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TURKISH DRIED APRICOT

Turkey realizes 82% of the total dried apricot trade of the world.

Harvest, Drying, and Packing of Dried Apricot

Harvest: Harvest time is determined with respect to the type of apricot, the altitude at which it is grown, due to the ripening, the getting yellow of its color, its softening and getting sweet and juicy. The most suitable apricot harvest is made by hand, so the fruits are not damaged during harvest and they are harvested when sufficiently ripe. The other harvest types are that are done by shaking and flapping.

Drying: Apricot is dried for using two different methods, called “Gün kurusu” (natural dry), and “Kükürtleme” (sulfured dry). Sulfuring is useful to shorten the time of the drying process, to preserve the natural color, to prevent the product from getting infested with bugs, and to increase the preservation period. Sulfuring, and the rest accomplish more than 80 % of the total drying efforts by drying in the sun. Spreading the apricot directly on earth, concrete, or cloths does 10 % of the drying processes. In natural drying, the quality decreases because of the dirt and bruises that the apricots receive. In apricots that are day dried, bugs form a short time after the drying process, but nevertheless, these apricots are very tasteful.

Selecting and Packing: Drying process is made by growers and farmers, and then these raw apricots are sold in the market to intermediaries. These merchants market the apricots to processor and packer companies. Packers companies first wash and fumigate these apricots, then calibrate to 8 different sizes, after these processes, apricots are waited in plastic baskets for 24 hours to absorb the excess water in it. After humidity and SO₂ tests, if the product is conformed to official quality standards, handpicked by workers by one by one. All the wounded, damaged, dotted and moldy berries are selected.

Packing: The final outcome is put into generally 5 or 12.5 kg bulk cartons, inside pp nylon or oil paper. In many of processing and packing houses, retail packs like 200, 250, 400, and 500gr is workable upon requests of buyers, these are white foam trays or clear cello bags.

Classification of Turkish Dried Apricot:

In Turkish Standards- TS 485, all the class and size details can be found. The two important quality criteria of dried apricots with regard to this standard are, moisture and SO₂ contents, which should not exceed 25 % and 0,25 % (2500ppm) by weight respectively. The variety of Turkish sun dried apricots is *Prunus Armeniaca* L. and called as "Şekerpare". The origin of this fruit is Malatya which is in Eastern Anatolia Region.

Drying process begins by reaping of fresh and ripe fruits from the trees into the cases and continues with sulphur dioxide cure for 2 or 3 days, and then dried under the sun; semi-dried fruits are pitted by hand.

Sulphured Dried Apricots; are treated with SO₂ in order to provide color retention and longer the shelf life .The color of this type changes from light yellow to orange. The SO₂ content is max 2000 ppm for European countries and between 2500-3000 for USA and others. Also if the buyer needs a special content it can be adjusted as well. The color is lighter as the SO₂ content increases.

Natural (Unsulphured) Dried Apricots; differs from sulphured apricots in color, the color of this type changes from light brown to dark brown this is because these apricots are directly dried under the sunlight without being treated with SO₂.

Organic Apricots; are grown by certified growers according to the standards of the Organic Agriculture and under the control of the organic certification organization and these apricots contains no chemicals as well as no sulphur.

The apricots are divided into two groups according to their drying style:

- Sulphured Dried Apricots
- Natural Dried Apricots

Classification according to Quality Specifications:

- Extra
- 1.Class
- 2.Class
- Industrial

There are two groups, natural and sulphured and four quality classes, extra, first, second and industrial classes.

In Turkish Standards, the two important quality criteria of dried apricots are, moisture and SO₂ contents, which should not exceed 25 % and 0,20 % (2000ppm) by weight respectively.

Sizing of apricots according to pieces in a kg:

Size No.	Diameter	Count per kg.
1	36mm or larger	up to 100
2	32mm – 36mm	101 - 102
3	29 mm – 36mm	121 – 140
4	26mm – 32mm	141 – 160
5	24mm – 29mm	161 – 180
6	24mm – 26mm	181 – 200

7	21mm – 26mm	201 – 220
8	20mm or less	220 or more

Packing:

Bulk: 5 kg, 10 kg, 12,5 kg carton boxes.

Retail Packing: A wide variety of retail packaging is available to meet your needs; Sealed round trays, cellophane bags, vacuum packs, wooden trays and more.

1 Natural Dried Apricots in Bulk

2 Dried Apricots in bulk

3 Dried Apricots in 250 gr. / 500 gr. Packages in 10/12.5/14kg net carton boxes.

Health Benefits of Apricot

- Apricot has high mineral content, that makes it beneficial in cases of anemia, tuberculosis, asthma, bronchitis, and toxemia.
- Apricot is high in vitamin A, that is why it is very helpful in the removal of skin pimples and other skin disorder.
- Apricot contains lycopene, this substance can help prevent cancer and help to protect LDL cholesterol from oxidation, which may help prevent heart disease.
- It helps destroy intestinal worms.
- It may help remove gallstones.
- It helps for preventing cancer in organs lined by epithelial tissue, due to its high vitamin A content.
- Dried apricots should be eaten with foods that are rich in Vitamin C so that iron absorption can be increased.

SUN DRIED APRICOT SPECIFICATIONS

1. Product Name	Turkish Whole Pitted Sun Dried Apricots (Sulphur treated)
2. Country of Origin	Turkey
3. Description	Sulphur treated sun dried apricots are washed, calibrated, selected, packed and metal detected.
4. Ingredients	Apricot, E220
5. Packaging Info	3 kgs, 5 kgs, 12,5 kgs bulk or toplayered cartons Food grade blue PE liners in 12,5 kgs carton boxes 250, 400 ,500 g. foam trays , Pet tubs
6. Labelling/Printing Info	Lot no, Crop, Grade, Size #, Quantity, Production Date and Best before information are printed on each box. Manufacturer name, contact information, product name, sulphur declaration and storage conditions are pre-printed on cartons.

7. Organoleptical Requirements	
Colour	Yellow, orange-yellow, orange
Taste	The fruit must have characteristic sweet flavor of Malatya apricots with no evidence of off flavors, including fermentation
Smell	Typical Turkish apricot odour with slightly SO2 smell and without off odours, including fermentation
Texture	Slightly soft, wholesome and faq of the season

8. Physical Requirements		
Size	No	Adet/kg (Count /kg)
	1	<100
	2	101-120
	3	121-140
	4	141-160
	5	161-180
	6	181-200
	7	201-220
	8	>220
Moisture	Hedef (Target) :18-22 %	Max. 24 %
Metal Detection Limits	1,35 mm Ferrus - 3,35 mm Non-Fer	

Physical defects	Extra
Moldy	1%

Decayed-Fermentation	1%	
Insect damage	1%	
Alive Mites-insect-worm	None permitted	
Filth	4%	
Halves/Slabs	1%	
Knife Cuts	1%	
Bruised	3%	
Sunburn	2%	
Hail Marks	2%	
White Marks	2%	
Speckled	3%	
Sugared	None permitted	
Discoloured	2%	
Pits/pieces	Max 1 piece/25 kg	
Extraneous Vegetative Matter	Max 2 unit/25 kg	
Foreign material	None permitted	
Combined Defects	9%	
Size Homogeneity Next larger and next smaller size	Max.10 %	
9. Chemical Requirements		
SO2	Europe	Max. 2000 ppm
	Canada	Max. 2500 ppm
	USA-AU and others	Max. 3000 ppm
Aflatoxin	Max. 4 ppb	
Pesticide Residue	In accordance with EU laws (Directives 90/642/EEC, 86/362/EEC, 86/363/EEC, 76/895/EEC and Commission directives which amend Directives 90/642/EEC, 86/362/EEC, 86/363/EEC, 76/895/EEC), Codex Alimentarius ,AU Food Laws and Turkish Food Codex (Directive no: 2004/42)	
Heavy metals	In accordance with EU laws (Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 and regulations which amend Regulation (EC) No 466/2001), Codex Alimentarius ,AU Food Laws and Turkish Food Codex (Directive no: 2002/63)	
11. Microbiological Criteria		
Total Count	<50 000 cfu /g	
Coliform	<100 cfu / g.	
E. coli	<10 cfu /g.	
Yeast	<1000 cfu /g	
Mold	<1000 cfu /g	
Salmonella /25 g.	Absent	
Osmophillicyeast	<1000 cfu /g	
12. Storage Conditions	Stored at ambient conditions in dark and dry places.	
13. Shelf Life	12 months from the production date at above storage conditions	
14. Transportation	Transported at ambient conditions in dry, clean, odourless containers.	
15. Consumer profile	All ages(except babies) Suitable for vegeterians,ovo-lacto vegeterians and vegans	
16. Allergens	Do not include any allergens except E220	
17. Intended Use	Dried apricots are used in the confectionery and bakery industries, but are generally intended for direct consumption.	
17. GMO durumu- GMO Status	GMO içermez.GMO free	
18. Codex Amendments	Customer is responsible for informing any changes in relevant legislation of the country	

Dried Apricot

Chinese Apricot	
SO2	<2000ppm
Moisture	18-22%
Packing	12.5kg/ctn