

Appendix C - Minimum information to be declared when a firewood product is being offered for sale

Approximately compliant with prEN 14961-5 Solid biofuels – Fuel specifications and classes – Part 5: Firewood for non-industrial use

'Firewood' logs must be dry enough to be ready to use in their intended appliance

Firewood
Oven Ready = ready to burn if kept dry
Length - 10 inches / 25cm / L25 (example only)
Diameter – 2 to 6 inches / 5 to 15 cm / D10 and D15 (example only)
Ash, beech and birch – All hardwood species / All softwood species / Mixed hardwood and softwood
Class - A1 – mostly split – suitable for stoves, fireplaces and log boilers (or A2 – some split – suitable for stoves, fireplaces and log boilers or B - suitable for log boilers only)
< 25% moisture = M25 w-% wet basis 'A' can be M20 or M25, 'B' can be M25 or M35
Optional –XXX kWh energy content Net calorific value/ Q
Optional – Kiln dried (with fossil fuel or biomass) or Natural air dried
UK country of origin – with further detail optional (e.g. Yorkshire)
1m ³ loose volume, multiply by 2/3 for equivalent stacked volume (approx.) (example only)

Notes:

Length – can be +/- 2cm and 15% can be shorter than the minimum

Diameter – 15% can be less than the minimum, small portions of a log can exceed the maximum

Species must be listed in order of highest proportion, the first species must always be present, the others may not always occur in a sale pack

A1 has no branchwood, >90% split pieces, has 'even and smooth' cut-off surface (which can include chainsaw cut) and shows no visible decay (mould or other). 'A2' must have >50% split wood. 'B' has no requirements for split wood. 'A2' has less than 5% visible decay, while 'B' must declare if decay is greater than 10%.

Country of origin is where the tree was growing, unless the firewood is a by-product or residue from a wood process which uses more than 50% of the stem wood, in which case the county of origin is as the site where it became a by-product/ residue.

For peer review:

Net calorific value – Q – I want to help consumers understand the pence per kWh they are paying for their fuel to help give a standard unit comparison between all heating fuel options. Is this the right way of doing it? Optional?

Firewood term – should this be a reserved term for an approved supplier, in that they should not sell any other ‘firewood’ labelled product that it not ‘ready to burn’ (<25% moisture)?

The EU specs call for the use of the terms **Broadleaf and Coniferous**, I suggest that we use the terms hardwood and softwood as these are terms most understood by customers.

Split percentage seems overly prescriptive with little added value for the consumer and extra costs for the supplier. Surely once the log is of the stated dimensions and with the stated moisture content then it is ready to burn. Splitting is mostly to help further moisture content reduction, but we are saying this is not necessary. Reference coppice cordwood – the whole batch could meet the diameter requirement without splitting.

Kiln dried with fossil fuel might give rise to unacceptable levels of Green House Gas balance and loss of Carbon Neutral status – calculations are required?

Moisture – very contentious issue! I propose only allowing 25% moisture wood to be allowed in the scheme. I need feed-back on whether there is a significant customer percentage with appliances that are ‘designed to work efficiently’ with logs at 30% ... 35% before I would consider raising this (fireplaces/ stoves or boilers). There is pressure to reduce the allowed percentage to 20%, partly due to this being a more stable product in a sealed bag. I have feed-back stating that log boilers are happy with 25%, what about stoves – is the trade happy with 25% (max) being burnt in stoves?

Volume – I am working with Trading Standards to agree a standard that they can apply for testing 1m³ of logs. I am suggesting that for packs smaller than 1m³, these are sold as a ‘minimum weight’ (with a statement of equivalent loose volume of stacked volume to help customers relate to the bulk purchase equivalent value?). While it is not practical for most log traders to weigh their ‘truck load’ deliveries, it is easy to weigh small packs and the energy content has reasonable control from the moisture and the hardwood/ softwood declaration.

Visible decay definition – are the words from the specification appropriate for defining a pass standard that can be resolved between producer, customer and trading standards? See following for current wording from standard:

Decay and mould means a lost of mass and energy. Damage of insects, almost in sap-wood, is considered to be no lost of mass or energy. Mould can result on the surface of wood. The amount of mould depends on the conditions of drying or storing or ambient climate. Discolouration can result by chemical reactions between Felons and tannins (e.g. white oak) or by air and kiln drying.