

Saffron (*Crocus sativus* L.) —

Part 2: Test methods

ICS 67.220.10

National foreword

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Cross-references

The British Standards which implement international publications referred to in this document may be found in the BSI Catalogue under the section entitled “International Standards Correspondence Index”, or by using the “Search” facility of the *BSI Electronic Catalogue* or of British Standards Online.

Summary of pages

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Contents

Page

Foreword.....	iv
1 Scope.....	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Tests and sample sizes	2
5 Identification test	4
6 Microscopic examination of saffron	5
7 Determination of moisture and volatile matter content	8
8 Determination of floral waste content of saffron in filaments and cut filaments	10
9 Determination of foreign matter content of saffron in filaments	10
10 Crushing and sieving of the samples for tests described in Clauses 6, 7 and 12 to 17	11
11 Determination of extract soluble in cold water	12
12 Determination of total ash.....	12
13 Determination of acid-insoluble ash	12
14 Determination of the main characteristics using a UV-Vis spectrometric method.....	12
15 Identification of saffron pigments	14
16 Detection and identification of artificial water-soluble acidic colourants: Thin-layer chromatography method (TLCM)	16
17 Detection of artificial water-soluble acidic colourants by high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC).....	20
Annex A (informative) Example of the expression of results for a microscopic examination	25
Annex B (informative) Photographic references for microscopic identification	27
Annex C (informative) Example of a UV-Vis profile of an aqueous extract of saffron	30
Annex D (informative) Examples of chromatograms obtained under test conditions.....	31
Bibliography	33

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

In other circumstances, particularly when there is an urgent market requirement for such documents, a technical committee may decide to publish other types of normative document:

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An ISO/PAS or ISO/TS is reviewed after three years in order to decide whether it will be confirmed for a further three years, revised to become an International Standard, or withdrawn. If the ISO/PAS or ISO/TS is confirmed, it is reviewed again after a further three years, at which time it must either be transformed into an International Standard or be withdrawn.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO/TS 3632-2 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*, Subcommittee SC 7, *Spices and condiments*.

This first edition of ISO/TS 3632-2 cancels and replaces ISO 3632-2:1993, which has been technically revised.

ISO/TS 3632 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Saffron* (*Crocus sativus L.*):

- *Part 1: Specification*
- *Part 2: Test methods*

Saffron (*Crocus sativus* L.) —

Part 2: Test methods

1 Scope

This part of ISO/TS 3632 specifies methods for the analysis of saffron obtained from *Crocus sativus* L. flowers.

It is applicable to saffron in both of the following forms:

- whole and cut filaments as a loose, supple, elastic and hygroscopic mass of filaments;
- powder.

NOTE The specifications for saffron are given in ISO/TS 3632-1.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 928, *Spices and condiments — Determination of total ash*

ISO 930, *Spices and condiments — Determination of acid-insoluble ash*

ISO 941, *Spices and condiments — Determination of cold water-soluble extract*

ISO/TS 3632-1, *Saffron (Crocus sativus L.) — Part 1: Specification*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO/TS 3632-1 and the following apply.

3.1

moisture and volatile matter content

loss of mass determined under the conditions specified in this part of ISO/TS 3632

NOTE Moisture and volatile matter content is expressed as a percentage by mass of the sample.

3.2

colouring strength

$E_{1\text{cm}}^{1\%}$

absorbency of the maximum wavelength (about 440 nm) of crocines for a 1 % solution of the test sample for a 1 cm cell

NOTE Colouring strength is mainly due to the content of crocines.

3.3

UV-Vis profile

spectrum of the aqueous extract of saffron between 200 nm and 700 nm

NOTE An example is given for information in Figure C.1.

3.4

detection limit

smallest concentration or content of the analyte that can be detected, but not quantified, under the specified test conditions for a method

4 Tests and sample sizes

4.1 Minimum mass of the test sample

Considering the high cost of saffron, the mass of sample received in the laboratories for carrying out the tests is often limited. The minimum mass of the laboratory sample shall be 14 g ($7\text{ g} \times 2$) in order to carry out the standard analyses in duplicate.

It is recommended that larger quantities of sample be placed at the disposal of the laboratories in case of dispute.

Since the mass of the test portion is low, it is advisable that it be taken from a homogenized sample.

4.2 Tests required and sample sizes

See Table 1 for saffron in filaments and cut filaments, and Table 2 for saffron in powder.

Table 1 — Saffron in filaments and cut filaments

Analysis order	Procedure (sample: 7 g × 2 = 14 g)	Test sample g	Comments	Corresponding clause
1	Identification test	5	Non-destructive test Reject sample if vegetable matter is found other than from <i>Crocus sativus</i> L.	Clause 5
2	Determination of floral waste content	3	Non-destructive test	Clause 8
3	Determination of foreign matter	3	Sample is reconstituted after re-incorporating floral waste	Clause 9
4	Regrouping and mixing of all elements separated in tests.	5	Return to the original test sample of 5 g	Clauses 5, 8 and 9
5	Microscopic examination	0,05		Clause 6
6	Determination of moisture and volatile matter content	2,5	Keep the sample for determination of total ash and acid-insoluble ash	Clause 7
7	Determination of extract soluble in cold water	2		Clause 11
8	Determination of total ash	2 (approx.)	Sampling remaining after test 6	Clause 12
9	Determination of acid-insoluble ash		Sampling remaining after test 8	Clause 13
10	Crushing and sieving	5	Carry out the sieving in accordance with Clause 10 to obtain a powder of which 95 % passes through a 500 µm sieve. Re-incorporate whatever remains on the sieve in the receptacle of the sieve	Clause 10
11	Determination of main characteristics	0,5		Clause 14
12	Thin-layer chromatography: identification of saffron pigments	0,05		Clause 15
13	Thin-layer chromatography: identification of artificial colourants	0,5	HPLC (test 14) may alternatively, or additionally, be performed. In the latter case, use the extract for both methods	Clause 16
14	High-performance liquid chromatography: identification of artificial colourants	0,5	TLC (test 13) may alternatively, or additionally, be performed. In the latter case, use the extract for both methods	Clause 17
NOTE There will remain 1,40 g of sample which can be used for further tests or for repeating certain analyses if necessary.				

Table 2 — Saffron in powder form

Analysis order	Procedure (sample: 7 g × 2 = 14 g)	Test sample g	Comments	Corresponding clause
1	Identification test	0,5	Do not continue with the analysis if the colorimetric analysis is not correct	Clause 5
2	Microscopic examination	0,05		Clause 6
3	Determination of moisture and volatile matter content	2,5	Keep the sample for determination of total ash and acid-insoluble ash	Clause 7
4	Determination of extract soluble in cold water	2		Clause 11
5	Determination of total ash	2 (approx.)	Sampling remaining after test 3	Clause 12
6	Determination of acid-insoluble ash		Sampling remaining after test 5	Clause 13
7	Crushing and sieving	4,5	Verify that 95 % of the powder passes through a 500 µm sieve. Re-incorporate whatever remains on the sieve in the receptacle of the sieve	Clause 10
8	Determination of main characteristics	0,5		Clause 14
9	Thin-layer chromatography: identification of saffron pigments	0,05		Clause 15
10	Thin-layer chromatography: identification of artificial colourants	0,5	HPLC (test 11) may alternatively, or additionally, be performed. In the latter case, use the extract for both methods	Clause 16
11	High-performance liquid chromatography: identification of artificial colourants	0,5	TLC (test 10) may alternatively, or additionally, be performed. In the latter case, use the extract for both methods	Clause 17
NOTE There will remain 0,9 g of sample which can be used for further tests or for repeating certain analysis if necessary.				

5 Identification test

5.1 General

This preliminary test may make the subsequent analyses unnecessary if it shows that the saffron is not pure.

5.2 Saffron in filaments and cut filaments

5.2.1 Principle

The saffron is examined visually with a magnifying glass.

5.2.2 Apparatus

5.2.2.1 Magnifying glass, with a magnification of ×10 max.

5.2.2.2 Watch glass, of suitable size.

5.2.3 Procedure

Spread out the test sample of saffron in filaments and cut filaments on the watch glass (5.2.2.2) and examine it with the magnifying glass (5.2.2.1).

5.2.4 Interpretation of results

All the filaments shall belong to the plant *Crocus sativus* L.

Reject the sample if vegetable matter other than that belonging to *Crocus sativus* L. is found.

5.3 Saffron in powder form

5.3.1 Principle

A colorimetric reaction is used.

5.3.2 Reagents

Use only reagents of recognized analytical grade, and distilled or demineralized water or water of equivalent quality.

5.3.2.1 Sulfuric acid, of density 1,19 g/l.

5.3.2.2 Diphenylamine, not producing any coloured reaction with the sulfuric acid.

5.3.2.3 Diphenylamine solution, prepared as follows.

Add 0,1 g of diphenylamine (5.3.2.2) to 20 ml of sulfuric acid (5.3.2.1) and 4 ml of water.

5.3.3 Apparatus

5.3.3.1 Porcelain dish, with flat bottom.

5.3.4 Procedure

Take a 0,5 g sample of saffron (see Table 2).

Place this test portion in the porcelain dish (5.3.3.1) containing the diphenylamine solution (5.3.2.3).

5.3.5 Interpretation of results

Pure saffron immediately turns to a blue colour which rapidly turns reddish brown.

In the presence of nitrates, the blue colour persists.

6 Microscopic examination of saffron

6.1 General

The method is applicable to the examination of saffron in powder and filament form in order to determine whether the sample consists exclusively of stigmata belonging to *Crocus sativus* L. and to highlight any floral waste and foreign matter.

6.2 Principle

The identity of saffron in powder and crushed filament form is verified. Foreign matter and floral waste, if any, are identified by the observation of anatomical elements by using microscopy under the conditions described in 6.5. The percentages relating to the observed elements may be determined if required (see Annexes B and C).

6.3 Reagents

Unless otherwise indicated, use only reagents of recognized analytical grade, and distilled or demineralized water or water of equivalent purity.

6.3.1 Iodine/iodide solution, aqueous solution of iodine in potassium iodide.

In a 100 ml one-mark volumetric flask, equipped with a glass stopper, add 2 g of iodine, 4 g of potassium iodide and about 10 ml of water. Leave until completely dissolved, then make up to the mark with water. Stopper the flask.

6.3.2 Illuminating solution, either sodium hydroxide or potassium hydroxide with 5 g/100 ml of water, or chloral hydrate with 80 g/100 ml of water; dissolve when hot.

6.4 Apparatus

Usual apparatus used for microscopic examinations, such as slides, cover-glasses, scalpel, lancet needles, and the following.

6.4.1 Volumetric flask, of capacity 100 ml.

6.4.2 Syringe, permitting delivery of 50 µl, graduated in microlitres.

6.4.3 Microscope, permitting observation with a magnification of $\times 100$ and $\times 400$, equipped with a device permitting observation in polarized light (optional).

6.5 Procedure

6.5.1 Test portion

For each slide (6.5.2 to 6.5.4), take a test portion of the order of 0,001 g to 0,002 g of saffron in powder (see 10.3) or crushed filament (see 10.2) form.

6.5.2 Preparation for observation in water

Prepare two slides as follows.

Deposit 50 µl of water on a slide. Using the tip of a scalpel or lancet needle, take the test portion (6.5.1), mix it with the water and wait for at least 5 min until the powder is well wetted before covering with a cover slide.

6.5.3 Preparation for observation in an aqueous solution of sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide or chloral hydrate

Prepare two slides as indicated in 6.5.2 but replacing water with the sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide or chloral hydrate aqueous solutions (6.3.2).

Wait for a few minutes for the medium to illuminate and observe for 10 min after adding the illuminating solution in order to avoid altering the cellular elements and to ensure they can be identified.