



United States Department of Agriculture

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Agricultural
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United States Standards for Grades of Shelled Walnuts (*Juglans regia*)

September 21, 2017

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Shelled Walnuts (*Juglans regia*) (82 FR 39655) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since September 1, 1968.

Voluntary U.S. grade standards are issued under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which provides for the development of official U.S. grades to designate different levels of quality. These grade standards are available for use by producers, suppliers, buyers, and consumers. As in the case of other standards for grades of fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, and specialty crops these standards are designed to facilitate orderly marketing by providing a convenient basis for buying and selling, for establishing quality control programs, and for determining loan values.

The U.S. grade standards and inspection instructions for all fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, and specialty crops are available on the internet and upon request at the address below. These documents provide detailed interpretations of the grade standards and provide step-by-step procedures for grading the product.

Grade standards are issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) after careful consideration of all data and views submitted during rulemaking. The Department welcomes suggestions for improving the standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of standards and inspection instructions obtained from:

Director, Specialty Crops Inspection Division
Specialty Crops Program,
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 0240
Washington, D.C. 20250

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621-1627.

Note: Compliance with the provisions of these standards shall not excuse failure to comply with the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, or with applicable State laws and regulations.

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United States Standards for Grades of Shelled Walnuts (*Juglans regia*)

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General
§51.2275 Application.

The standards contained in this subpart apply only to walnuts commonly known as English or Persian walnuts (*Juglans regia*). They do not apply to walnuts commonly known as black walnuts (*Juglans nigra*).

§51.2276 [Reserved].

Grades
§51.2277 U.S. No. 1.

“U.S. No. 1” consists of portions of walnut kernels which are well dried, clean, free from shell, foreign material, insect injury, decay, rancidity, and free from damage caused by shriveling, mold, discoloration of the meat, or other means. (See §51.2280.)

- (a) Color shall be specified in connection with this grade in terms of “extra light,” “light,” “light amber,” or “amber” from the USDA Walnut Color Chart or in terms of “red” color. The color classifications in the USDA Walnut Color Chart shall not apply to “red” color. Furthermore, “red” color shall not be mixed with “extra light,” “light,” “light amber,” or “amber” colors. (See §51.2281 and §51.2282.)
- (b) Size shall be specified in connection with this grade in terms of one of the size classifications. (See §51.2284 and §51.2285.)

§51.2278 U.S. Commercial.

“U.S. Commercial” consists of portions of walnut kernels which meet the requirements of U.S. No. 1 grade, except for increased tolerances. (See §51.2280.)

- (a) Color of walnuts based on the USDA Walnut Color Chart shall be not darker than the “amber” classification. There are no color requirements for “red” color. Color may be specified in connection with the grade in terms of one of the color classifications in the USDA Walnut Color Chart or “red” color. “Red” color shall not be mixed with “extra light,” “light,” “light amber,” or “amber” colors. (See §51.2281 and §51.2282.)
- (b) Size shall be specified in connection with this grade in terms of one of the size classifications. (See §51.2284 and §51.2285.)

Reserved
§51.2279 [Reserved].

Tolerances for Grade Defects

§51.2280 Tolerances for grade defects.

- (a) All percentages shall be calculated on the basis of weight.
- (b) In order to allow for variations, other than for color and size, incident to proper grading and handling, tolerances shall be permitted for the respective grades as indicated in Table I:

Table I

Grade	Tolerances for grade defects			
	Total defects	Serious damage	Very serious damage	Shell and foreign material
U.S. No. 1	5%	2% (included in 5% total defects).	1% (included in 2% serious damage).	0.05% (included in 1% very serious damage).
U.S. Commercial	8%	4% (included in 8% total defects).	2% (included in 4% serious damage).	0.05% (included in 2% very serious damage).

Color Requirements

§51.2281 Color classifications.

The following color classifications are provided to describe the color of any lot:

- (a) "Extra light," "light," "light amber," and "amber:" The portions of kernels in the lot shall be not darker than the darkest color permitted in the specified classification as shown on the USDA Walnut Color Chart.
- (b) "Red:" There are no color requirements.

§51.2282 Tolerances for color.

- (a) All percentages shall be calculated on the basis of weight.
- (b) In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, tolerances shall be permitted for the respective color classifications as indicated in Table II:

Table II

Color classification	Tolerances for color			
	Darker than extra light ¹	Darker than light ¹	Darker than light amber ¹	Darker than amber ¹
Extra light	15%	2% (included in 15% darker than extra light).	-----	-----
Light	-----	15%	2% (included in 15% darker than light).	-----
Light amber	-----	-----	15%	2% (included in 15% darker than light amber).
Amber	-----	-----	-----	10%
Red	-----	-----	-----	-----

¹See illustration of this term on USDA Walnut Color Chart.

§51.2283 Off color.

The term “off color” is not a color classification, but shall be applied to any lot which fails to meet the requirements of the “amber” classification when applying the color classifications in the USDA Walnut Color Chart. Off color shall not be used for “red” color.

Size Requirements

§51.2284 Size classification.

The following classifications are provided to describe the size of any lot: “Halves”, “Pieces and Halves”, “Pieces” or “Small Piece”. The size of portions of kernels in the lot shall conform to the requirements of the specified classification as defined below:

- (a) **Halves.** Lot consists of 85 percent or more, by weight, half kernels, and the remainder three-fourths half kernels. (See §51.2285.)
- (b) **Pieces and halves.** Lot consists of 20 percent or more, by weight, half kernels, and the remainder portions of kernels that cannot pass through a sieve with 24/64 inch round openings. When a lot exceeds this minimum requirement, the actual percentage of halves may be specified. (See §51.2285.)
- (c) **Pieces.** Lot consists of portions of kernels that cannot pass through a sieve with 24/64 inch round openings. (See §51.2285.)
- (d) **Small pieces.** Lot consists of portions of kernels that pass through a sieve with

24/64 inch round openings, but that cannot pass through a sieve with 8/64 inch round openings. When desired, the actual size ranges within such size ranges may be specified. (See §51.2285.)

§51.2285 Tolerances for size.

- (a) All percentages shall be calculated on the basis of weight.
- (b) In order to allow for variations incident to proper sizing and handling, tolerances shall be permitted for the respective size classifications as indicated in Table III:

Table III

Size classification	Tolerances for size				
	Smaller than 3/4 halves	Will not pass through 24/64 inch round hole	Pass through 24/64 inch round hole	Pass through 16/64 inch round hole	Pass through 8/64 inch round hole
Halves	5%	-----	-----	1% (included in 5%)	-----
Pieces and halves ¹	-----	-----	18%	3% (included in 18%)	1% (included in 3%)
Pieces	-----	-----	25%	5% (included in 25%)	1% (included in 5%)
Small pieces ²	-----	10%	-----	-----	2%

¹No part of any tolerance shall be used to reduce the percentage of halves required or specified in a lot of "pieces and halves."

²The tolerances of 10% and 2% for "small pieces" classification shall apply, respectively, to any smaller maximum or any larger minimum sizes specified.

Application of Tolerances

§51.2286 Application of tolerances.

The tolerances provided in these standards are on a lot basis, and they shall be applied to a composite sample representative of the lot. However, any container or group of containers in which the walnuts are obviously of a quality materially different from that in the majority of containers shall be considered a separate lot, and shall be sampled separately.

Definitions

§51.2287 Well dried.

"Well dried" means that the portion of kernel is firm and crisp, not pliable or leathery.

§51.2288 Clean.

“Clean” means that the appearance of the individual portion of kernel, or of the lot as a whole, is not materially affected by adhering dust, dirt or other foreign material.

§51.2289 Shell.

“Shell” means the outer shell and/or the woody partition from between the halves of the kernel, and any fragments of either.

§51.2290 Insect injury.

“Insect injury” means that the insect, web, frass or other evidence of insects is present on the portion of kernel.

§51.2291 Rancidity.

“Rancidity” means that the portion of kernel is noticeably rancid to the taste. Rancidity should not be confused with a slightly astringent flavor of the pellicle (skin) or with staleness (the stage at which the flavor is flat but not objectionable).

§51.2292 Damage.

“Damage” means any defect, other than color, which materially affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual portion of kernel, or of the lot as a whole. Any one of the following defects or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect shall be considered as damage:

- (a) **Shriveling** when more than one-eighth of the portion of kernel is severely shriveled, or a greater area is affected by lesser degrees of shriveling producing an equally objectionable appearance, except that kernels which are thin in cross-section but which are otherwise normally developed shall not be considered as damaged;
- (b) **Mold** when plainly visible;
- (c) **Discoloration of the meat** when more than one-eighth the volume of the portion of kernel is severely discolored, or a greater volume is affected by lesser degrees of discoloration producing an equally objectionable appearance;
- (d) **Not well dried**; and,
- (e) **Not clean.**

§51.2293 Serious damage.

“Serious damage” means any defect, other than color, which seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual portion of kernel or of the lot as a whole. Any one of the following defects or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect shall be considered as serious damage:

- (a) **Shriveling** when more than one-fourth of the kernel is severely shriveled, or a greater area is affected by lesser degrees of shriveling producing an equally objectionable appearance;
- (b) **Mold** when plainly visible on more than one-eighth of the surface of the kernel in the aggregate; and,
- (c) **Discoloration of the meat** when more than one-fourth the volume of the portion of kernel is severely discolored, or a greater volume is affected by lesser degrees of discoloration producing an equally objectionable appearance.

§51.2294 Very serious damage.

“Very serious damage” means any defect, other than color, which very seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual portion of kernel or of the lot as a whole. Any one of the following defects or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect shall be considered as very serious damage:

- (a) **Shriveling** when more than 50 percent of the portion of kernel is severely shriveled;
- (b) **Mold** when plainly visible on more than one-fourth of the surface of the portion of kernel in the aggregate;
- (c) **Discoloration of the meat** when more than one-half the volume of the portion of kernel is severely discolored;
- (d) **Insect injury**;
- (e) **Rancidity or decay**; and,
- (f) **Shell, or any foreign material.**

§51.2295 Half kernel.

“Half kernel” means the separated half of a kernel with not more than one-eighth broken off.

§51.2296 Three-fourths half kernel.

“Three-fourths half kernel” means a portion of a half of a kernel which has more than one-eighth but not more than one-fourth broken off.