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Service

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Crops
Program

Specialty
Crops
Inspection
Division

United States Standards for Grades of Beets

Effective September 6, 2016

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Beets (81 FR 51297) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since August 1, 1955.

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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Styles

§51.375 Bunched beets.

“**Bunched beets**” means beets which are tied in bunches. The tops shall be full length or removed to not less than 6 inches.

§51.376 Beets with short-trimmed tops.

“**Beets with short-trimmed tops**” means, unless otherwise specified, beets showing leafstems ranging to not more than 4 inches in length.

§51.377 Topped beets.

“**Topped beets**” means beets with tops removed to not more than one-half inch in length.

Grades

§51.378 U.S. No. 1.

“**U.S. No. 1**” consists of beets of similar varietal characteristics the roots of which are well trimmed, firm, fairly smooth, fairly well shaped, fairly clean and free from soft rot and free from damage caused by cuts, freezing, growth cracks, disease, rodents or insects, or mechanical or other means. Bunched beets or beets with short-trimmed tops shall have tops which are fresh and free from decay and free from damage caused by discoloration, freezing, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means.

- (a) Unless otherwise specified, the diameter of each beet shall be not less than 1-1/2 inches. (See §51.381.)

§51.379 U.S. No. 2.

“**U.S. No. 2**” consists of beets of similar varietal characteristics, the roots of which are well trimmed, firm, not excessively rough, not seriously misshapen and which are free from soft rot and free from serious damage caused by cuts, dirt, freezing, growth cracks, disease, rodents or insects, or mechanical or other means. Bunched beets or beets with short-trimmed tops shall have tops which are fresh and free from decay and free from damage caused by discoloration, freezing, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means.

- (a) Unless otherwise specified, the diameter of each beet shall be not less than 1-1/2 inches. (See §51.381.)

Reserved

§51.380 Reserved.

Tolerances

§51.381 Tolerances.

In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, the following tolerances shall be permitted:

(a) For bunched beets

- (1) For defects of roots.** 10 percent, by count, for roots in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade: *Provided*, That not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein not more than 1 percent for soft rot;
- (2) For defects of tops.** 10 percent, by count, for bunches with tops in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade, including therein not more than 5 percent for decay;
- (3) For off-size roots.** 5 percent, by count, for roots in any lot which are smaller than the specified minimum diameter, and 10 percent, by count, for roots which are larger than any specified maximum diameter; and,
- (4) For off-length tops.** 5 percent, by count, for bunches with tops in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the style.

(b) For beets with short-trimmed tops or topped beets

- (1) For defects of roots.** 10 percent, by weight, for roots in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade: *Provided*, That not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein not more than 1 percent for soft rot;
- (2) For defects of tops.** 10 percent, by weight, for roots with tops in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade, including therein not more than 5 percent for decay;
- (3) For off-size roots.** 5 percent, by weight, for roots in any lot which are smaller than the specified minimum diameter, and 10 percent, by weight, for roots which are larger than any specified maximum diameter; and,
- (4) For off-length tops.** 10 percent, by weight, for beets with tops in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the style specified.

Application of Tolerances

§51.382 Application of tolerances.

- (a)** The contents of individual packages in the lot, based on sample inspection, are

subject to the following limitations: *Provided*, That the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerances specified for the grade:

- (1) For packages which contain more than 5 pounds and a tolerance of 10 percent or more is provided, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than one and one-half times the tolerance specified. For packages which contain more than 5 pounds and a tolerance of less than 10 percent is provided, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than double the tolerance specified except that at least one defective and one off-size specimen shall be permitted in any package; and,
- (2) For packages which contain 5 pounds or less, individual packages in any lot are not restricted as to the percentage of defects and off-size: *Provided*, That not more than one beet which is frozen or affected by soft rot may be permitted in any package.

Standard Bunching

§51.383 Standard bunching.

- (a) Standard bunches of beets shall be fairly uniform in size and each bunch of beets shall weigh not less than 1 pound and contain at least 3 beets.
- (b) Not more than 10 percent of the bunches in any lot may fail to meet the requirements for “Standard Bunching.”

Definitions

§51.384 Well trimmed.

“**Well trimmed**” means that unattractive secondary rootlets have been removed and that any objectionably long or coarse tail-like part of the root has been cut off.

§51.385 Firm.

“**Firm**” means that the beet root is not soft, flabby or shriveled.

§51.386 Fairly smooth.

“**Fairly smooth**” means that the root is not rough or ridged to the extent that the appearance is materially affected. Very slight roughness over the crown or very slight pitting caused by the shedding of dead leaves shall not be considered as materially affecting the appearance.

§51.387 Fairly well shaped.

“**Fairly well shaped**” means that the root is not misshapen to the extent that the appearance is materially affected.

§51.388 Fairly clean.

“**Fairly clean**” means that the individual root is reasonably free from dirt, stain or other foreign matter, and that the general appearance of the roots in the container is not more than slightly affected.

§51.389 Damage.

“**Damage**” means any defect which materially affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual beet root, or the general appearance of the beet roots in the container, or causes a loss of more than 5 percent, by weight, in the ordinary preparation for use, or which materially affects the appearance or shipping quality of the tops. 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) Growth cracks when not shallow and not smooth or when the appearance is materially affected; and,
- (b) Discoloration when yellowing or other discoloration of the tops materially affect the appearance of the bunch. The appearance of bunches with tops having slight discoloration such as yellowing, browning, or other abnormal color affecting a few leaves shall not be considered materially affected.

§51.390 Fresh.

“**Fresh**” means that the tops are not badly wilted.

§51.391 Diameter.

“**Diameter**” means the greatest dimension of the root measured at right angles to a line running from the crown to the base of the root.

§51.392 Excessively rough.

“**Excessively rough**” means that the root is rough or ridged to the extent that the appearance is seriously affected.

§51.393 Seriously misshapen.

“**Seriously misshapen**” means that the root is misshapen to the extent that the appearance is seriously affected.

§51.394 Serious damage.

“**Serious damage**” means any defect which seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual beet, or the general appearance of the beets in the container, or causes a loss of more than 20 percent, by weight, in the ordinary preparation for use.