

Comment Info: =====

General Comment: March 26, 2008

Vincent J. Fusaro
Standardization Section
Fresh Products Branch-Fruit & Vegetable Programs
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 1661, South Building, Stop 0240
Washington, D.C. 20250-0240

Reference: February 26th, 2008; Federal Register Vol. 73, No. 38, pgs. 10185-10186
AMS Docket #FV-07-0140

Dear Mr. Fusaro:

I write to express my support to add an additional 5% allowance for shattered berries as proposed by the current AMS/USDA rule revision. With the evolution in packaging, fresh table grapes consistently retain a high level of quality regardless of whether or not they are attached to the stem.

Consumers, as shown through a recent study commissioned by the California Table Grape Commission, overwhelmingly consider fresh loose table grapes to be of equal value to those remaining on the stem. In some cases, fresh loose berries are preferred because of consumer preference for sweetness and ripeness embodied in loose berries resulting from higher sugar contents.

We widely recognize fresh table grape standards to signal quality, hence, the need to accurately reflect shatter of high quality is now.

I thank you for your consideration and time.

Sincerely,

Pat Ricchiuti
P-R Farms