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Standardization Section
Fresh Products Branch
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REVISING GRADE STANDARDS FOR FIELD GROWN FRESH MARKET CUCUMBERS

Reference: July 2004 7CFR part 36
Federal Register on June 25, 2004

Over the past several years seed companies have developed new varieties of cucumbers that tend to grow longer, and if picked a day late the width can expand by $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch. This can throw it out of grade even though it is a perfect super select.

I feel we should have two categories for Super Selects: #1 criteria being a 66-76 count and a #2 criteria being a 56-65 count. Both criteria will make an excellent cucumber for the consumer. I feel we should also be more lenient toward yellowing, which does nothing to diminish the taste or quality of a cucumber.

Select cukes would be a #2 consisting of mostly misshaped cucumbers. Small cukes should fit into a count range of 85-105.

If the consumer could see the amount of produce that is thrown away due to such strict guidelines (enough to feed a small country), I truly feel that they would change their eating habits and be more tolerant toward color and shape.

Regards,

Tom O'Brien,
C&D Fruit & Vegetable Co.

