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Marketing
Service

Fruit and
Vegetable
Division

Processed
Products
Branch

Grading Manual for Canned Sweetpotatoes

May 1985

This manual is designed for Processed Products Branch Personnel of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Its purpose is to give background information and guidelines to assist in the uniform application and interpretation of U.S. grade standards, other similar specifications, and special procedures.

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MEETING THE STYLE REQUIREMENTS

Canned sweetpotatoes are graded according to the styles for which they are offered and it is the responsibility of the inspector to assign the appropriate style to each lot. Under good manufacturing practices, occasional different-shaped units may be permitted in a designated style such as a piece or cut in whole style or a cut piece in halves style. A sample unit which contains several different-shaped units within a designated style is considered as mixed style.

Within whole style, 90 percent, by count, of the units in a container must be whole or almost whole; allow 10% pieces or cuts, halves, sections etc., or 1 unit, whichever is greater. In halves style, 90 percent, by count, must be halves and 10 percent, by count, or one (1) unit, whichever is greater, may be of a different shape(s). This procedure to determine style applies to all styles except whole and pieces and mashed styles. See the guide for determining whole, almost whole, and pieces in the appendix of this grading manual (Attachment No. 1). All sample units must be of the same style for the lot to be considered that style, otherwise the lot is considered mixed style.

For a lot of officially drawn samples to be designated "whole and pieces":

- (1) The "whole" sweetpotatoes from all the containers average not less than 50 percent, by weight, of all the units, with the remainder in pieces;
- (2) One-half or more of the containers comprising the sample each contain not less than 50 percent, by weight, of units that are "whole"; and
- (3) None of the containers comprising the sample contain less than 25 percent, by weight, of units that are "whole".

DRAINED WEIGHT

Use caution when transferring sweetpotato units from their primary container to the mesh screen. Gentle handling of units can result in a more precise drained weight while preserving the character of the sample unit.

CHIPS vs. UNITS

The "count" is based on the number of "units" of sweetpotatoes exclusive of chips and pieces five (5) grams or less. Do not include such chips and pieces in the count of units.

MEETING THE VARIETAL COLOR TYPES

Canned Sweetpotatoes are classified into three varietal color types; golden, yellow, or mixed. A sample unit of canned sweetpotatoes in which all the units are of the same varietal color type may be designated as golden or yellow. All 5%, by count, or 1 unit, whichever is greater, of the yellow units in golden and vice versa.

A lot of canned sweetpotatoes in which all the sample units are not of the same varietal color type shall be designated in terms of the number of sample units and their type.

Example: 3 sample units golden; 3 sample units mixed.

FLAVOR AND ODOR

When evaluating flavor and odor, consider the type of pack. The flavor characteristics will be different for "regular pack" than "vacuum pack," and "sirup pack" will be different from "water pack." Naturally, whenever a spice or garnish is included as an optional ingredient, you can expect a variation in flavor due to the spice or garnish.

Sometimes a sweetpotato unit will taste "earthy". This taste is often the result of growing conditions and is affected by insufficient cooking. Any "earthy" tasting unit fails the requirements for "good flavor and odor." If the "earthy" unit is only slightly undesirable, consider it "reasonably good flavor." If it is objectionable, consider the sample unit Substandard.

"Off-flavor", but still edible, sample units are considered Substandard.

SCORING BLEMISHES

Blemished units are classified as an insignificant blemish, materially blemished, or seriously blemished. A slight imperfection, scar, discoloration, etc., that is not readily noticeable is considered an insignificant blemish. However, a readily noticeable blemish that either materially or seriously affects the appearance or edibility of the product must be scored accordingly. Pathological or insect injury that materially affects the appearance or edibility of the unit is scored as a "materially blemished unit." Pathological or insect injury that seriously affects the appearance or edibility is scored as a "seriously blemished unit." Insignificant blemished are not

scorable unless they are so numerous either singly or in conjunction with other defects, that the overall appearance is adversely affected.

SUGGESTED ORDER OF GRADING A SAMPLE UNIT

WHOLE STYLE

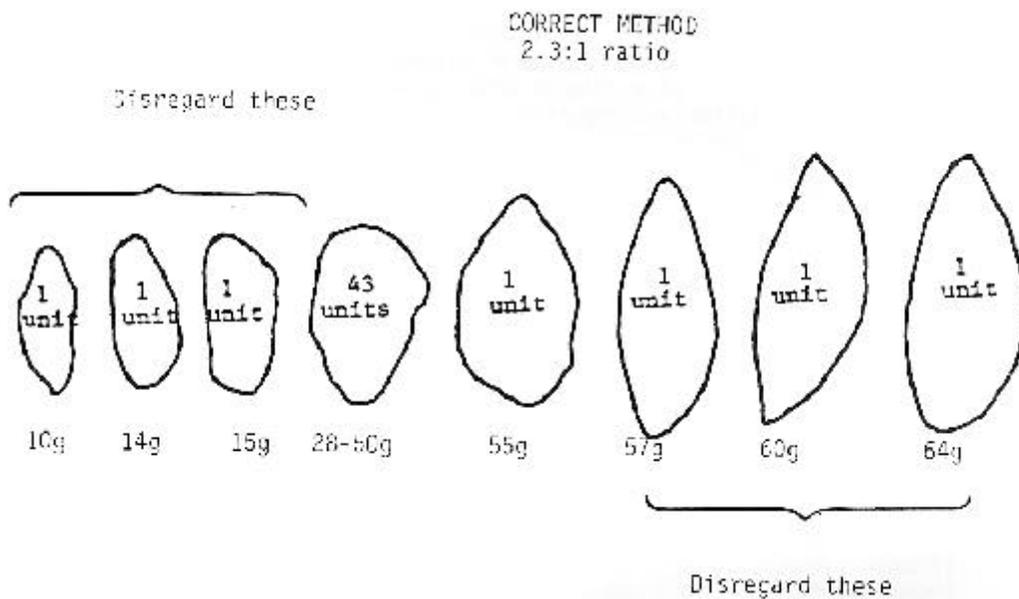
1. After the non-quality factors have been evaluated, evaluate and grade the sample unit(s) on a "container-by-container" basis. (Also see Step 14.)
2. Reassemble any split or mechanically damaged units. Count each reassembled whole unit as a single unit.
3. Arrange all of the whole units, placing them in order of size from the largest to the smallest or vice versa.
4. Evaluate the color of the individual sweetpotato units. Ignore blemished areas for purposes of color evaluation.
 - a. Good color - the units are typically bright, characteristic of either the yellow or golden varietal type, except that 5% or 1 unit, whichever is greater, of yellow is allowed in golden and vice versa. There may be moderate variation within the units of a single color type. The units must be free of oxidation and greenness.
 - b. Reasonably good color - the units may be slightly dull. Both golden and yellow varieties may be present but not to the extent that the appearance is seriously affected. There may be slight oxidation and slight greenness present.
 - c. Assign 27 to 30 scorepoints to sweetpotatoes with good color or 24 to 26 scorepoints to sweetpotatoes with reasonably good color. Some processors want to know the reason(s) for assigning specific scorepoints to a quality factor. If this is the case, make a notation directly over the scorepoints. (See Attachment 2 for abbreviations.)

FACTORS	SCORE POINTS				
COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (SStd) 0-23	28	29	28

5. Evaluate the canned sweetpotatoes for uniformity of size and assign scorepoints using the following procedure:
 - a. Select the 95 percent most uniform units, by count, that can be considered essentially whole. Since you have already arranged them as to size, you may segregate the 5 percent least uniform and set them aside. The 5 percent least uniform can be selected from either end of the size range or from both ends. In most situations, selecting 5 percent

from the smaller end will provide the 95 percent most uniform units. Be sure to use the method that does disregard the 5 percent least uniform units.

CORRECT METHOD
2.3:1 RATIO



INCORRECT METHOD
5.50:1 ratio

- b. Do not score chips or pieces 5 grams or less under uniformity of size. Score them later under character (See Step II)
- c. Weigh the largest and the smallest of the 95 percent most uniform units on a gram scale and divide the weight of the smallest unit not the weight of the largest unit to determine the ratio.

Example: $\frac{64.0 \text{ g}}{28.0 \text{ g}} = 2.3 \text{ to } 1$

- d. Refer to the following chart to assign scorepoints for uniformity of size:

Canned Sweetpotatoes
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SIZE	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (C) 0-15	2.3 19	3.0 18	2.7 18
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6. Examine the sample unit for extraneous vegetable material. Count the number of pieces of EVM. Refer to Table III in the standards for allowances in Grade A and B.
7. Examine all the units for total blemishes including seriously blemished. Refer to Table III for allowances in Grade A and B.
8. Examine the sample unit for traces of sand and grit. None is allowed in Grade A which affect the edibility of the product. A slight amount of sand or grit is allowed in Grade B, but not to the extent that it affects the edibility more than slightly. The best way to test for sand or grit is to taste any suspect units. Excessive or coarse sand is Class 3 foreign material. See File Code 172-A-1 for further sampling procedures and instructions.
9. Check to see if the defects such as secondary rootlets, and peel, etc., are within the allowances of Table III. Practically free from tough fibrous ends means that less than 15 percent of the units in the sample unit have tough fibrous ends and that less than five (5) percent of the units in the sample average have tough fibrous ends. Look at the TOTAL DEFECTS before assigning the scorepoints. Insignificant imperfections are not scorable unless they are so numerous as to affect the overall appearance of the product.

NOTE: Make a notation directly over the scorepoints indicating the reason(s) for the assigned scorepoints. In this example, 2 seriously blemished units are noted.

ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (C) 0-23	28	^{2SB} 24	27
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10. Examine the units for texture and tenderness (character). If the packing medium is a slurry, there is evidence of poor character.

NOTE: Sweetpotato units with internal tough fibers which are inedible (form a stringy ball of fiber in your mouth) are scored as internal tough or coarse fibers under character.

11. Count the very soft, very firm, crumbly, and mushy units. Also count the units which are tough or have coarse fibers. Less than ten (10) percent by count of chips and pieces are considered insignificant when evaluating character. When chips and pieces exceed the ten percent tolerance they are scorable under character in relation to their effect on the overall appearance of the sample unit.

Example: A Sample unit with 30 units can have up to 3 pieces smaller than 5 grams without affecting the score for character.

NOTE: Make a notation directly over the scorepoints for character indicating the reason(s) for the assigned scorepoints. In this example, 2 units with tough fiber and 2 crumbly units are noted.

ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (SStd) 0-23	28	2SB 24	27
CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	18	2CR 2TIF 16	19

12. Total the scorepoints for the quality factors.
13. Taste and Smell the sample unit for flavor and odor. Assign the grade for flavor and odor as well as the grade overall for the sample unit.

The completed scoresheet should resemble this example:

FACTORS		SCORE POINTS			
COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	28	29	28
SIZE OR CONSISTENCY	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 <u>3/</u> (SStd) 0-15 <u>2/</u> or <u>3/</u>	2.3 19	3.0 18	2.7 18
ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	28	2SB 24	27
CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	18	2CR 2TIF 16	19
TOTAL SCORE	100		93	87	92
FLAVOR AND ODOR	A - "good", B - "reasonably good", SStd - "off"		A	A	A
GRADE			A	B	A

1/ Indicates limiting rule

2/ Indicates partial limiting rule for size only.

3/ Indicates limiting rule for consistency only

14. Under in-Plant Inspection, you have the option to draw line checks before the product reaches the cooker. The line check can be drawn for determining uniformity of size and to evaluate defects. If line checks are drawn, the recommended sample unit size is 1000 grams.

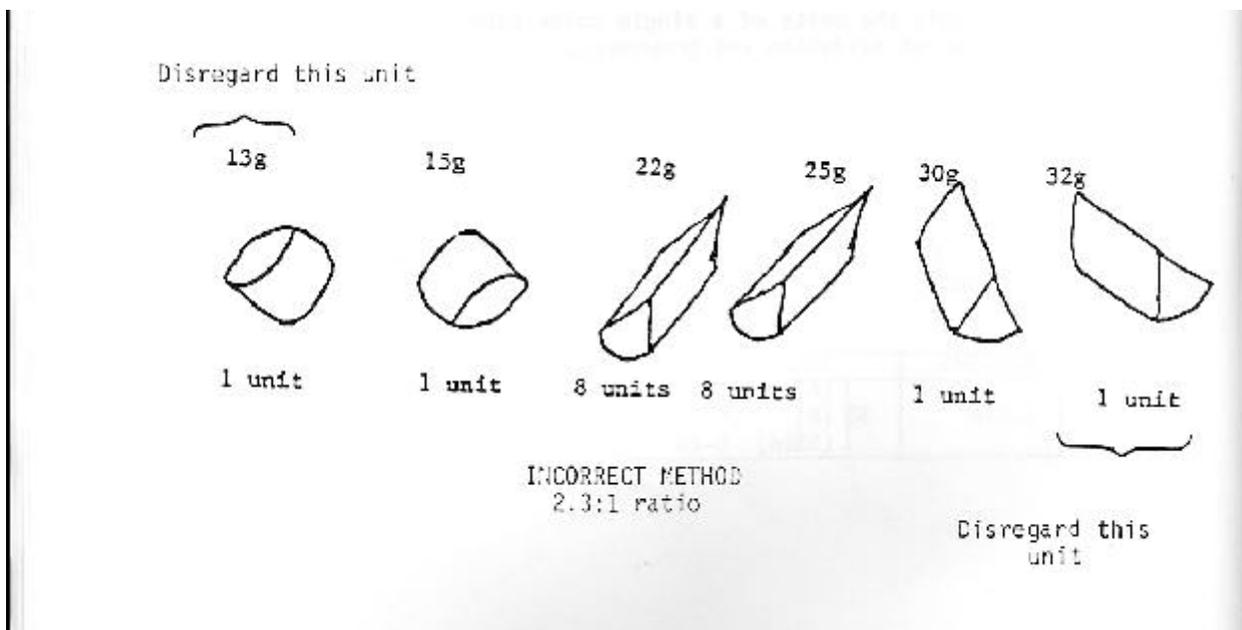
STYLES OTHER THAN MASHED OR WHOLE

1. After the non-quality factors have been evaluated, evaluate and grade the sample unit(s) on a "container-by-container" basis (Also see Step 14.)
2. Reassemble any split or mechanically damaged units. Count each reassembled unit as a single unit.
3. Arrange all of the units, placing them in order of size from the largest to the smallest or vice versa.
4. Evaluate the color of the individual units. Ignore blemished areas for purposes of color evaluation. The vacuum pack may lack the luster that would be attributed to the liquid in regular pack.
 - a. Good color - the units are typically bright, characteristic of either the yellow or golden varietal type, except that 5% or 1 unit, whichever is greater, of yellow is allowed in golden and vice versa. There may be moderate variation within the units of a single color type. The units must be free of oxidation and greenness.
 - b. Reasonably good color - the units may be slightly dull. both golden and yellow varieties may be present but not to the extent that the appearance is seriously affected. There may be slight oxidation and slight greenness present.
 - c. Assign 27 to 30 scorepoints to sweetpotatoes with good color or 24 to 26 scorepoints to sweetpotatoes with reasonably good color.

COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (SStd) 0-23	28	29	28
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5. Evaluate the canned sweetpotatoes for uniformity of size and assign scorepoints using the following procedure:
- a: Select the 95 percent most uniform units, by count. since you have already arranged them as to size, you may segregate the 5 percent least uniform and set them aside. The 5 percent least uniform can be selected from either end of the size range or from both ends. In most situations, selecting 5 percent from the smaller end will provide the 95 percent most uniform units. Be sure to use the method that does disregard the 5 percent least uniform units.

CORRECT METHOD
2.1:1 ratio



- b. Do not score chips or pieces 5 grams or less under uniformity of size. Score them later under character (See Step 11).
- c. Weigh the largest and the smallest of the 95% most uniform units on a gram scale and divide the weight of the smallest unit into the weight of the largest unit to determine the ratio.

Example: $\frac{32.0 \text{ g}}{15.0 \text{ g}} = 2.2:1$

- d. Refer to the following chart to assign scorepoints for uniformity of size:

Canned Sweetpotatoes
May 1985

<u>Size ratio</u>	<u>Scorepoints</u>
1.0:1 thru 1.6:1	20
1.7:1 thru 2.3:1	19
2.4:1 thru 3.0:1	18
3.1:1 thru 3.5:1	17
3.6:1 thru 4.0:1	16
4.1:1 or more	0-15

NOTE: Make a notation of the ratio directly over the scorepoints for size indicating the reason for the assigned scorepoints.

SIZE	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	2.1	3.0	2.7
			19	18	18

6. Examine the sample unit for extraneous vegetable material. Count the number of pieces of EVM. Refer to Table III for allowances in Grade A and B.
7. Examine all the units for total blemished including seriously blemished. Refer to Table III for allowance in Grade A and B.
8. Examine the sample unit for traces of sand and grit. None is allowed in Grade A which affects the edibility of the product. A slight amount of sand or grit is allowed in Grade B, but not to the extent that it affects the edibility more than slightly. the best way to test for sand or grit is to taste any suspect units. Excessive or coarse sand is Class 3 foreign material. See File Code 172-A-1 for further sampling procedures and instructions.

9. Check to see if the defects such as secondary rootlets, and peel, etc., are within the allowances of Table III. Practically free from tough fibrous ends means that less than 15 percent of the units in the sample unit have tough fibrous ends and that less than five (5) percent of the units in the sample average have tough fibrous ends. Look at the TOTAL DEFECTS before assigning the scorepoints. Insignificant imperfections are not scoreable unless they are so numerous as to affect the overall appearance of the product.

NOTE: Make a notation directly over the scorepoints indicating the reason for the assigned scorepoints. In this example, 2 seriously blemished units are noted.

ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (C) 0-23	28	2SB 24	27
--------------------	----	------------------------------------	----	-----------	----

10. Examine the units for texture and tenderness (character). Check to see if the units meet the allowances in Table III for character. If the packing liquid is a slurry, there is evidence of poor character.
11. Count the very soft, very firm, crumbly, and mushy units. Also count the units which are tough or have coarse fibers. Less than ten (10) percent by count of chips and pieces are considered insignificant when evaluating character. When chips and pieces exceed the ten percent tolerance they are scorable under character in relation to their effect on the overall appearance of the sample unit.

Example: A sample unit with 30 units can have up to 3 pieces smaller than 5 grams without affecting the score for character.

NOTE: Sweetpotato units with internal tough fibers which are inedible (form a stringy ball of fiber in your mouth) are scored as internal tough or coarse fibers under character.

NOTE: Make a notation directly over the scorepoints for character indicating the reason(s) for the assigned scorepoints. In this example, 2 units with tough fiber and 2 crumbly units are noted.

CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (C) 0-15	18	2CR 2TIF 16	19
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12. Total the scorepoints for the quality factors.
13. Taste and smell the sample unit. Assign the grade for flavor and odor as well as the overall grade for the sample unit.

The completed scoresheet should resemble this example:

FACTORS		SCORE POINTS			
COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	28	29	28
SIZE OR CONSISTENCY	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 <u>3/</u> (SStd) 0-15 <u>2/</u> or <u>3/</u>	2.3 19	3.0 18	2.7 18
ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	28	2SB 24	27
CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	18	2CR 2TIF 16	19
TOTAL SCORE	100		93	87	92
FLAVOR AND ODOR	A - "good", B-"reasonably good, SStd - "off"		A	A	A
GRADE			A	B	A

- 1/ Indicates limiting rule.
- 2/ Indicates partial limiting rule for size only.
- 3/ Indicates limiting rule for consistency only.

14. Under In-Plant Inspection, you have the option to draw line checks before the product reaches the cooker. the line checks can be drawn for determining uniformity of size and to evaluate defects. If line checks are drawn, the recommended sample unit size is 1000 grams.

MASHED STYLE (Solid-Pack)

1. After the nonquality factors have been evaluated, evaluate and grade the sample unit(s) on a "container-by-container" basis.
2. Invert the opened container and set it on a large white shallow pan to examine consistency. Slowly lift the container away from the shallow pan. Have the timer set for two minutes. After 2 minutes look at the separation of free liquid.
3. Refer to the table below and examine the sample unit for dryness, firmness, flow characteristics and separation of free liquid.

CONSISTENCY

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS	
Grade A:	Retains the approximate shape of the container and is not dry. May show slight settling and slight separation of free liquid. <u>1/</u>
Grade B:	Soft and fails to retain the approximate shape of the container but may not be free flowing and may show moderate separation of free liquid. <u>1/</u>
or	
Noticeably firm but not very dry, hard, or rubbery.	

- 1/ Consider the size of the container. Mass will influence the amount of free liquid.

4. Assign the scorepoints for consistency of the sample unit.

Example:

COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (SStd) 0-23			
CONSISTENCY	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	18	19	19

5. Cut a wedge (a cross section approximately 1/5 of the side of the cylindrical shape: from the center to the outer edge of the mass. Gently remove the wedge to examine internal color.
6. Evaluate the color of the sample unit mass. The color should be bright and typical of either varietal color type with no sign of greenness or oxidation for Grade A. If the sample unit mass color exceeds moderate variation, or has slight oxidation or greenness, grade it Grade B. Make a notation over color score if sample is being downgraded (See Attachment No. 2).

Example:

COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (SStd) 0-23	28	29	OX G 25
CONSISTENCY	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (SStd) 0-15	18	19	19

7. Examine the sweetpotato mass for defects taking a spatula or knife to cut into the mass. Look for dark specks. Subjectively assign scorepoints for defects in the mass.

ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 (C) 0-23	27	29	DKS 27
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8. Refer to the definition for good character for solid-pack and Table IV in the U.S. standards to determine character.

9. Look at the texture closely. Use the spatula or knife to spread the mass.

Grade A - smooth texture; free from tough or coarse fibers.

Grade B - slightly grainy; some tough or coarse fibers.

Substandard - Fails Grade B.

10. Assign score points for character on the scoresheet. Example:

CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 (C) 0-15	20	19	18
-----------	----	------------------------------------	----	----	----

11. Total the scorepoints for the quality factors.

12. Taste and smell the sample unit mass. Assign the grade for flavor and odor as well as the overall grade for the sample unit.

The completed scoresheet should resemble this example:

FACTORS		SCORE POINTS			
COLOR	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	28	29	OX G 25
SIZE OR CONSISTENCY	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 <u>3/</u> (SStd) 0-15 <u>2/</u> or <u>3/</u>	18	19	19
ABSENCE OF DEFECTS	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 24-26 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-23 <u>1/</u>	27	29	DKS 27
CHARACTER	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 16-17 <u>1/</u> (SStd) 0-15 <u>1/</u>	20	19	18
TOTAL SCORE	100		93	96	89
FLAVOR AND ODOR	A - "good", B-"reasonably good, SStd - "off"		A	A	A
GRADE			A	A	B

- 1/ Indicates limiting rule.
- 2/ Indicates partial limiting rule for size only.
- 3/ Indicates limiting rule for consistency only.

SCORESHEET

Size and kind of container
 Container marks or identification
 Label
 Net weight (ounces)
 Vacuum (inches)
 Drained weight (ounces)
 Brix measurement (sirup, regular pack only)
 Sirup designation (light, heavy, extra heavy)
 Color (yellow, golden, mixed)
 Type of pack (regular, vacuum, solid)
 Style (whole, halves, etc.)
 Count

FACTORS		SCORE POINTS		
Color	30	A		27-30
		B	1/	24-26
		Sstd	1/	0-23
Size or Consistency	20	A		18-20
		B	3/	16-17
		Sstd	2/ or 3/	0-15
Defects	30	A		27-30
		B	1/	24-26
		Sstd	1/	0-23
Character	20	A		18-20
		B	1/	16-17
		Sstd	1/	0-15
Total score	<u>100</u>			
Flavor and odor (A-“good”; B- “reasonably good”; Sstd- “off” Grade				

- 1/ Indicates limiting rule.
2/ Indicates partial limiting rule for size only.
3/ Indicates limiting rule for consistency only.

Appendix

ATTACHMENT No. 1

Photo Number

1. almost whole
2. whole
3. almost whole
4. almost whole
5. almost whole
6. almost whole
7. almost whole
8. piece (approaching almost whole)
9. piece
10. piece
11. whole
12. piece
13. almost whole
14. piece (approaching almost whole)
15. whole (approaching almost whole)
16. almost whole
17. almost whole
18. almost whole
19. whole
20. almost whole
21. almost whole (approaching piece)
22. piece
23. almost whole
24. (style) whole

To determine almost whole, the sweetpotato unit should resemble at least 2/3's of an apparent whole sweetpotato. Any unit which appears to be less than 2/3's of a whole potato can be considered as a cut or piece.



1 Almost whole



2 Whole



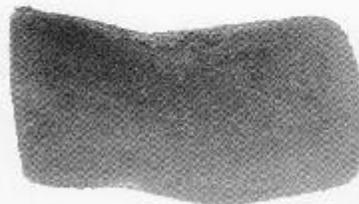
3 Almost whole



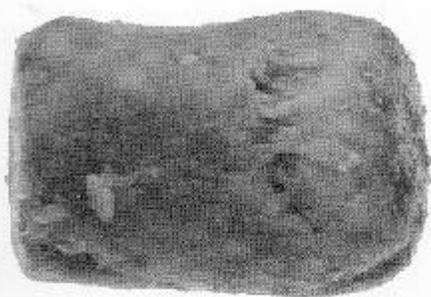
4 Almost whole



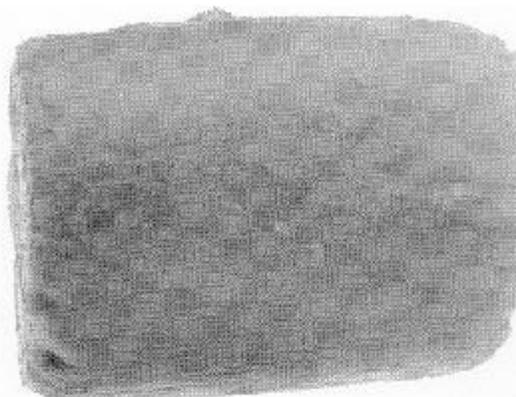
5 Almost whole



6 Almost whole



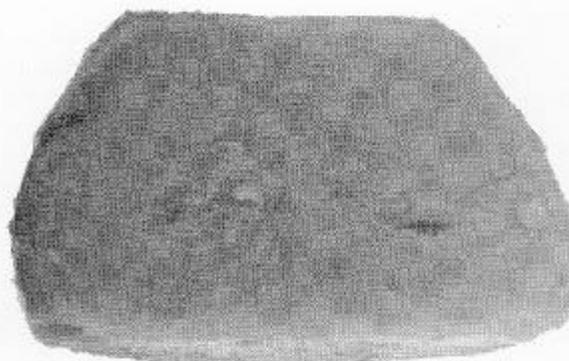
7 Almost whole



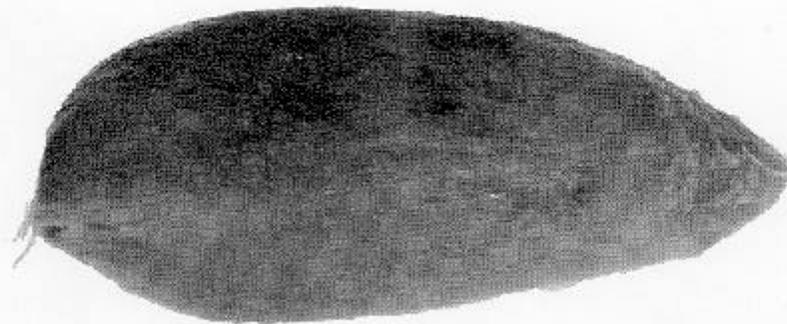
8 Piece



9 Piece



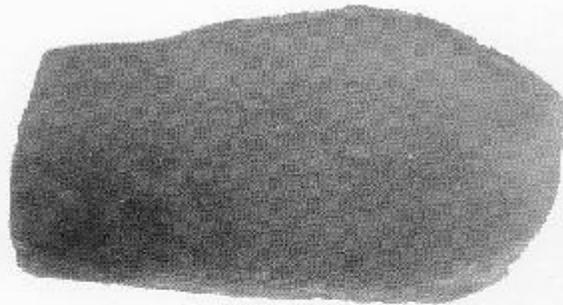
10 Piece



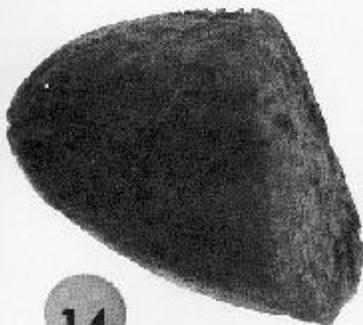
11 Whole



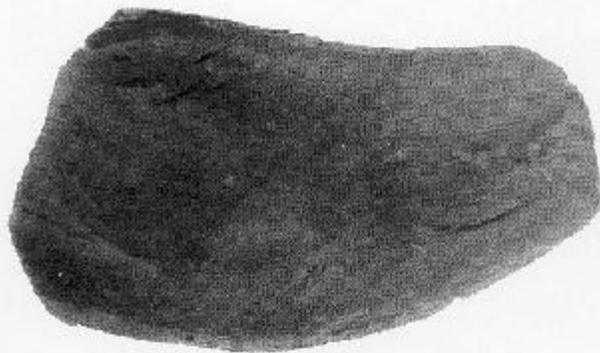
12 Piece



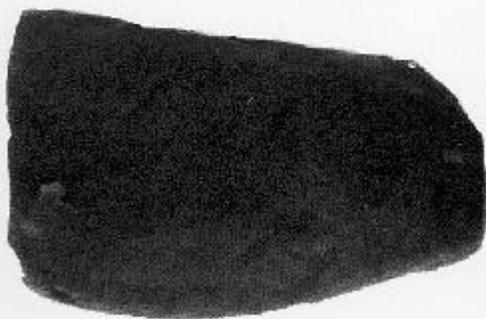
13 Almost whole



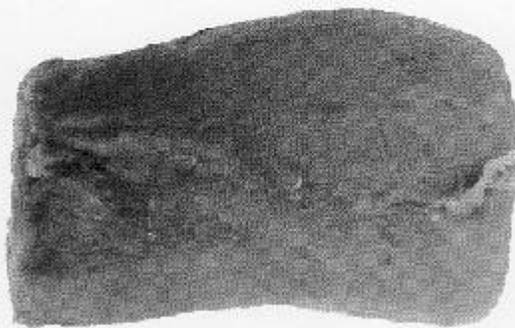
14 Piece



15 Whole



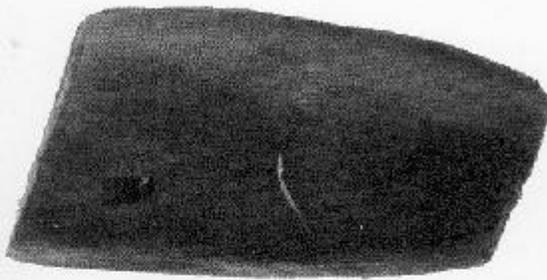
16 Almost whole



17 Almost whole

(Style) Whole

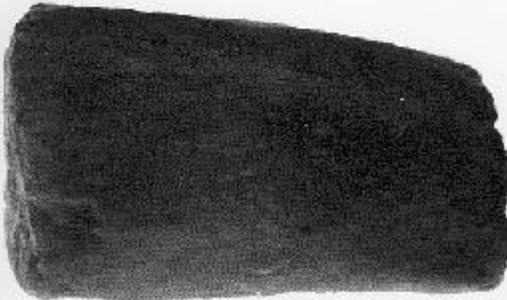




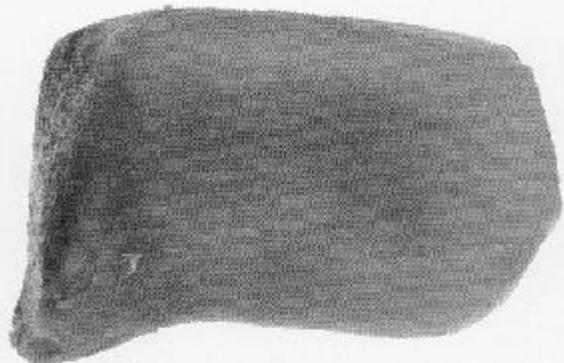
18 Almost whole



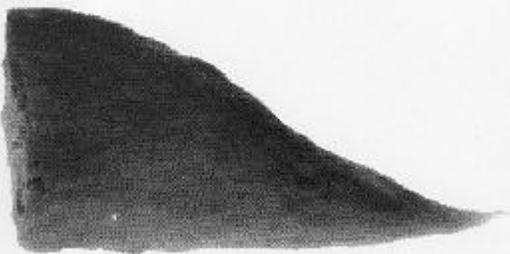
19 Whole



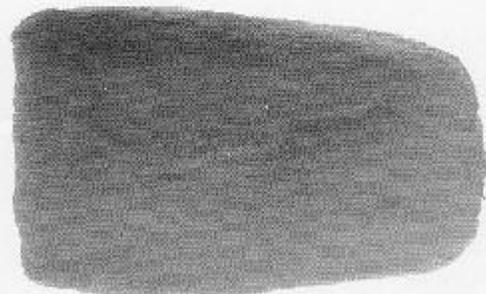
20 Almost whole



21 Almost whole



22 Piece



23 Almost whole

ATTACHMENT No. 2

Standard Abbreviations for Scoresheets

Color:

White potato - W
Yellow potato - Y
Variation - V
Oxidation - OX
Dull - D
Greenish Cast - G

Size:

First (Prime number of ratio to nearest tenths
example: 4.7 = 4.7: 1 [eliminate to one (:1)]
Different shapes - DS

Defects:

Secondary Rootlet - SR
Blemished- B
Serious Blemish - SB
Tough External Fibers - TEF
Peel - P
Mechanically damaged unit - MDU
Pitted - PT
Sand or Grit -SG
Harmless Plant Material - HPM
Pathological Injury - PI
Insect Injury - II
Dark specks - DKS

Character:

Crumbly -CR
Mushy - M
Chips - C
Very soft - VS
Very firm - VF
Tough Internal Fiber - TIF
Packing liquid is a slurry - SL

The abbreviation by itself would represent one sweetpotato unit in a sample unit; if there is more than one, the abbreviation would be preceded by a number of units effected. (Ex. 3 crumbly units - 3CR).