

Commodity Specification

Bulk Products for Further Processing

August 2012

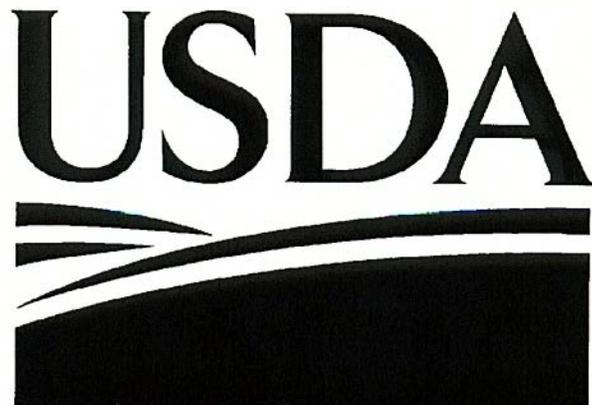


Table of Contents

I. GENERAL	1
A. U.S. Standards.....	1
B. Exceptions to U.S. Standards.....	1
C. Product Origin.....	1
D. Kosher Products	2
E. Packing Season	2
F. Containers and Packing.....	2
G. Palletization Requirements	2
H. Prerequisites	3
II. INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY SPECIFICATIONS	3
A. Fresh Potatoes for Dehydration	3
B. Potatoes for Processing.....	4
C. Sweet Potatoes for Processing	5
D. Tomatoes for Processing.....	5
III. INSPECTION AND CHECK-LOADING	6
A. Requirements (Products for Processing).....	6
B. Procedures.....	6
IV. FAILURE TO MEET SPECIFICATIONS	7

I. General

A. U.S. Standards

All products (product/commodity) produced under this Commodity Specification must meet the requirements specified in the applicable United States Standards for Grades (U.S. Standards) or Commercial Item Description (CID) effective on the date of the Solicitation/Invitation for Bid (IFB). The U.S. Standards and CIDs are published separately and are incorporated herein and made a part of this Commodity Specification.

B. Exceptions to U.S. Standards

Additional exceptions may be specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. Any exceptions contained in the applicable Solicitation/IFB shall have precedence over the requirements contained herein, for that Solicitation/IFB only.

C. Product Origin

1. Commodities delivered pursuant to this Commodity Specification shall have originated from crops that have been 100 percent grown, processed, and packed in the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, (hereinafter referred to as the United States). See Section I.E. of the Master Solicitation.
2. If the contractor handles any commodity originating from sources other than the United States, the contractor must have a written plan to segregate the commodity. This segregation plan will include an identification and record system for all commodities to ensure they are completely segregated and cannot be used to fulfill purchase orders awarded by USDA. Such segregation plan must be made available, within 10 days of purchase order award, to representatives of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).
3. The contractor must maintain positive written documentation records evidencing 100 percent domestic origin to the grower level. Contractors must also ensure that the documentation provided by any subcontractors demonstrates the same level of traceability. The burden of proof of compliance is on the contractor.

Documentation may include load or warehouse storage receipts for raw product (i.e., bin tags), product blend (formulation) records, product coding explanations, finished product warehousing records, shipping or payment records, or other documentation or evidence that clearly establishes the product's domestic origin.

4. Contractors must provide the domestic origin certification and supporting documentation records to representatives of the AMS Fruit and Vegetable Program, Processed Products Division (USDA Inspector) when requesting inspection service. USDA Inspectors will select and review at least one code for each purchase order to determine compliance with the Agency's domestic origin requirements.

5. Such records must be available for review by the Government in accordance with FAR 52.214-26. In the event of an audit, AMS auditors will examine as many codes as is necessary to verify compliance.
6. Self-certifications by contractors and subcontractors will not be accepted.
7. Failure to observe this requirement may lead to suspension or debarment, purchase order termination, and penalties at Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code concerning falsification of information.

D. Kosher Products

Occasionally, USDA solicits offers to sell KOSHER products. Such products are identified on the solicitation with the letter “K” incorporated into the WBSCM material descriptions. Vendors must comply with the applicable dietary (KOSHER) laws as established by the “613 COUNCIL OF KASHRUTH” in the production of these commodity products. Vendors must not bid on these purchase units unless they can be properly certified.

Vendors receiving purchase order items identified as “KOSHER” must contact the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York (BJENY) at telephone 646-472-5365 prior to manufacturing the commodity product to arrange for certification of compliance with the applicable dietary (kosher) laws.

E. Packing Season

All products must be from the current packing season/crop year, unless otherwise specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

F. Containers and Packing

1. The product delivered to USDA shall be packed in new, good quality cartons, so constructed as to ensure acceptance by common carrier or other carrier for safe transportation for domestic shipment. These cartons shall be of the same dimensions as those used in normal commercial transaction. These packing requirements provide that pack shall be at least fairly well filled. The tolerances applicable under such packing requirements shall apply.
2. The containers and case markings shall meet the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42). In addition to any other commercial markings, each carton shall show the grower’s or shipper’s name and address, variety, grade (state grade may be shown if in compliance with paragraph II, and size by count.

G. Palletization Requirements

1. Pallets

Products must be on 48 X 40 inch, non-reversible, flush stringer, and partial four-way entry. New pallets must be good quality wood. Used pallets must be No.1 hardwood or its equivalent in new softwood. Broken or damaged pallets are unacceptable. If pallet exchange is desired, the contractor shall arrange for pallet exchange with consignees. USDA is in no way responsible for arrangement of pallet exchange.

2. Unitization

Each delivery unit must be unitized. Shipping cases must be stacked and secured from top to bottom, so that each container and layer of containers becomes an integral part of the pallet. Either stretch wrapping with plastic film or “lock ‘n pop” is acceptable. The palletized product must be loaded in the conveyance in such a way that will prevent shifting and damage to the containers of product.

H. Prerequisites

1. All vendors and/or suppliers providing fresh vegetables shall undergo a good agricultural practices and good handling practices audit of their operations. The audit must be conducted by the USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Program, Fresh Products Division or licensed Federal-State auditors providing services under a cooperative agreement with USDA oversight. The audit conducted may be either the USDA Good Agricultural Practices & Good Handling Practices (GAP&GHP) audit, the Produce GAPs Harmonized Food Safety Audit, or the Tomato Audit Protocol audit, whichever is applicable to the commodity being purchased.
2. The audit must cover all parts of the operation which are applicable to the commodity being purchased. For example, a tomato purchase would require an audit of the fields, packing house, and storage facilities.
3. A copy of the three acceptable audit standards is available on the USDA website at www.ams.usda.gov/gapghp, or from your local USDA or Federal-State inspection office. A listing of USDA and Federal-State inspection offices are also available on the website listed above.

II. Individual Commodity Specifications

A. Fresh Potatoes for Dehydration

1. Grade- U.S. No. 2 or better.
2. Pack – Bulk
3. Crop Year - The potatoes shall be from the current packing season/crop year.

4. Size – Whole potatoes shall be specified not less than 1 ½ inches in diameter in accordance with the U.S Standards for Grades of Potatoes for Processing (usable pieces not less than 4 ounces in weight).
5. Varieties - Shepody, Ranger, Umatilla, Alturas, Norkotah, Atlantic, Goldrush, Snowden, Pike, Reba, Marcy, Millenium, Superior, Freedom, and Russett Burbank. Varieties cannot be mixed.
6. Specific Gravity Specification - All varieties 1.0723 (19.1% solids) or higher.
7. Defects, Serious Damage and Foreign Material:
 - a. No lot should be less than 40% bruise-free.
 - b. The method of calculating the term “bruise-free” shall be evaluated for bruising by the Federal or Federal-State Inspector.
 - c. Any load of potatoes found to contain broken glass or foreign substance, which may be harmful to health or adulterates the finished product, will be rejected.
 - d. Any load of potatoes will be rejected if potatoes have more than 10% dry rot.

B. Potatoes for Processing

1. Grade- U.S. No. 2 or better.
2. Pack – Bulk
3. Crop Year - The potatoes shall be from the current packing season/crop year.
4. Size - Whole potatoes shall be specified not less than 1 1/2 inches in diameter (usable pieces not less than 4 ounces in weight). There will be a 3% tolerance for potatoes less than 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Lots shall not contain less than 42% over 6 ounces.
5. Varieties - Shepody, Ranger, Umatilla, Alturas and Russett Burbank. Varieties cannot be mixed.
6. Sugar or sugar end content Criteria - No more than 15 % of the potatoes (plugs or slices taken from the sample) are Color or darker in the USDA Color Chart or comparable scale when fried in 375 degree (Fahrenheit) oil for 2 minutes 30 seconds or in 350 degree (Fahrenheit) oil for 3 minutes.

The sample for frying to determine color may be prepared by one of the following methods:

- a. 3/8” X 3/8” center cut strip
- b. ¾ inch diameter area in the center of the cut face of a ¼ inch slice made by a transverse cut through the tuber at ½ inch from the stem
- c. 2 ½ inch disc cut from a 5/16 inch slice taken from the middle of 10 potatoes

Lots delivered directly from the field may have the color testing requirements waived at the discretion of the receiver.

7. Specific Gravity Specification: - All varieties 1.075 or higher
8. Defects, Serious Damage and Foreign Material:
 - a. No lot should be less than 40% bruise-free. The method of calculating the term “bruise-free” shall be evaluated for bruising by the Federal or Federal-State Inspector.
 - b. Any load of potatoes found to contain broken glass or foreign substance, which may be harmful to health or adulterates the finish product, will be rejected.
 - c. Any load of potatoes showing evidence of field frost or freeze will be rejected.
 - d. Any load, lot or portion of lot of potatoes delivered may be rejected if potatoes have more any combination of insects and nematode cullage that exceeds 10%.

C. Sweet Potatoes for Processing

1. Grade - U.S. No. 2 or better (Sweet Potatoes for Dicing or Pulping.)
2. Cured – Applicant warrants sweet potatoes are cured according to standard curing procedures.
3. Pack – Bulk
4. Crop Year – The sweet potatoes shall be from the current packing season/crop year.
5. Size – Whole sweet potatoes shall be specified not less than 1 3/4 inches to 8 inches in diameter. Maximum diameter tuber must pass freely through an 8 inch diameter tube.
6. Varieties – Beauregard or Covington. Varieties cannot be mixed.
7. Defects, Serious Damage, and Foreign Material:
 - a. Sweet potatoes should be run on sizing and dirt removal belt prior to loading.
 - b. Any load of sweet potatoes found to contain broken glass or foreign substance, which may be harmful to health or adulterates the finished product, will be rejected.

D. Tomatoes for Processing

1. Pack-Bulk
2. Color - 28 Maximum

Method - Agtron measurement of a composite raw juice sample extracted from tomatoes representative of the lot or an equivalent method to determine (“fairly well colored” as defined in the United States Standards for Grades of Tomatoes for Processing).

3. Worm damage - 2% maximum
Method - weigh scoreable Tomatoes (those with worm injury or worms attached).
4. Mold, decay and/or fungus – 8% maximum.
Method – weigh scoreable tomatoes.
5. Green – 4% maximum.
Method – weigh scoreable tomatoes (those with no visible red color on surface).
6. Extraneous material – 4% maximum
Method – weigh extraneous material (i.e., dirt, loose stems, vines, stones, trash, etc.)
7. Tomatoes shall be free from any other defect or combination of defects that would result in the loss of more than 20% of the weight of an individual tomato when removed in the preparation for processing.
8. Loading tolerance of product – 40,000 lbs. net minimum.

The grade requirements referred herein are defined in the United States Standards for Grades of Tomatoes for Processing (Category B), effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

III. Inspection and Check-Loading

A. Requirements (Products for Processing)

1. Representatives of the AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Program, Fresh Products Division (USDA Inspector) must perform the inspection (see section IX. A of the Master Solicitation). The cost of inspection, samples taken for inspection, mailing of review samples submitted for evaluation, and any chemical analysis required for testing shall be for the account of the Contractor.
2. USDA inspection of fresh vegetables must be performed at destination. The count (number) of packages shall be certified by Federal or Federal-State Inspection Service (see section IX. A of the Master Solicitation). The acceptability of the quality and packing of the product must be evidenced by certificates issued by the USDA Inspector.
3. Representative sample units will be graded according to the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Fresh Vegetables and Related Products (7 C.F.R. part 51), and United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 C.F.R. part 42.140), effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

B. Procedures

The Contractor must give the USDA Inspector at least 72 hours advance notice when scheduling inspection service.

Contractors are encouraged to submit requests for inspection in writing via form FV-237 (Record of Request for Inspection or Re-inspection of Food Products) with verifiable receipt notice, such as fax log, to alleviate possible miscommunication. Requests can also be made electronically using the following link:

<http://eforms.ams.usda.gov/#CustomersFV>

IV. Failure to Meet Specifications

Any lot which fails applicable specifications prescribed herein will be rejected as not acceptable for delivery. If any lot fails to meet the product or packaging requirement, the Contractor may request in writing that USDA accept delivery of the lot. USDA may at its option, accept delivery, provided that the purchase price is the purchase order price less a discount, to be determined by the Contracting Officer.