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Specialty  
Crops  
Inspection  
Division

# Commodity Specification for Frozen Potato Products

September 2017

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“SCI moving forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century using technology, innovation, and old fashioned hard work”

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## **GENERAL**

### **U.S. Standards**

Frozen potato products (product/commodity) produced under this Commodity Specification must meet the requirements specified in the applicable United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes or United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet potatoes, (U.S. Standards) and/or the 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.

### **Exceptions to U.S. Standards**

Exceptions to the U.S. Standards for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) frozen potato and sweet potato product purchases are found in Section II, Individual Commodity Specifications, of this document. 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.

### **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., F. of the AMS Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurements.
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, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) when requesting inspection service. USDA

Inspectors will select and review at least one code for each contract 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/contract termination, and penalties at Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code concerning falsification of information.

### **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.

### **Packing Season**

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

### **Shipment**

Frozen potatoes must be shipped at 0 degrees F (plus or minus 10 degrees F).

### **Grade of Frozen Potatoes**

All frozen potato products must be U.S. Grade A (as defined in the U. S. Standards) unless otherwise specified in Section II, Individual Commodity Specifications, herein or the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

### **Fill of Container**

1. Contractor must meet the fill weight for the product as specified in the applicable U.S. Standards unless otherwise indicated herein.

2. The average net weight must meet the net weight as printed on the label and the Individual Commodity Specification Section II

## **PACKING, LABELS AND PACKAGING**

### **Commercial Labels and Packaging**

#### Primary Containers

1. Vendors have the option to use commercial labeling and packaging which meets all applicable FDA requirements and contains a code which allows traceability of the product in the event of a recall or they may use USDA packaging and labeling as specified in the AMS Master Solicitation.
2. The processors' own commercially acceptable "brand" labels may be used on all products unless prohibited by the Solicitation. Distributor's "brand" labels are not acceptable.
3. All products must be packed in new, commercially acceptable primary containers. Frozen potato products shall be packed only in the container size and type specified in the applicable Solicitation. The packages must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.

#### Secondary Containers (Case)

1. Primary containers shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations.
2. Case flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully sealed with tape. Tape must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.
3. Mixing and matching of USDA and commercial labeling methods will not be acceptable.
4. Two or more different commercial labels will not be acceptable within a shipping unit (truckload).

### **USDA Labels and Packaging**

#### Primary Containers (bags)

1. The product shall be packed in unmarked primary containers of commercially acceptable quality containing approximately five pounds of each product as applicable. The primary containers shall be completely sealed (tack sealing is not acceptable). Kraft paper containers without polyethylene liners are not acceptable. Commercial plastic bags are acceptable for primary containers.

2. The bags must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.

#### Secondary Containers (Case)

1. Primary containers shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. Case flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be sealed with tape. Tape must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.
2. Cases must be marked in such a manner that they contain all of the symbols, statements and information contained in Exhibit 1, "Required Markings for Shipping Containers."
3. Cases may be marked by printing or stenciling or by preprinted, self-adhesive stickers. Self-adhesive stickers must be affixed to the case in such a manner that they cannot be removed intact.
4. Exact arrangement and adherence to font size is not required. The case markings must be clearly marked, easily read, and substantially the same as specified in Exhibit 1.
5. Exhibit 2 shows an alternative placard that may be applied to a new, corrugated fiberboard case acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. This placard must be affixed to the case in such a manner that it cannot be removed intact.
6. Cases must have the recycling statement shown in Exhibit 5, "Please Recycle" Symbol and Statement or Exhibit 6, "Corrugated Recycles" Symbol and Statement.

#### **Universal Product Codes (UPC)**

Contractor UPC's are acceptable for primary containers of product shipped utilizing commercial labels and/or secondary fiberboard cases enclosing commercially labeled product.

Primary label and shipping container Universal Product Codes for USDA labeled products are listed in Exhibit 4. The contractor's UPC is not acceptable. The shipping container UPC must be marked on the case as shown in Exhibit 2.

#### **Palletization Requirements**

##### 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.**

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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.

### Unitization

Each delivery unit of frozen potatoes 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.

### **Shipment and Delivery**

#### Quantity Tolerance

Contractor will be allowed a tolerance on the final delivery of plus or minus 50 cases of **each product**, from **each shipping point** named in the purchase order.

### **INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY SPECIFICATIONS**

The commodity specifications for frozen potatoes - diced, and sweet potatoes – mashed, and cut or chunks and can be found in the Commodity Specification for Frozen Vegetables.

Only unsaturated vegetable oils containing “0 grams Trans Fats” as defined by FDA, shall be used in the processing of these products. Canola oil may be used. Hydrogenated oils shall not be used for the processing of these products.

The vendor is responsible for the product meeting the sodium content requirements for each individual commodity. Vendors must make available (when requested), a laboratory analysis report to document and verify information provided in a Nutritional Facts Panel.

The vendor is responsible for the product meeting the sodium content requirements for each individual commodity. Vendors must make available (when requested), a laboratory analysis report to document and verify information provided in a Nutritional Facts Panel.

The requirements for the products must be certified under continual **on-line grading by a USDA Inspector**.

### **Frozen French-Cut Strips**

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes.
2. Style – Strips, crinkle cut.
3. Cross Sectional Dimension – Not less than 3/8 x 3/8 inch and not more than 1/1/2 x 1/12 inches.

4. Length – Medium or longer.
5. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
6. Fry Color type – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
7. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solids percentage of 28 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 100 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Type of Pack – Institutional.
10. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
11. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds.  
  
No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
12. Oven Heating – Oven type only –The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

**Note:** Not more than 10 percent by count of units present of Frozen French-Cut Strips, except chips, may consist of small pieces, slivers, and/or irregular pieces.

### **Preformed Rounds**

Preformed Rounds shall be in accordance with the Commercial Item Description (CID), A-A-20038 - Potato Products, Preformed, Precooked, Frozen, effective at the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

1. Type of Pack – Institutional.
2. Style – Round.
3. Size and Count – Cross-sectional dimension: 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter.
4. Length – 1 to 1-1/4 inches.
5. Count – 47-54 units per pound.
6. Seasoning – Unseasoned.
7. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.

8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: CID Designation 2 - Light, to CID Designation 4 - Medium. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
10. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
11. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
12. Cooking/heating method – Oven-baked. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

Preservatives or flavor enhancers such as monosodium glutamate are **not** permitted. Not more than 15 percent by count of units present, excluding chips, may consist of irregular shaped units, small pieces, and small clusters. Clusters and chips shall be evaluated on an overall appearance basis and may no more than slightly detract from the appearance of the product.

### **Additional Quality Factors**

Definitions of these terms are contained in CID A-A- 20038, Potato Products, Preformed, Precooked, Frozen, effective at the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

1. Defects – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, except that, in addition, any mechanically damaged unit with its interior portion exposed is scored as a major defect. The allowance for defectives is contained in the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, Table 1, Institutional Type.
2. Texture – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, except that the product may contain slightly more moisture. After preparation, the product shall have an internal appearance of having individual bits and pieces of properly blanched potatoes.
3. Flavor – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes.

### **Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) Frozen Cut Potato Wedges**

IQF Frozen Cut Potato Wedges shall be prepared from mature, sound, russet potatoes which have been washed, sorted, and trimmed as necessary to assure a clean and wholesome product. The potatoes shall be cut into wedges on the lengthwise axis.

TYPE I – Water/oil blanched

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Variety – Russet type such as, but not limited to: Burbank, Shepody, Norkotah or other mealy type potatoes which meet the solids requirement.
3. Length – Medium or longer.
4. Unit size – 8 or 10 cuts per whole potato.
5. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
6. Cooking Method – Oven baked.
7. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 100 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
10. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solid percentage of 28 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
11. Type of Pack – Institutional.
12. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
13. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

TYPE II – Fat free water blanched – baked, micro waved, or roasted

1. Grade – Equivalent to U.S. Grade A.
2. Variety – Russet type such as, but not limited to: Burbank, Shepody, Norkotah or other mealy type potatoes which meet the solids requirement.
3. Length – Medium or longer.
4. Unit size – 8 or 10 cuts per whole potato.
5. Fat Free – The product shall not contain oil.

6. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: Fry Color 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used. There may be variations in surface color due to the method of cooking.
7. Optional coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 100 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Cooking Method – Oven baked.
10. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solids percentage of 19 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
11. Type of Pack – Institutional.
12. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
13. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

### **Frozen Sweet Potato Strips**

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Potatoes.
2. Variety – Any Golden variety.
3. Style – Strips
  - a. Straight cut, (WBSCM Material 101013).
  - b. Crinkle cut (or corrugated) surfaces, (WBSCM Material 110721).
4. Cross Sectional Dimension – Not less than 3/8 x 3/8 inch and not more than 1/2 inch x 1/2 inch.
5. Length – Medium or longer - fifty (50) percent or more are 2 inches in length or longer.
6. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
7. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.

8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Color – Typical golden fried sweet potato color which may vary with coatings. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
10. Small Units – Composite weight does not exceed 5 percent (5%) by weight of all units.
11. Solids Requirements – The product shall contain a minimum percentage of 25 percent solids by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
12. Type of Pack – Institutional.
13. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags or 12/2.5 pound bags or 10/3 pound bags).
14. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
15. Oven Heating – Oven-type only. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

#### **Frozen Waffle-Cut Sweet Potatoes**

1. Grade – Equivalent to U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Potatoes based on the quality factors for sliced style.
2. Variety – Any Golden variety.
3. Style – Waffle-cut, which is thick slices of potato that have corrugated surfaces cut into a criss-cross pattern by quarter turning the potato before each slide over a grater/cutter.
4. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must **not** contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
5. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
6. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
7. Color – Typical golden fried sweet potato color which may vary with coatings. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
8. Small Units – Composite weight does not exceed 5 percent (5%) by weight of all units.
9. Solids Requirements – The product shall contain a minimum percentage of 25 percent solids by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
10. Type of Pack – Institutional.

11. Pack Size – 15 pound cases (6/2.5 or 5/3 pound bags).
12. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 15 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 14.7 pounds.
13. Oven Heating – Oven-type only. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

## **INSPECTION AND CHECKLOADING**

### **Inspection**

**NOTE: USDA inspection shall be made during on-line production of the product.**

A representative of the AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) must perform the inspection and checkloading (See Section X.A of the AMS 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.**

Inspection of frozen products must be performed not more than 60 days prior to shipment. Whether each lot offered meets the product and container requirements of the contract/purchase order must be determined on the basis of representative sample units. Representative sample units will be graded according to the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Products and Related Products (7 C.F.R. Part 52), and United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 C.F.R. Part 42.140), effective on the date of the Solicitation.

### **Temperature**

All frozen foods shall be held, and stored at an air temperature of 0 degrees F, or lower. The internal product temperature shall be maintained at 0 degrees F, and at time of loading may not exceed 10 degrees F. Carrier temperature shall be determined after the product is loaded.

### **Certification**

Subject to (Section IX.A of the AMS Master Solicitation) the acceptability of the quality, weight, packaging, and checkloading of the product must be evidenced by certificates issued by the USDA Inspector.

No product shall be shipped unless the USDA Inspector informs the contractor that a designated lot is acceptable. Notice by the USDA Inspector that a designated lot scheduled for shipment does not meet requirements of the purchase order shall constitute rejection of such lot.

### **Procedures**

The contractor must give the USDA Inspector at least 7 days advance notice when scheduling inspection service. This product must be graded online. Contractors are encouraged to submit

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requests for inspection in writing with verifiable receipt notice, such as fax log, to alleviate possible miscommunication.

**Laboratory Tests**

The contractor must allow 14 days after product sampling for laboratory tests (when required) to be completed and returned.

**FAILURE TO MEET SPECIFICATIONS**

Any lot which fails applicable specifications prescribed herein will be rejected as not acceptable for delivery. If any lot of frozen potato products 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 contract/purchase order price less a discount, to be determined by the Contracting Officer.

**EXHIBITS**

**Exhibit 1—Required Markings for Non-Commercial Shipping Containers  
ALL PRINTING TO BE IN BLACK INK**

<u>BOTH SIDE PANELS</u>	<u>BOTH END PANELS</u>
PRODUCT NAME 1/ 2/	PRODUCT NAME PURCHASE ORDER NO. 3/  4/
USDA SYMBOL 5/	
KEEP FROZEN	

Product name must be printed or stenciled on a separate line in letters at least three-fourths inch high, and all other information must be in letters less than three-fourth's inch but at least three-eighths inch high. The USDA Food Symbol must be printed, stamped, or labeled and be of sufficient size to stand out prominently. Case markings must be limited to case codes and those contained in this Exhibit.

- 1/ Insert any additional product style, pack, packing media, or further definition as applicable; (i.e. Rounds, Wedges, etc.).
- 2/ Insert the size and number of packages per case, i.e. 6/5 pound bags, 30 pound bag.
- 3/ Insert the last five digits of purchase order number.
- 4/ Insert name of Packer and Packer's Address - City, State, and Zip Code. This information can be placed on the end panels or the side panels.
- 5/ Insert Universal Product Code (see Exhibit "4").

Recycle symbols and statements can be placed on bottom panels (Exhibit "5" and "6").

**Exhibit 2—Alternative Label for Shipping Containers  
(Includes all Required Information)**



**Product·Name¶**

**Style·**

**Size·Number·per·case·**

**Purchase·Order·Number·xxxxx¶**

**Packed·by:·ABC·Growers¶**

**Any·Town,·CA·**

**99999¶**

**KEEP·FROZEN¶**



1234567891012345678910¶

**Exhibit 3—Sample Alternative Label for Shipping Containers  
(Includes all Required Information)**



# Frozen Potato Rounds

6/5 lb. bags

Purchase Order Number XXXXX

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999



**KEEP FROZEN**

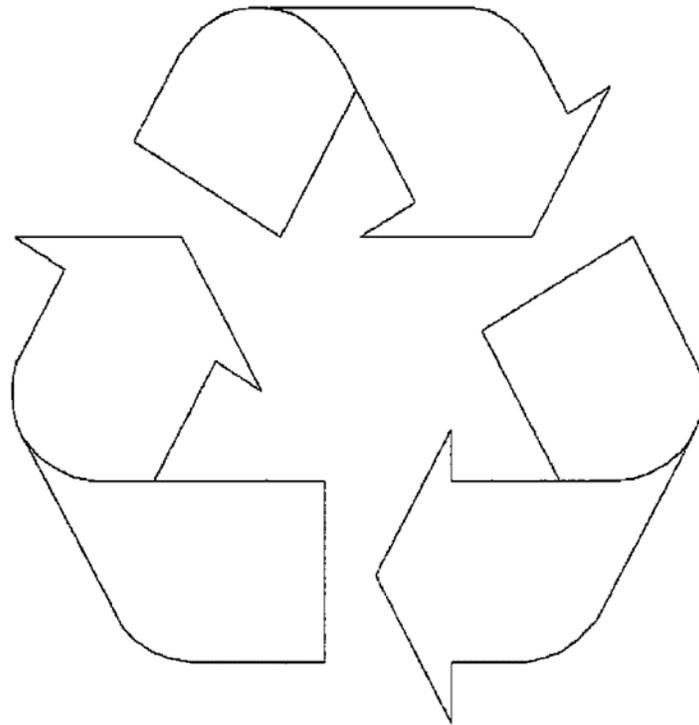


1234567891012345678910

**Exhibit 4—Universal Product Codes**

Frozen Potato Products	WBSCM Material	Primary Container	Secondary Container
Potatoes Oven Fry Pkg-6/5-LB	100357	7-15001-00357-7	1-07-15001-00357-4
Potatoes Rounds Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	100358	7-15001-00358-4	1-07-1500-100358-1
Potatoes Wedge Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	100355	7-15001-00355-3	.....1-07-15001-00355-0
Potatoes Wedge Fat Free Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	100356	7-15001-00356-0	1-07-15001-00356-7
Sweet Potato Strips Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	101013	7-15001-01013-1	1-07-15001-01013-8
Sweet Potato Crinkle Cut Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	110721	7-15001-10721-3	1-07-15001-10721-0
Sweet Potatoes Waffle Cut Frz Pkg-6/5-LB	110571	.....7-15001-10571-4	1-07-15001-10571-1

**Exhibit 5—“Please Recycle” Symbol and Statement**



**PLEASE  
RECYCLE**

**Exhibit 6—“Corrugated Recycles” Symbol and Statement**



**Corrugated  
Recycles**

**Exhibit 7—USDA Symbol**

