

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Fruit and Vegetable Programs

Fresh Products Branch

United States Standards for Grades of Peppers (Other Than Sweet Peppers)

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Grades

§51.1282 U.S. Fancy.

- "U.S. Fancy" consists of mature peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when specified as mixed varieties and/or colors), which are firm, well shaped, and free from Blossom End Rot, crushed/broken, freezing, freezing injury, hail, insects, mechanical, sunscald, decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, and from injury caused by bruising, dirt, discoloration, disease, insects, pitting, scars, shriveling, sunburn, or other means.
- (a) **Size.** Size may be specified in inches and fractions thereof in connection with the grade in terms of minimum diameter, maximum diameter, minimum length and/or maximum length, or by count.
- (b) **Color.** Color may be specified in connection with the grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of specified color.

§51.1283 U.S. No. 1.

"U.S. No. 1" consists of mature peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when specified as mixed varieties and/or colors), which are firm, fairly well shaped, and free from crushed/broken, freezing, freezing injury, sunscald and decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, and free from damage caused by Blossom End Rot, bruising, dirt,

¹ Packing of the product in conformity with the requirements of these standards shall not excuse failure to comply with the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

discoloration, disease, hail, insects, pitting, scars, shriveling, sunburn, mechanical or other means.

- (a) **Size.** Size may be specified in inches and fractions thereof in connection with the grade in terms of minimum diameter, maximum diameter, minimum length and/or maximum length, or by count.
- (b) **Color.** Color may be specified in connection with the grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of specified color.

§51.1284 U.S. No. 2.

- "U.S. No. 2" consists of mature peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when specified as mixed varieties and/or colors), which are firm, not seriously misshapen, and free from freezing, freezing injury, sunscald and decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, crushed/broken and free from serious damage caused Blossom End Rot, bruising, dirt, discoloration, disease, hail, insects, pitting, scars, shriveling, sunburn, mechanical or other means.
- (a) **Size.** Size may be specified in inches and fractions thereof in connection with the grade in terms of minimum diameter, maximum diameter, minimum length and/or maximum length, or by count.
- (b) **Color.** Color may be specified in connection with the grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of specified color.

Tolerances

§51.1285 Tolerances.

In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling in each of the foregoing grades, the following tolerances, by count, are provided as specified:

- (a) U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1 grades.
- (1) **For defects.** Not more than 10 percent of the peppers in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of these grades, but not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for peppers which are seriously damaged or affected by decay of the stems only, including therein not more than 2 percent for peppers affected by decay affecting calyxes and/or walls.
- (2) **For off-size.** Not more than 10 percent of the peppers in a lot may fail to meet the specified size.
- (b) U.S. No. 2 grade.
- (1) **For defects.** Not more than 10 percent of the peppers in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of the grade, but not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for peppers which are affected by sunscald or affected by decay of the stems only, including therein not more than 2 percent for peppers affected by decay affecting calyxes and/or walls.
- (2) **For off-size.** Not more than 10 percent of the peppers in a lot may fail to meet the specified size.

Application of Tolerances

§51.1286 Application of tolerances.

The contents of individual packages in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the

following limitations: **Provided**, that the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerances specified for the grade:

- (a) For packages which contain more than 20 peppers, and a tolerance of 10 percent or more is provided, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than one and one-half times the tolerance specified.
- (b) For packages which contain more than 20 peppers and a tolerance of less than 10 percent is provided, and for packages which contain 20 peppers or less, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than double the tolerance specified, except that at least 1 defective and 1 off-size pepper may be permitted in any package.

Definitions

§51.1287 Mature.

"Mature" means that the pepper has reached the stage of development that will withstand normal handling and shipping.

§51.1288 Similar varietal characteristics.

"Similar varietal characteristics" means that each pepper is of the same type and shape.

§51.1289 Firm.

"Firm" means that the pepper is not soft or pliable, although it may yield to slight pressure.

§51.1290 Well shaped.

"Well shaped" means that the pepper is not more than slightly curved, slightly indented or slightly misshapen for the variety.

§51.1291 Fairly well shaped.

"Fairly well shaped" means that the pepper may be more than slightly indented or curved, or is not decidedly crooked, constricted or deformed for the variety.

§51.1292 Not seriously misshapen.

"Not seriously misshapen" means that the pepper is not badly indented, crooked, constricted or otherwise badly deformed for the variety.

§51.1293 Injury.

"Injury," unless otherwise specifically defined in this section, means any defect which more than slightly detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the pepper. Any one of the following defects, or any combinations of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as injury:

- (a) Bruising when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (b) Dirt when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (c) Discoloration when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (d) Pitting when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (e) Scars when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (f) Shriveling when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.
- (g) Sunburn when aggregate area exceeds 5 percent of the surface.

§51.1294 Damage.

"Damage," unless otherwise specifically defined in this section, means any defect which materially detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the pepper. Any

one of the following defects, or any combinations of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as damage:

- (a) Blossom End Rot when aggregate area exceeds the area of a circle 3/8 inch in diameter.
- (b) Bruising when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (c) Dirt when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (d) Discoloration when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (e) Hail or mechanical when aggregate area exceeds the area of a circle 3/8 inch in diameter.
- (f) Pitting when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (g) Scars when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (h) Shriveling when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.
- (i) Sunburn when aggregate area exceeds 10 percent of the surface.

§51.1295 Serious damage.

"Serious damage," unless otherwise specifically defined in this section, means any defect which seriously detracts from the appearance or the edible or shipping quality of the pepper. Any one of the following defects, or any combinations of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as serious damage:

- (a) Blossom End Rot when aggregate area exceeds the area of a circle 3/4 inch in diameter.
- (b) Bruising when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (c) Dirt when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (d) Discoloration when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (e) Hail or mechanical when aggregate area exceeds the area of a circle 3/4 inch in diameter.
- (f) Pitting when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (g) Scars when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (h) Shriveling when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (i) Sunburn when aggregate area exceeds 15 percent of the surface.
- (i) Decay affecting stems only.

§51.1296 Diameter.

"Diameter" means the greatest dimension measured at right angles to the longitudinal axis.

§51.1297 Length.

"Length" means the greatest length measured in a straight line parallel to the longitudinal axis, excluding the stem.