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United States Standards for Grades of Canned Solid-Pack Apricots

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This is a reprint of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Solid-Pack Apricots (41 FR 15016) which have been in effect since May 12, 1976 and were updated to modify the format and to correct and align the text as originally published in the CFR.

Voluntary U.S. grade standards are issued under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which provides for the development of official U.S. grades to designate different levels of quality. These grade standards are available for use by producers, suppliers, buyers, and consumers. As in the case of other standards for grades of fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, and specialty crops these standards are designed to facilitate orderly marketing by providing a convenient basis for buying and selling, for establishing quality control programs, and for determining loan values.

The U.S. grade standards and inspection instructions for all fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, and specialty crops are available on the internet and upon request at the address below. These documents provide detailed interpretations of the grade standards and provide step-by-step procedures for grading the product.

Grade standards are issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) after careful consideration of all data and views submitted during rulemaking. The Department welcomes suggestions for improving the standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of standards and inspection instructions obtained from:

Director, Specialty Crops Inspection Division
Specialty Crops Program,
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 0240
Washington, D.C. 20250

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621-1627.

Note: Compliance with the provisions of these standards shall not excuse failure to comply with the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, or with applicable State laws and regulations.

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United States Standards for Grades of Canned Solid-Pack Apricots

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Product Description, Styles, and Grades

§52.6241 Product description.

Canned solid-pack apricots is the product represented as defined in the standards of identity for canned apricots (21 CFR 145.115(a)) issued pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and prepared in one of the styles specified in §52.6242 and is sealed in a container and before or after sealing is so processed by heat as to prevent spoilage. The food may be seasoned with one or more of the optional ingredients permitted in the aforementioned standards of identity.

§52.6242 Styles.

- (a) **Halves** are apricots cut approximately in half along the suture from stem to apex.
- (b) **Slices** are apricots cut into thin sectors or strips.
- (c) **Pieces or irregular pieces** are apricot units that are predominantly irregular in size and shape which do not conform to a single style or which are a mixture of halves and slices.

§52.6243 Grades.

- (a) **U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard** is the quality of the product that:
 - (1) Has normal flavor and odor;
 - (2) Has at least a fairly good color;
 - (3) Has at least a fairly good character;
 - (4) Is at least fairly free from defects; and
 - (5) Scores not less than 70 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart.
- (b) **Substandard** is the quality that fails to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade C.

Fill of Container, Drained Weights

§52.6244 Recommended fill of container.

The recommended fill of container for canned solid-pack apricots is not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since fill of container, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purposes of these grades. It is recommended that each container be as full of apricots as practicable without impairment of quality and that the product occupy not less than 90 percent of the volume of the container.

§52.6245 Recommended minimum drained weight.

- (a) **General.** The minimum drained weight recommendations in Table I are not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since drained weight, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purpose of these grades.
- (b) **Definitions of symbols.**
 - (1) LL Lower limit for individual drained weights.
 - (2) \bar{X}_d Minimum sample average drained weight value.
- (c) **Method for ascertaining drained weight.**
 - (1) The drained weight is determined by emptying the contents of the container upon a U.S. Standard No. 8 circular sieve of proper diameter containing 8 meshes to the inch (0.0937 ± 3 percent, square openings) so as to distribute the product evenly, inclining the sieve to approximately a 17 to 20 degree angle to facilitate drainage, and allowing the product to drain for two minutes.
 - (2) The drained weight is the weight of the sieve and apricots less the weight of the dry sieve. A sieve 12 inches in diameter is used.
- (d) **Compliance with recommended minimum drained weights.** A lot of canned solid-pack apricots is considered as meeting the minimum drained weight recommendations if the following criteria are met:
 - (1) The average of the drained weights from all the sample units in the sample meets the recommended average drained weight (designated as \bar{X}_d) in Table I; and
 - (2) The number of sample units which fail to meet the recommended minimum drained weight for individuals (designated as LL) in Table I does not exceed the applicable number specified in Table II.

Table I – Recommended Drained Weights for Canned Solid-Pack Apricots

Container Designation	Dimensions	LL	\bar{X}_d
No. 10	603 x 700	89.5 ounces	92.0 ounces

Table II – Acceptance Numbers for Recommended Drained Weight

Sample Size <i>(number of sample units)</i>	3	6	13	21	29	38	48	60
Acceptance Number	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sample Unit Size

§52.6246 Sample unit size.

For purposes of evaluating quality factors, the sample unit size shall be the entire contents of a No. 10 container or equivalent.

Factors of Quality

§52.6247 Ascertaining the grade of a sample unit.

In addition to considering other requirements outlined in the standards, the following quality factors are evaluated:

(a) Factors not rated be score points.

(1) Flavor and odor.

(b) Factors rated by score points. The relative importance of each factor which is scored is expressed numerically on the scale of 100. Score points are assigned the various quality factors in accordance with the scoring guide in Table III. The maximum number of points that may be given such factors are:

Factors	Points
Color	20
Defects	40
Character	40
Total Score	100

(c) Definition of flavor and odor. Normal flavor and odor means that the product is free from objectionable flavors and objectionable odors of any kind.

§52.6248 Ascertaining the rating for the factors which are scored.

The essential variations within each factor which is scored are so described that the value may be ascertained for each factor and expressed numerically. The numerical range within each factor which is scored is inclusive (for example **14 to 20 points** means 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, or 20 points).

§52.6249 Color.

- (a) **General.** The color of canned solid-pack apricots refers to the characteristic color of the outer, uncut surfaces of the units, the varying degrees of **pale yellow areas, light greenish-yellow areas, and light green areas**; and the uniformity of the individual sample unit when viewed in mass.
- (b) **Definitions.**
- (1) **Well-colored. Well-colored** means that the units have a typical color characteristic of well-matured apricots. The units may have pale yellow areas not exceeding one-fourth of the outer surface area and are free from brown color due to oxidation, improper processing, or other causes.
- (2) **Reasonably-well colored. Reasonably well-colored** means that the units may possess pale yellow areas not exceeding one-half of the outer surface area, or may possess light greenish-yellow areas not exceeding one-fourth of the outer surfaces area. The units may possess a slight brown color due to oxidation, or other causes.
- (3) **Fairly well-colored. Fairly well-colored** means that the units may be pale yellow or may possess light greenish-yellow areas not exceeding one-half of the outer surface areas, or greenish areas not exceeding one-fourth of the outer surface and/or may possess more than a slight brown color due to oxidation, or other causes, but not off-color.
- (4) **Poorly colored. Poorly colored** means that the units may possess light greenish-yellow areas exceeding one-half of the outer surface area, or green areas exceeding one-fourth of the outer surface area, or are off-color for any reason.
- (c) **"C" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots that possess a fairly good color may be given a score of 14 to 20 points. **Fairly good color** means that:
- (1) the sample unit, in mass, may be variable in color; and
- (2) the apricots are at least fairly well-colored, except that the weight of the units that are poorly colored does not exceed the weight specified in Table III.
- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots that fail to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade C may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.6250 Defects.

(a) **General.** The factor of defects refers to the degree of freedom from pit material, harmless extraneous material, short stems, minor blemishes and major blemishes, and from any other defects not specifically mentioned.

(b) **Definitions and explanations of defects.**

(1) **Harmless extraneous material.** Any vegetable substance (such as, but not limited to, a leaf or portion thereof or a large stem) that is harmless.

(2) **Short stem.** The short, thick, woody stem which attaches the apricots to the twig of the tree or other stem material of equivalent woodiness and shortness.

(3) **Pit material.** Any whole pit or any hard portion of an apricot pit, regardless of size.

(4) **Minor blemish.**

(i) Light brown or brown surface areas, including **freckles** which singly or in combination on a unit, exceed in aggregate the area of a circle 1/8-inch in diameter but do not exceed in the aggregate the area of a circle 1/4-inch in diameter.

(ii) Any blemish or abnormality whether or not specifically defined which materially but not seriously affects the appearance or eating quality of the product.

(5) **Major blemish.**

(i) Light brown to brown surface areas which, singly or in the aggregate on a unit, exceed the area of a circle 1/4-inch diameter.

(ii) Blemishes that extend into the fruit tissue regardless of the area or depth.

(iii) Single dark brown surface areas that exceed the area of a circle 1/8-inch in diameter, whether or not the unit is affected by minor blemishes; or

(iv) Any blemish whether or not specifically defined which seriously affects the appearance and/or eating quality of the unit but is not a filthy or decomposed substance.

- (c) **"C" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots that are at least fairly free from defects may be given a score of 28 to 40 points. Fairly free from defects means that the defects present do not exceed the allowances specified in Table III.
- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots that fail to meet the defect requirements of U.S. Grade C may be given a score of 0 to 27 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.6251 Character.

- (a) **General.** The factor of character refers to the degree of ripeness, the texture and condition of the flesh, the firmness, and tenderness of the canned solid-pack apricots.
- (b) **Definitions.**
 - (1) **Good character.** **Good character** means that the units have a practically uniform, tender, fleshy texture typical of well-ripened, properly prepared, and properly processed canned solid-pack apricots; the units may be soft but hold their original confirmation and size without material disintegration.
 - (2) **Reasonably good character.** **Reasonably good character** means that the units possess at least a reasonably uniform, reasonably tender texture typical of properly ripened apricots that are properly processed; the texture is at least reasonably fleshy, and the units are at least reasonably thick but the tenderness may be variable within the unit or among the units; the units may be soft to slightly firm or ragged, but are not mushy.
 - (3) **Fairly good character.** **Fairly good character** means that the units possess a texture of properly processed apricots which may be variable in fleshiness but the texture is fairly fleshy and the units may be lacking uniformity of tenderness or may be markedly ragged with frayed edges or may be very soft or mushy, or may be moderately firm.
 - (4) **Poor character.** **Poor character** means that the units are very mushy or very firm.
- (c) **"C" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots that possess a fairly good character may be given a score of 28 to 40 points. To score in this classification, the weight of units that possess poor character does not exceed the weight specified in Table III.
- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Canned solid-pack apricots which fail to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade C may be given a score of 0 to 27 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product

(this is a limiting rule).

Allowances for Quality Factors

§52.6252 Allowances for quality factors for canned solid-pack apricots.

Table III

Quality Factors	Maximum Allowances			
	Grade C		Substandard	
COLOR (<i>ounces of apricots that are:</i>)				
SCORE POINTS	18 - 20	16 - 17	14 - 15	0 - 13
Well-Colored	All	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit
Reasonably Well-Colored	5	All	No Limit	No Limit
Fairly Well-Colored	2	9	All	No Limit
Poorly Colored	0	2	14	All
DEFECTS (<i>number of defects</i>)				
SCORE POINTS	36 - 40	32 - 35	28 - 31	0 - 27
Harmless Extraneous Material	0	1	3	More than 3
Short Stems	1	3	6	More than 6
Pit Material	1	3	6	More than 6
Units Affected by Minor and Major Blemishes	9	18	36	More than 36
Major Blemishes	4	9	18	More than 18
CHARACTER (<i>ounces of apricots units that possess:</i>)				
SCORE POINTS	36 - 40	32 - 35	28 - 31	0 - 27
Good Character	All	No Limit	No Limit	No Limit
Reasonably Good Character	5	All	No Limit	No Limit
Fairly Good Character	2	9	All	No Limit
Poor Character	0	2	9	No Limit

Lot Inspection and Certification
§52.6253 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.

The grade of a lot of canned solid-pack apricots covered by these standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the **Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Product Thereof, and Certain Other Processed Food Products** (7 CFR 52.1 to 52.83).

Score Sheet
§52.6254 Score sheet for canned solid-pack apricots.

Size and kind of container			
Container mark or identification			
Label			
Net weight (ounces)			
Vacuum (inches)			
Drained weight (ounces);			
Degree Brix (if sweetened)			
Factors		Score Points	
Color	20	"C" "SStd"	14 - 20 0 - 13 <u>1/</u>
Defects	40	"C" "SStd"	28 - 40 0 - 27 <u>1/</u>
Character	<u>40</u>	"C" "SStd"	28 - 40 0 - 27 <u>1/</u>
Total score	100		
Normal flavor and odor			
U. S. Grade			

1/ Indicates limiting rule.