



United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Specialty
Crops
Program

Specialty
Crops
Inspection
Division

United States Standards for Grades of Greenhouse Leaf Lettuce

Effective September 6, 2016

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Greenhouse Leaf Lettuce (81 FR 51297) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since September 1, 1964.

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.

Non-Discrimination Policy: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

United States Standards for Grades of Greenhouse Leaf Lettuce

Section	Page No.
Grades	2
§51.3455 U.S. Fancy.....	2
§51.3456 U.S. No. 1.....	2
Reserved	2
§51.3457 Reserved.....	2
Tolerances	2
§51.3458 Tolerances.....	2
Application of Tolerances	2
§51.3459 Application of tolerances.....	2
Definitions	3
§51.3460 Similar varietal characteristics.....	3
§51.3461 Well grown.....	3
§51.3462 Well trimmed.....	3
§51.3463 Fairly well trimmed.....	3
§51.3464 Injury.....	3
§51.3465 Damage.....	3
§51.3466 Serious damage.....	3

Grades

§51.3455 U.S. Fancy.

“**U.S. Fancy**” consists of plants of leaf lettuce of similar varietal characteristics which are well grown, well trimmed and free from decay and which are free from injury caused by coarse stems, bleached or discolored leaves, sprayburn, dirt, wilting, freezing, disease, insects, or other means.

§51.3456 U.S. No. 1.

“**U.S. No. 1**” consists of plants of leaf lettuce of similar varietal characteristics which are well grown, fairly well trimmed and free from decay and which are free from damage caused by coarse stems, bleached or discolored leaves, sprayburn, dirt, wilting, freezing, disease, insects, or other means.

Reserved

§51.3457 Reserved.

Tolerances

§51.3458 Tolerances.

In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, the following tolerances by count, shall be permitted in any lot:

- (a) **U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1 grades.** 10 percent for plants of leaf lettuce which fail to meet the requirements of the grade: *Provided*, That included in this amount not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including in this latter amount not more than 1 percent for plants affected by decay.

Application of Tolerances

§51.3459 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 15 plants, 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 15 plants and a tolerance of less than 10 percent is provided, and for packages which contain 15 plants or less, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than double the tolerance specified, except that at least 1 defective plant may be permitted in any package.

Definitions

§51.3460 Similar varietal characteristics.

“**Similar varietal characteristics**” means that the plants in any container are of the same general type.

§51.3461 Well grown.

“**Well grown**” means that the plant is not stunted or poorly developed.

§51.3462 Well trimmed.

“**Well trimmed**” means that the stem is trimmed off to within three-fourths inch of the point of attachment of the first whorl of leaves and that leaves which are more than slightly bleached or discolored have been removed.

§51.3463 Fairly well trimmed.

“**Fairly well trimmed**” means that the stem is trimmed off to within three-fourths inch of the point of attachment of the first whorl of leaves and that leaves which are materially bleached or discolored have been removed.

§51.3464 Injury.

“**Injury**” means any specific defect described in this section; or an equally objectionable variation of this defect, any other defect, or any combination of defects, which noticeably detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the lettuce. The following specific defect shall be considered as injury:

- (a) Stems when more than 2-1/2 inches in length, measured from the end of the butt to the point of attachment of the last whorl of leaves.

§51.3465 Damage.

“**Damage**” means any specific defect described in this section; or an equally objectionable variation of this defect, any other defect, or any combination of defects, which materially detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the lettuce. The following specific defect shall be considered as damage:

- (a) Stems when more than 3-1/2 inches in length, measured from the end of the butt to the point of attachment of the last whorl of leaves.

§51.3466 Serious damage.

“**Serious damage**” means any defect, or any combination of defects, which seriously detracts from the appearance or the edible or shipping quality of the lettuce.