



**United States
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Agriculture**

**Agricultural
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Service**

**Fruit and
Vegetable
Division**

**Fresh
Products
Branch**

United States Standards for Grades of Okra for Processing

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United States Standards for Grades of Okra for Processing ¹

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General

§51.3635 Application.

These standards are intended to apply only to seed pods of the okra plant (*Hibiscus esculentus*) delivered to a freezing or canning plant for processing purposes. They may be used as a basis for grading the quality of lots of okra for the purpose of more equitable pricing. It is assumed that a schedule of prices will be established to be paid by the pound for each quality and size of okra to be purchased by the processor. The percentage of each quality and size okra in the lot may be approximately determined by analyzing a representative sample or samples drawn from the lot. The price of the load can be calculated from the number of pounds and the established price of each quality and size.

Grades

§51.3636 U.S. No. 1.

¹Compliance 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.

"U.S. No. 1" consists of pods of okra of similar varietal characteristics which are fresh, tender, fairly well colored, fairly well formed, free from decay and worm holes, and free from damage caused by scars, bruises, cuts, punctures, insects, discoloration, dirt or other foreign material or other means. Pods in this grade are at least fairly well trimmed, unless specified as well trimmed or poorly trimmed. (See Size, §51.3639.)

§51.3637 U.S. No. 2.

"U.S. No. 2" consists of pods of okra which meet the requirements of U.S. No. 1 grade except those for color, shape and trim. Okra in this grade may be pale green in color, moderately misshapen and poorly trimmed. (See Size, §51.3639.)

Culls

§51.3638 Culls.

"Culls" consists of pods of okra which fail to meet the requirements of either of the foregoing grades, and any extraneous material in the lot.

Size Classifications

§51.3639 Size classifications.

Okra may be classified as to size in connection with the grade into two or more groups on the basis of specified lengths in inches, or on the basis of the following size classifications:

- (a) "Very small" includes pods of okra less than 1-3/4 inches in length.
- (b) "Small" ("baby") includes pods of okra not less than 1-3/4 inches or more than 3-1/2 inches in length.
- (c) "Medium" includes pods of okra more than 3-1/2 inches in length and, unless otherwise specified, not more than 5 inches in length.
- (d) "Large," unless otherwise specified, includes pods of okra more than 5 inches in length.

Definitions

§51.3640 Similar varietal characteristics.

"Similar varietal characteristics" means that the pod is of the same type and closely similar in appearance to the rest of the pods in the lot.

§51.3641 Fresh.

"Fresh" means that the pod is not appreciably wilted or flabby.

§51.3642 Tender.

"Tender" means that the pod is succulent and reasonably free from fiber. The tip will break fairly easily and cleanly when bent back, and flesh of the central portion of the pod can be cut crosswise with a sharp knife using very little pressure.

§51.3643 Fairly well colored.

"Fairly well colored" means that the pod of a green variety has a good green color or is at least light green with no yellowish cast.

§51.3644 Fairly well formed.

"Fairly well formed" means that the pod is not more than slightly curved, crooked or otherwise not more than slightly deformed.

§51.3645 Worm hole.

"Worm hole" means a hole caused by an insect penetrating the wall of the pod.

§51.3646 Damage.

"Damage" means any specific defect described in this section; or an equally objectionable variation

of any one of these defects, or any other defect, or any combination of defects which materially detracts from the edible or processing quality of the pod. The following specific defects shall be considered as damage:

- (a) Scars or bruises which will materially detract from the appearance of the pod after processing;
- (b) Cuts or punctures which penetrate the wall of the pod.
- (c) Insects when the insect is present inside the pod, or when the action of insects has distinctly affected the appearance of the pod;
- (d) Discoloration which will materially detract from the appearance of the pod after processing; and,
- (e) Dirt or other foreign material which is so firmly attached to the pod that it cannot be removed by the usual processing plant washing.

§51.3647 Fairly well trimmed.

"Fairly well trimmed" means that the stem has been broken or cut off at a point not more than three-fourths inch below the cap scar at the base of the pod, and that the open seed cavities have not been exposed by excessively high trimming.

§51.3648 Well trimmed.

"Well trimmed" means that the stem has been neatly cut off at a point not more than one-fourth inch below the cap scar at the base of the pod, and that the open seed cavities have not been exposed by excessively high trimming.

§51.3649 Pale green.

"Pale green" means that the pod of a green variety has a tinge of green predominating over most or all of its surface, and not more than one-tenth of its surface shows a yellowish cast.

§51.3650 Moderately misshapen.

"Moderately misshapen" means that the pod is not badly curved, crooked or otherwise badly misshapen.

§51.3651 Poorly trimmed.

"Poorly trimmed" means that the stem has been broken or cut off at a point more than three-fourths inch below the cap scar at the base of the pod, or that the open seed cavities have been exposed by excessively high trimming.

§51.3652 Length.

"Length" means the dimension of the pod measured from the cap scar at the base to the tip end of the pod.