



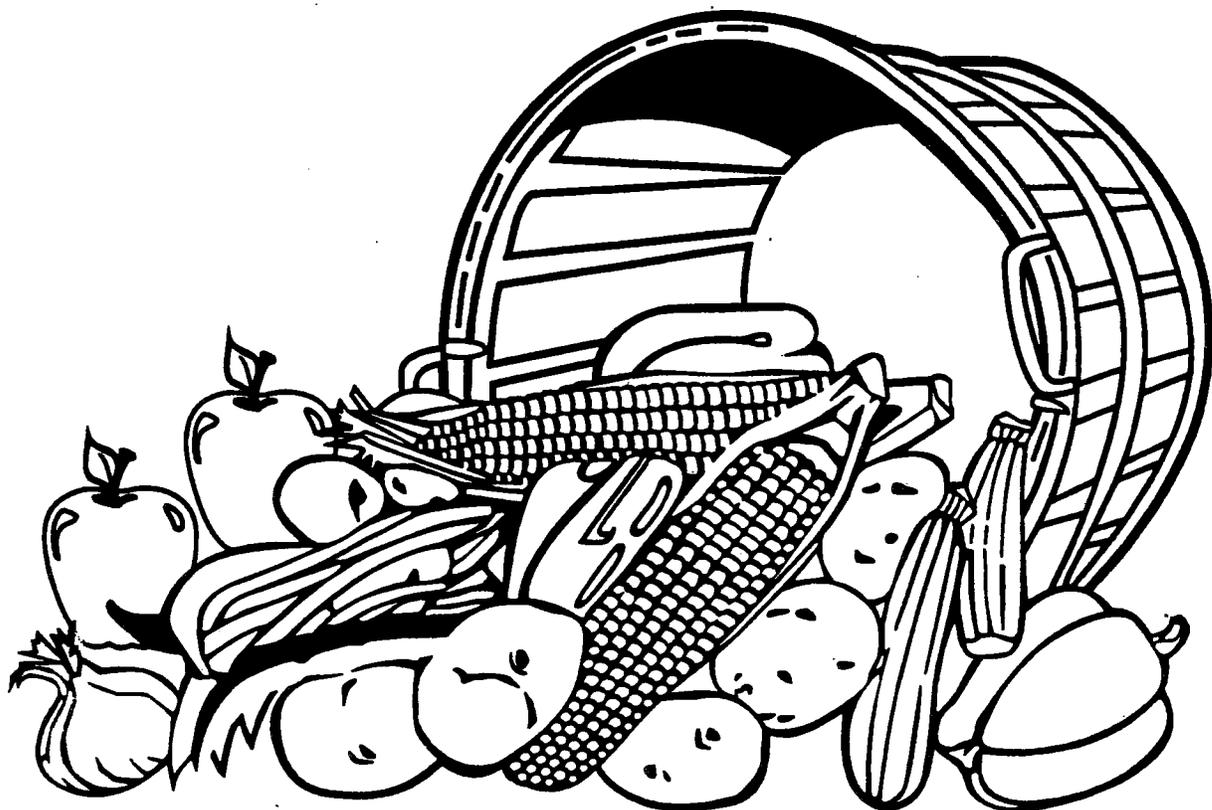
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Fruit and
Vegetable
Division

Sweet Peppers and Other Peppers

Shipping Point and Market Inspection Instructions



Shipping Point and Market Inspection Instructions for Sweet Peppers

These inspection instructions are specifically developed and designed by the Fresh Products Branch to assist officially licensed inspectors in the interpretation and application of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers, 7 CFR Section 51.3270.

These instructions do not establish any substantial rule not legally authorized by the official grade standards. This publication supersedes any previously issued inspection instructions.

Refer to General Inspection Instructions for additional information pertaining to date, inspection point, carrier, condition of carrier, lading, etc. not covered in these instructions. (Reference to "General Inspection Instructions" in all Fresh Products Branch publications refers to any one or all of the following - General Shipping Point Inspection Instructions, General Market Inspection Instructions, or Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Certificate Writing Handbooks.)

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SWEET PEPPER

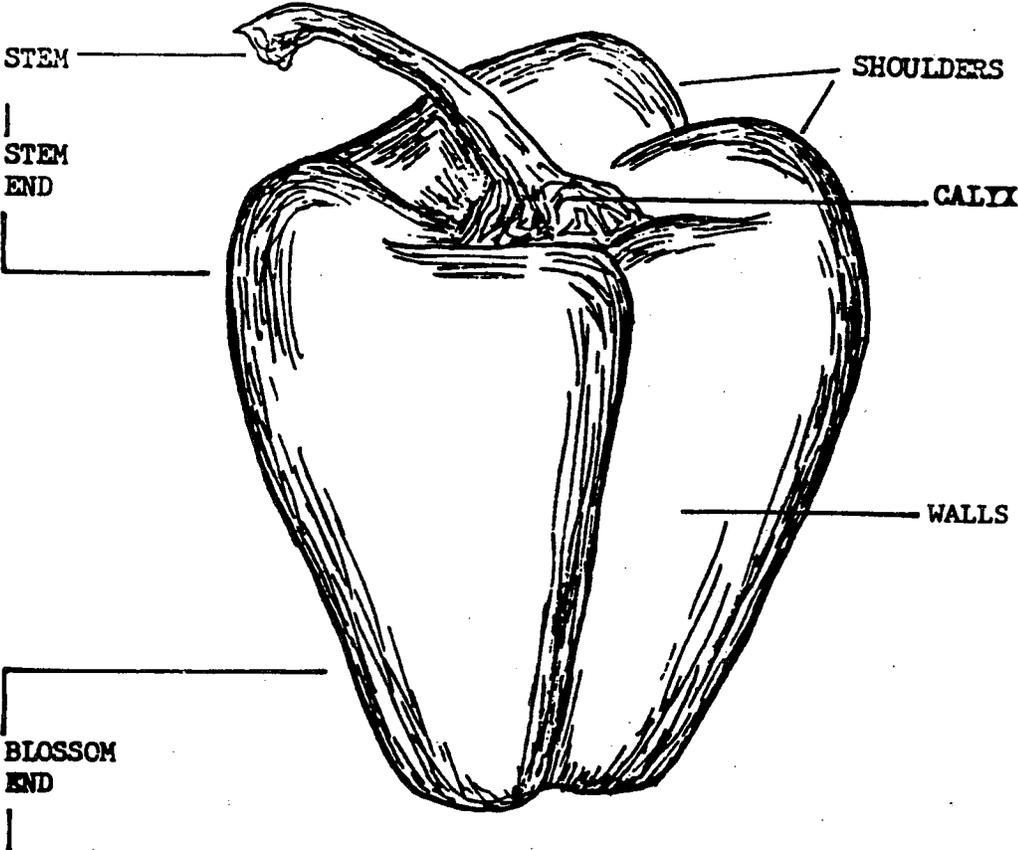


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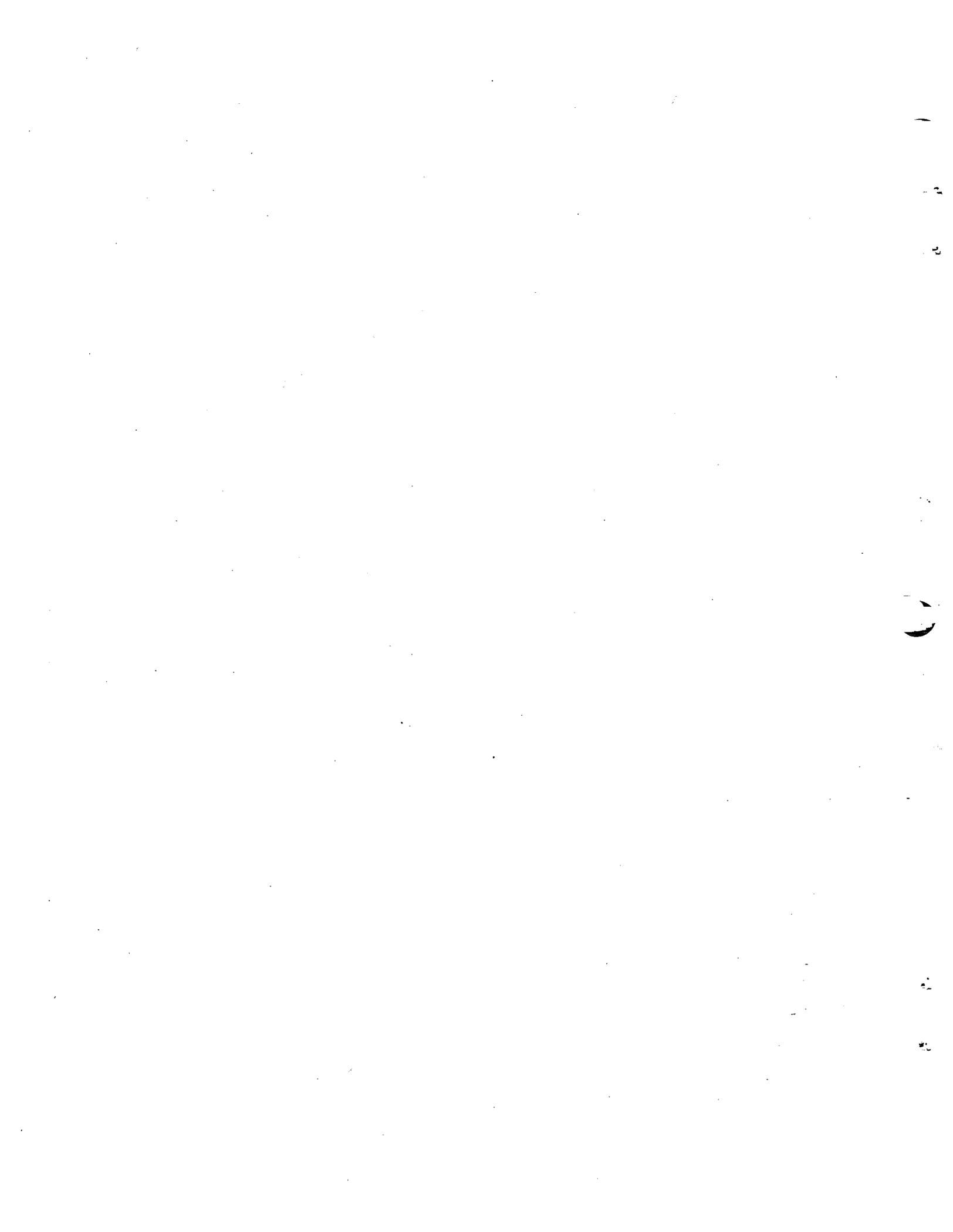
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Appendix I - U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers

Appendix II - Certificate and Notesheet Examples



(1) Sampling

Representative Sampling. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the importance of the inspector obtaining representative samples. Accurate certification is possible only if the samples examined are truly representative of the entire lot or accessible portion. All portions of a lot or load should receive the same attention in sampling regardless of the difficulty involved in reaching the more inaccessible layers or parts of a load.

Size of Sample. The tolerances of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers are determined on the basis of count. **At least fifty** peppers shall be examined from each container. Whenever a lot is out of grade only because of defects exceeding the container or lot tolerance in one or a few samples, the entire contents of those containers shall be examined. The entire contents shall be examined in containers with 20 specimens or less, regardless of quality or condition of the lot.

The sample to be examined shall be taken extending from the top to the bottom or nearly to the bottom of the container in order to provide a representative sample of that container. Care should be taken to avoid including too large a portion of peppers from the face (top portion) of the container, as these are frequently larger and of better quality than the remainder of the contents.

When the size of samples are not uniform, the percentage shall be determined for each sample. All percentages must be totaled and divided by the number of samples examined, in order to determine the average percentage for the lot.

Number of Samples. Accurate certification is possible only if the samples examined are truly representative of the entire lot. Due to potential variations in size, quality, condition, or all of these, no definite rule can be provided as to a required number of samples. It is the inspector's responsibility to examine enough samples to ensure an accurate picture of the entire lot. However, for lots containing less than 100 cartons, a minimum of three samples shall be inspected.

(2) Tolerances

Application of Tolerances. The contents of individual packages in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the following limitations provided that the average for the entire lot is within the tolerances specified for the grade:

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

Tolerances				
Grade	Total Defects	Including Serious Damage	Including Decay	Off-Size
U.S. Fancy	10%	5%	2%	10%
U.S. No. 1	10%	5%	2%	10%
U.S. No. 2	10%	5% (sunscald only)	2%	10% (if size is specified)

(3) Heading on Notesheet

Detailed instructions pertaining to date, inspection point, place of inspection, kind of carrier, lading, etc., which are not covered by this section may be found in the General Inspection Instructions. Additional information and instructions may be given by your supervisor.

(4) Products Inspected

The following information shall be given:

- Commodity, Type or Variety.
- Type of Container.
- Distinguishing Marks.
- State of Origin (if marked).
- Quantity Inspected.

Commodity, Type or Variety. "Sweet PEPPERS" shall be used to describe this commodity. Green or various colors of peppers may be used in conjunction with "Sweet PEPPERS," or may be reported in the "Lot ID" section on market notesheets and certificates.

If variety or type, such as "Red California Wonder" is marked on the container, this should be shown as part of distinguishing marks, not as "Red California Wonder Sweet Peppers" under the "Product" heading.

There are two general types of sweet peppers based on certain varietal characteristics. The most popular type is the thick-walled, meaty, blunt or bell-shaped type, which is usually multi-pointed. The other type is the long, thin-walled, single pointed type.

**** Two varieties of commercially grown sweet peppers now being marketed of the long pointed type are the Shepherd (Italian Sweet) and the Melrose varieties. If the variety is printed on the container or if the inspector can verify through documentation that the peppers are one of these types or of another sweet type, the peppers may be certified on the basis of the U.S. Grade standards. If there is any question as to whether the peppers are of a "sweet" type, the lot should not be certified on the basis of the U.S. standards. Keep in mind that the peppers still have to meet the requirements of "similar varietal characteristics." ****

All three grades require peppers to be of "similar varietal characteristics," which means that each pepper must be of the same general type. This means that distinctive thick-walled and thin-walled types should not be mixed.

The Inspection Service does not certify variety, and when the question of variety is in controversy, the inspector should inform interested parties that only type may be certified. It may also be pointed out that when type is a factor in a general run of peppers, such as thin-walled peppers in a thick-walled lot, it will be reported as a Quality defect.

Type of Container. The bushel carton is probably the most widely used container. The use of bushel baskets is slowly declining due to increased cost of the container and with the success of palletizing cartons.

Peppers marketed in consumer size packages such as film bags and shrink wrap trays are usually packed in master cartons, flats, or even wirebound crates of various sizes.

Distinguishing Marks. Whenever a container is labeled, printed, tagged or marked with a brand or grade, it shall be reported under the "Brands/Marks" heading. This also includes shipper's name and address, lot numbers, varieties, sizes, or weight. If the containers bear no brand, grade or any other marking, it shall be stated "No Brand."

State of Origin. The inspector should not make a positive statement on his/her own authority, but when container markings list the State or country of origin, it should be quoted. This policy is necessary because some firms may use one mark on the same product they may pack in two or three States and the inspector can certify only to the marks and has no means of knowing in what State or country the peppers are grown. (If packages are not marked or the peppers are in bulk, refer to the General Inspection Instructions.)

Quantity Inspected. The number of containers shall always be reported. The count of large lots certified in a warehouse or on a platform may be reported on the authority of someone other than the inspector. However, it is advisable in such instances for the inspector to make a rough check to determine that a substantial number of the containers reported in the lot are present.

Small lots (100 containers or less) that can be counted with accuracy shall be reported on the inspector's authority as "inspector's count."

(5) Condition of Pack

Sweet peppers are shipped in many different size and style of containers. The principal packs are volume fill (jumble pack), volume filled and faced, and hand packed in rows and layers.

"Volume fill" and "volume fill, faced" shall be described as follows:

Well Filled. Peppers are level with top edge of the container.

Fairly Well Filled. Peppers are not in contact with the lid or cover, but not more than 1-1/2 inches below the lid or cover.

Slack. Peppers are more than 1-1/2 inches below the lid or cover and the amount of slackness shall be reported in half inches or inches below the lid.

The word "faced" shall be shown following the descriptive term used if this is the case. A "faced" package is one that is packed by inverting the lid or cover and a layer of peppers are arranged in rows, the remainder is then "Jumble filled" and then the bottom of the carton inserted in the top portion, which is usually a full telescope type carton.

Hand Packed. Peppers that are packed in layers or rows by a straight pack method, should be described as follows:

Very Tight. The pack is so tight that some of the peppers are bruised, crushed or broken, or out of shape because of the pressure. The amount of peppers so affected shall be reported in percentages under "Offsize/Defects."

Tight. A full pack with no movement of the peppers in the container and in which the peppers come in slight contact with the lid.

Fairly Tight. The peppers are not necessarily in contact with the lid and there is slight movement of peppers within the container.

Slightly Slack. Shall be used to describe the condition when the surface of the peppers are only slightly below the top of the package and that there is moderate movement of peppers within the container.

Slack is a loose pack in which the contents are below the top of the container. The amount of slackness shall be reported in half inches.

Determining and Reporting Net Weight. When requested to certify as to specified or marked net weight on both stationary lot sampling or on-line sampling, the procedures as described in the General Inspection Instructions must be followed.

Consumer Size Packages. Most consumer size packages show a marked weight. However, some consumer size packages are packed only as to count of peppers per package. When this occurs, the inspector will have to inquire as to the specified weight of the packages. If short weight was the primary complaint and the reason for inspection, it is very likely that the applicant will state what weight the peppers were purchased as.

(6) Temperature of Product

Refer to the General Inspection Instructions for information not covered in this section.

Due to the importance of the pulp temperature of fresh fruits and vegetables, it is essential that the inspector accurately read and report the temperature or range in temperatures on each lot. Pulp temperature should be reported regardless of the location of the product, whether in the carrier, warehouse, or stacked on the platform.

(7) Size

U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1. The U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers provide a minimum size specification for length AND diameter in the U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1 grades, which shall be used as part of the grades. No other specifications may be used for U.S. Fancy, but other size specifications may be designated for the U.S. No. 1 grade, at applicant's request. The standards provide a 10% tolerance, by count, for peppers that fail to meet size specifications.

U.S. No. 2. Minimum size is not specified in the U.S. No. 2 grade and therefore no tolerance is provided for off-size in the standards. When a request is made for an inspection on the basis of the U.S. No. 2 grade, and a minimum length or diameter or both are specified, the inspector shall report the percentage of off-size.

Size Requirements		
Grade	Minimum Diameter	Minimum Length
U.S. Fancy	3 inches (76.2mm)	3½ inches (88.9 mm)
U.S. No. 1	2½ inches (63.5 mm), UOS*	2½ inches (63.5 mm), UOS*
U.S. No. 2	N o S i z e R e q u i r e m e n t s	
* UOS - Unless Otherwise Specified.		

Application of Tolerances for Off-size. No sample or container with more than 20 peppers may have more than 15% (one and one-half times) total off-sized peppers; and no sample or container with 20 peppers or less may have more than 20% (double) total off-sized peppers, except that at least one (1) off-size pepper may be permitted in any package.

The off-size tolerance may be used entirely for minimum diameter or minimum length, or both, but the combined average may not exceed 10%. For instance, a lot may have an average of 7% under the minimum diameter and 3% under the minimum length, provided the container tolerances are not exceeded. If a lot has 7% under the minimum diameter and 4% under the minimum length, the total off-size tolerance has been exceeded.

Suggested Notesheet for Off-Size, U.S. No. 1				
Sample	< 2½" diameter	< 2½" length	Total off-size	
50	2	3	(14%)	5
50	4	3	R	7
50	2	1	A	3
50	3	3	N	6
50	2	0	G	2
50	5	2	E	7
	—————	—————	(4%)	—————
	6%	4%		10%

Diameter means the greatest dimension measured at right angles to the longitudinal axis. Round hole measuring cards or gauges should be used in determining the diameter.

Length means the greatest overall length measured in a straight line parallel to the longitudinal axis, exclusive of the stem. A ruler may be used, measuring from the highest shoulder at the stem end to the lowest point or tip at the blossom end.

In describing size on the certificate, the range in length and diameter of the peppers must be reported. Dimensions shall be reported in ¼ inch variations. Unless the range is narrow (one inch or less), it is desirable to show the size of "most" of the specimens in order to give the general size impression of the lot.

Reporting a separate "mostly" range for both length and diameter makes a long size statement. While the range in diameter may differ from the range in length, and should be reported separately, the "mostly" can often be combined into one statement. However, accuracy must not be sacrificed for brevity. If a wide variation occurs in either length or diameter and each shows off-size and a different "mostly," they should be reported separately.

Lots which meet grade requirements, and have undersize specimens that do not average in excess of 10% or show any samples exceeding the container tolerance, may be reported as "undersize within tolerance." However, there is no objection to showing actual percentages if requested by the applicant.

The percentage of off-size must be shown in the following cases: 1) When off-size is in excess of the tolerance or exceeds the container tolerance; 2) When a percentage of U.S. No. 1 Quality is being reported; 3) When a lot fails to grade. If a lot fails to meet the size specification, the ranges as well as the averages of off-size must be reported.

Count. It is common practice for peppers to be bought and sold on the basis of count. However, count of peppers per container is not a grade requirement, but rather a very popular trading practice. Very often an inspector will be asked to certify count, which is reported under the "Other" or "Count" heading on the certificate. A reference must be made under the "Remarks" statement.

Examples:

1. Other: Large Lot: Range 57 to 78, average 69 peppers per carton.
Medium Lot: Range 90 to 118, average 107 peppers per crate.

2. Remarks: Count of peppers per carton or crate determined at applicant's request.

(8) Quality and Condition

Statements pertaining to freshness, maturity, shape, color, the amount and kind of quality defects, and the amount of decay are shown under the appropriate headings. Those factors noted with one asterisk (*) shall be reported as CONDITION factors on market certificates. Those factors noted with two asterisks (**) may be considered as QUALITY or CONDITION, depending on the circumstances.

Maturity. The U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers require peppers to be "mature green" to meet all grades. "Mature green" means that the pepper has reached the stage of development that will withstand normal handling and shipping. Mature peppers are firm and have well developed hard seeds.

Good green color is not the only indication of maturity since peppers that are colored or turning color are also mature. Immature peppers have seeds that are soft and have not fully developed. Such stock is usually soft, pliable, thin-fleshed, and pale in color. Score immature peppers against the total tolerance for the grade.

Similar Varietal Characteristics. "Similar varietal characteristics" means that each pepper is of the same general type. Thin-walled types and thick-walled types shall not be mixed in a container.

Distinctly thin-walled peppers found in a thick-walled type lot shall be scored as quality defects and, likewise, distinctly thick-walled type peppers found in a thin-walled type lot shall be scored as quality defects. Report these quality defects as "dissimilar varietal characteristics."

Shape. In describing shape of sweet peppers, the following terms shall be used: (For shape guides see photographs printed in standards.)

Well Shaped. A requirement of the U.S. Fancy grade. Means that the pepper is not more than slightly curved, slightly indented, or not otherwise more than slightly misshapen.

Fairly Well Shaped. A requirement of the U.S. No. 1 grade. Means that the pepper may be more than slightly indented or curved, but is not of the type commonly known as a "button," or is not decidedly crooked, constricted, or deformed.

Not Seriously Misshapen. A requirement of the U.S. No. 2 grade. Means that the pepper is not badly indented, crooked, constricted or otherwise badly deformed.

Cleanness. There are no cleanness requirements for any of the grades in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers. Dirt is not specifically mentioned in any of the grades and must be considered under the heading of "injury," "damage," or "serious damage" by "other means."

A lot may be described as "clean," "fairly clean," "dirty" or "badly caked with dirt." Peppers that have been harvested from wet, muddy fields may be dirty or partly caked with dirt. Therefore, peppers described as "dirty" shall be scored against the total tolerance for defects in the U.S. Fancy and the U.S. No. 1 grades. Peppers that are described as "badly caked with dirt" shall be scored against the serious damage tolerance in the U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1 grades, but against the total tolerance in the U.S. No. 2 grade. The term "slightly dirty" should not be used in describing peppers.

******Silvery White Discoloration.** This defect appears as a diffused or solid silvery white areas, mostly occurring on red sweet peppers. Score as injury when aggregating more than 5% of the surface on a pepper 3-1/2 inches (88.9 mm) in length and 3 inches (76.2 mm) in diameter. Score as damage when aggregating more than 10% of the surface on a pepper 2-1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length. Score as serious damage when aggregating more than 25% of the surface on a pepper 2-1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length. ****

Brightness and Smoothness. While brightness and smoothness of peppers are not factors in any of the U.S. grades, they usually affect the market value. These factors may be described on the certificate.

Fresh, firm, and well developed peppers have a glossy shine that may be described as "bright." Less attractive stock may be described as "fairly bright" or "dull" according to the appearance of the lot. The fact that a lot of peppers has been washed and waxed does not necessarily mean that it deserves to be called "bright," nor does it mean that an unwashed or unwaxed lot deserves to be called "dull."

Stock may be described as "smooth," "fairly smooth," or "rough," depending on the amount or degree of the characteristics, ridges or grooves that normally appear on certain varieties.

Bacterial Spots. Bacterial spots occur as small, irregular, raised yellowish brown to black scab-like lesions that become cracked and may open the way for development of decay or infection. Score as injury when aggregating more than the area of a circle 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) in diameter on a pepper 3-1/2 inches (88.9 mm) in length and 3 inches (76.2 mm) in diameter. Score as damage when aggregating more than the area of a circle 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length. Score as serious damage when aggregating more than the area of a circle 1 inch (25.4 mm) in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length. For injury, damage and serious damage, allow a greater area on a larger pepper and a lesser area on a smaller pepper.

Dark or Black Areas. Inspectors may encounter lots and/or loads of peppers with a large number of very dark or black areas, usually starting at the blossom end and covering a considerable portion of the pepper. This is a pigmentation of the pepper and is thought to be a varietal characteristic occurring in some growing areas. These peppers shall not be scored against any of the grades. If the applicant insists on including a description of this factor on the inspection certificate, it shall be reported under "Remarks" in general terms, followed by the word, "not affecting grade," and "reported at applicant's request."

Field Frost Injury. Field frost injury first shows a dark discoloration and later causes yellowish brown discoloration under the outer skin, which may penetrate the fleshy wall. This type of injury should be scored when detracting from the appearance under the general definitions of "injury," "damage," or "serious damage."

Green Peppers in a Colored or Turning Color Lot.(*) When an application for inspection is requested on the basis of, for example, "U.S. Fancy Red," "U.S. No. 1 Yellow," or "U.S. No. 2 Purple," etc., green peppers shall be scored against the 10% off-color allowance (not meeting the 90% showing any amount of specified color). Thus, if a lot averages 14% green peppers, it would not meet the "Colored" designation, but would meet the "Mixed Color" designation. Also refer to the "Color" section of this book.

Hail or Similar Injury. Hail or similar injury usually appears as several unhealed punctures or small openings. If the injury is fresh, it is scored as serious damage when the puncture or opening penetrates through the fleshy wall of the pepper. If the hail or similar injury has had time to heal, the crack(s) or puncture(s) may show a brownish corky tissue on the surface. If the hail or similar injury is healed score as follows: injury when the affected areas aggregate more than the equivalent of a circle $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (9.6 mm) in diameter on a pepper $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches (88.9 mm) in length and 3 inches (76.2 mm) in diameter; damage when the affected areas aggregate more than the equivalent of a circle $\frac{3}{8}$ inch (9.6 mm) in diameter on a pepper $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length; serious damage when seriously detracting from the appearance or the edible or shipping quality of the pepper. For injury, damage and serious damage, allow a greater area on a larger pepper and a lesser area on a smaller pepper.

Insects.** Sweet peppers may be affected by several types of insects, with the Aphid the most recognizable. At destination, if insects are alive, treat as a Condition factor; if the insects are dead, treat as a Quality factor. If both live and dead insects are present, treat as a Condition factor.

Sweet peppers having more than 5 insects present would be scored against the total tolerance for all three grades.

If no insects are found and the pepper shows evidence of feeding, score on the same basis as scars.

Worms.** Sweet peppers that have one attached worm and show evidence of feeding shall be scored as serious damage. Therefore, if only a worm(s) is present with no evidence of feeding it would not be scoreable. If evidence of feeding only, score on the same basis as scars. However, if a worm hole penetrates the fleshy wall of the pepper, score as serious damage. If the worm(s) is live, treat as a Condition factor.

Note: Fresh (unhealed) insect or worm feeding shall be scored as a Condition factor at destination.

Mechanical Injury. Mechanical injury shall be scored when healed or unhealed breaks, as a result of harvest or packing operations, extend through the pepper wall, or when detracting from the appearance under the general definitions of "injury," "damage," or "serious damage." (Please refer to scoring guide under bruising.) In some growing areas, birds peck holes in the pepper walls to obtain the seeds. Peppers with such holes shall be scored against all grades as serious damage.

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Pulled Stems. When peppers are improperly clipped or the pod is pulled sharply from the bush, a tear or rip may occur, usually pulling the stem and part of the calyx. Pulled stems shall only be scored when a definite break occurs in the pepper wall. This would be considered serious damage. ****

Scars. Scars generally consist of brownish corky tissue formed on the surface of peppers as a result of injury caused by branches rubbing against the pepper.

Score as **injury** when a pepper 3 1/2 inches (88.9 mm) in length and 3 inches (76.2mm) in diameter has a single scar more than 3/8 inch (9.6 mm) in diameter or an aggregate area exceeding that of a circle 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) in diameter. Score as **damage** when a pepper 2 1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length has a single scar more than 3/8 inch (9.6 mm) in diameter or an aggregate area exceeding that of a circle 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) in diameter. Score as **serious damage** when a pepper 2 1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length has a single scar more than 3/4 inch (19.1 mm) in diameter or an aggregate area exceeding that of a circle 1 inch (25.4 mm) in diameter. For injury, damage and serious damage, allow a greater area on a larger pepper, lesser area on a smaller pepper.

There is also another type of scar, sometimes called "ground spots" or "ground scar." This consists of dark, rough, dirty looking spots occurring on the blossom end point where peppers had been resting upon or rubbing against the ground. In the U.S. **Fancy** and **U.S. No. 1 grades**, these scars **must not** materially affect the appearance, but in the **U.S. No. 2 grade**, 15% of the surface may be affected.

Sunburn. Sunburn causes yellow areas and in severe cases the wall of the affected area may be slightly thinner than the remainder of the pepper and somewhat brittle. Score when the sunburn causes discoloration which affects an aggregate area of more than the following: 5% of the surface for **injury**, 15% of the surface for **damage**, and 25% of the surface for **serious damage**.

Sunscald. Sunscald appears as sunken areas which become tan or creamy-white in color. Often the outer skin becomes thin, parchment-like and papery. **Any amount of sunscald**, no matter how small, **shall be considered as serious damage** and scored against the 5% tolerance in each of the U.S. grades.

Firmness, Freshness. (*) While the U.S. grades do not require peppers to be "fresh" or "crisp," these are good terms to use indicating the product is in good condition. It also points out to interested parties the presence of a desirable factor in a given lot.

Peppers must be firm to meet the requirements of all grades. The determination of firmness for peppers is somewhat different than that of other vegetables and is more difficult. It should be emphasized that peppers consist of partly empty shells, the seed bearing portion is not in contact with the walls, but is connected by a thin membrane.

The resistance to pressure is based entirely on the condition and thickness of the walls. In fact, the thickness of walls may be the predominating factor in determining the resistance to pressure. Reporting peppers as "soft" due to the fact that they are thin-walled, must be avoided.

Firm. Firm means that the pepper may yield to slight pressure but is not soft, shrivelled, limp, or pliable.

Soft or flabby. Means that the pepper yields readily to pressure, lacks crispness entirely, or is limp or pliable. Such peppers shall be scored against all grades. "Slightly soft" or "slightly flabby" peppers may be used only as descriptive terms, at the applicant's request and not affecting grade.

Note: The term "fairly firm" shall not be used in describing peppers. Decayed, soft, or flabby peppers detract from the total firmness and crispness. Thus "5% flabby, 6% decay," shall be reported as "mostly fresh, firm, and crisp." A lot with "2% decay" shall be reported as "Generally fresh, firm, and crisp," etc.

Blossom End Rot. (*) Blossom End Rot is a physiological disease that frequently occurs on peppers. It is associated with calcium deficiency in the soil and can be greatly reduced with appropriate applications to the soil. It first appears as small water-soaked spots on the lower half of the fruit, near the blossom end. The spots enlarge and become light brown to brownish black in color and dry. Finally, if the fruit is invaded by a secondary disease, soft rot (decay) will be produced.

Score the water-soaked spots or light brown to brownish black and dry spots on the same basis as scars. Score as **damage** when a pepper has a single spot more than 3/8 (9.6 mm) inch in diameter or an aggregate area exceeding that of a circle 5/8 (15.9 mm) inch in diameter; score as **serious damage** when a single spot is more than 3/4 (19.1 mm) inch in diameter or an aggregate area exceeding that of a circle 1 inch in diameter. Above guides are based on a pepper 2-1/2 (63.5 mm) inches in diameter and length, allow greater area on a larger pepper and lesser area on smaller pepper. If certain that the defect is Blossom End Rot report as Blossom End Rot, otherwise describe the defect. Score as a condition defect. If the pepper has progressed into decay, score it as decay.

Bruising. (*) Bruising may be caused by peppers rubbing against each other or against sides of the container. This may result in abrasions of the skin, followed by discoloration. Score on the basis of the general definitions for "injury," "damage," or "serious damage." As a guide, if the pepper wall is not broken open or punctured

and only a bruised spot occurs, allow an area not exceeding 1/2 inch (12.7 mm) for injury, 5/8 inch (15.9 mm) for damage, and 1 inch (25.4 mm) for serious damage, on a pepper 2-1/2 inches (63.5 mm) in diameter and length. Allow a greater area on a larger pepper, lesser area on a smaller pepper.

Crushed or Broken. (*) Crushed or broken peppers may be caused by rough handling or a very tight pack. In some cases, there may be crushed or broken peppers found in fairly tight packs. Crushed or broken peppers may also result from overfilling the containers without properly shaking before the lid is fastened down. Crushed or broken peppers that result in openings or punctures through the fleshy wall of the pepper shall be scored as serious damage.

Note: When abnormal amounts of bruised, crushed, or broken peppers are found, it is important that the location of such peppers in the container and in the load be reported on the certificate.

Sunken Discolored Areas. (*) Shoulder rubs and skin abrasions may be caused by dirt or sand present in the picking containers, in the grading bins or belts, or on the packing tables. This may result in tiny punctures or the outer skin, causing excessive loss of moisture and pitting. This injury is practically invisible at the time of packing. These spots may become discolored and/or sunken in transit or within a few days after reaching the market. Describe as "sunken discolored areas," and include the area affected (**Example:** "over shoulders," "walls," or "blossom end"). They should be scored when they are sufficient in number to detract from the appearance under the general definitions of "injury," "damage" or "serious damage."

Shrivelling. (*) While the standards treat shrivelling as a factor affecting firmness, as a general rule, peppers which are shrivelled may be definitely firm to the touch and meet the other requirements of "firm" (not soft, limp, or pliable). Shrivelling may be caused by aging, although as a pepper ripens it will usually turn color before it shrivels from age. Another cause of shrivelling is lengthy exposure to warm, dry atmosphere. The most common cause of shrivelling is probably injury to the epidermis (outer skin), which results in excessive loss of moisture.

Very often a large number of peppers in contact with the container will show shrivelled areas on the side of the pepper wall adjacent to the container. In sampling, care must be taken not to include too many peppers which are in contact with the sides of the container. The sample must represent the average of the container.

Shrivelling is a common condition factor at destination. Small shrivelled spots or areas should be disregarded unless they are sufficient in area to damage the appearance or the edible or shipping quality of the product. Shrivelling shall be scored based on the general definition of injury, damage, and serious damage. "Slight shrivelling" or "small, slightly shrivelled areas," may be reported in the "Remarks" section in general terms at the applicant's request, followed by the phrase, "not affecting grade."

Freezing or Freezing Injury. (*) Freezing or freezing injury occurs under such a variety of conditions that it is the most difficult factor to accurately describe on the inspection certificate. This injury, if of noticeable extent, detracts greatly from the commercial value of the lot and must be carefully reported.

Peppers affected by freezing have a water-soaked, flabby texture, and the epidermis has a tendency to blister or rub off easily. In severe cases the stem becomes soft and dark and the core and seeds may be darkened and slightly brown. As the water evaporates from the affected tissue, the walls of the pepper collapse and the whole pepper becomes worthless.

When reporting freezing or freezing injury, several points should be foremost in mind. They are:

- Record pulp temperatures taken in various locations.
- Extent of injury in load.
- Extent of injury in containers.
- Degree to which individual specimens are affected.
- Describe the pattern of freezing or freezing injury in clear, concise terms.

Chilling Injury. (*) Chilling injury may occur when peppers are over-refrigerated or held beyond a normal marketing period. Peppers that have been injured by low, but not freezing temperatures may develop physiological disorders as "sheet pitting" or surface scalds or certain types of decay. Slightly affected pods may develop only a few scattered pits, but those severely affected may have half or more of the surface displaying a "sheet affect." Similar to freezing or freezing injury, chilling injury will also occur pattern-like in the container or load.

Decay. (*) In general, all decays shall be classed as factors of condition at destination. The decay should be described as accurately as possible.

Peppers are composed of three distinct sections or parts. For this reason, when decay is found, it shall be reported noting which part or parts are affected by decay. They are the "stem," "calyx," or "walls." For all practical purposes, the calyx is connected to and in close contact with the walls and decay affecting one or the other shall be reported as "affecting walls and calyxes."

Suggested Notesheet for Recording Decay

SA	Decay Walls-Calyx	Decay Stems	Decay Total	
50	4	0	4	(8)
50	2	5	7	
50	5	1	6	
50	0	0	0	
50	3	6	9	(18)
50	6	3	9	
	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 7	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 5	<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> 12	
	GMR Moderate	BSR Early		

When reporting decay, it is important to report the percentage of decay affecting walls and calyxes, and the percentage affecting stems.

Refer to General Inspection Instructions for information not covered in this section.

Points to Remember When Reporting Decay.

- Separate decay affecting walls and calyxes from that affecting stems.
- Describe the type of decay.
- When decay is in excess of tolerance, state degree or stage of advancement.
- Black or dark discoloration at cut end of stem caused by decay retardant treatment should not be confused with decay.
- If containers are wet or stained from decayed peppers, so state under "Condition of Load and Containers" on the notesheet and on the face of the certificate.
- If high samples of decay can be associated with a mark, lot number, or location in load, it shall be so reported on the certificate.
- When reporting decay, report on only one line of the "Average Defects" column and the "Off-size/Defects" section of the certificate. A breakdown of the percentage affecting walls and calyxes and the percentage affecting stems only shall be made in the "Other" section whenever the decay tolerance is exceeded.

(9) Color(*)

Peppers must be green to meet the requirements of the unqualified U.S. grades. Green peppers may be described as "green," "good green," or "dark green" color.

A pepper showing pale green to whitish-green areas, caused by "shading," may meet the green color requirement if the surface area is predominantly green.

A pepper showing color or turning color, other than green, shall be scored as a condition defect against the general lot tolerance for defects. Consequently, peppers showing any color other than characteristic of the lot, shall likewise be scored as a condition defect. However, a pepper showing yellowing or yellow areas caused by sunburn shall be scored as sunburn, a permanent defect, rather than turning color, a Condition defect. **Note:** Score as a Condition defect at destination and as a defect against the lot tolerance at shipping point.

**** On occasion lot may be marked or designated as "Chocolate," "Suntan," or "Stripers." These are strictly trade names and shall not be used in connection with a U.S. grade. ****

Color Specified or Mixed Color. Sweet peppers which conform to the requirement of the respective grades, except for color, may be designated in accordance with the facts. As examples: "U.S. No. 1 Red," "U.S. No. 1 Yellow," or "U.S. No. 1 Purple" may be certified when an average of 90% or more of the peppers in the lot show any amount of a shade of the specified characteristic color. There is no restriction on the percentage of green peppers that may be present in any one container, provided that the lot as a whole averages 90% or more showing some of the specified characteristic color.

When the peppers fail to meet the color requirements of a qualified U.S. grade such as "U.S. No. 1 Red," "U.S. No. 1 Yellow," or "U.S. No. 1 Purple," they may be certified as "U.S. No. 1 Mixed Color."

When an application for inspection is requested on the basis of "U.S. No. 1" and the only defect in excess of the tolerance is due to a specific color or turning a specific color (other than green), do not simply state under the "Grade" heading "U.S. No. 1 Mixed Color." The applicant purchased the lot as "U.S. No. 1" and is entitled to know whether it does or does not grade "U.S. No. 1."

Green Lots:

**** 1. Peppers with any color other than green, in a green pepper lot are scored against the 10% total defects tolerance and reported as Condition defects. (There is no "90% stipulation for green peppers). ****

2. "Unqualified" means that "green" color is not "qualified." While the shade of green color is reported under Condition, no statement concerning the green color is made in the Grade statement.

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November 1991

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3. Report only as "U.S. Fancy," "U.S. No. 1," "Fails to grade U.S. No. 1," etc. When a grade is reported without reference to color, it is assumed the lot is green.

4. Green lots with more than 10% color or turning color peppers fail to grade. If the lot exceeds the 10% defects tolerance ONLY because of peppers with color or turning color, the lot may be certified as "Mixed Color." Report as "Fails to grade U.S. No. ___ account condition. Now grades U.S. No. ___ Mixed Color." ****

Colored lots:

1. Green peppers, or peppers of contrasting colors (i.e. red peppers in a yellow lot), are scored against the 10% off-color allowance as referenced in section 51.3271 (b) of the standard.

2. "Qualified" means that at least 90% of the peppers in the LOT must show ANY amount of the specified characteristic color.

3. When meeting the "90%" rule (not more than 10% green or contrasting colors), color is reported with grade. (Example: "U.S. Fancy Red" or "U.S. No. 1 Yellow.")

4. Allow 10% for grade defects. This DOES NOT include those peppers scored against the 10% off-color allowance.

5. If the lot meets grade requirements EXCEPT for the 10% color requirement, the lot then grades "Mixed Color." Report as "Fails to grade U.S. No. ___ (color) account of failing to meet the requirements of color. Now grades U.S. No. ___ Mixed Color."

6. At no time shall an unused portion of one of the tolerances (10% total defects tolerance or 10% off-color allowance) be used to offset the other. Example: A lot has 12% other colors and 8% total grade defects. The excess 2% for off-color MAY NOT be used in conjunction with the 8% grade defects in order to bring the lot into grade.

(10) Grade

Under this heading a statement shall be made showing whether or not the lot(s) inspected meet the requirements of the grade or other specifications on which the application was based, be it the percentage of U.S. No. 1 Quality or the grade marked on the containers.

Size in Connection with Grade Statements. When the minimum and maximum size requested by the applicant differs from that specified in the grade, or the lot fails to meet a size specification, the "Grade" statement must be qualified to indicate the variation.

Thus, the grade statement for a lot of U.S. Fancy peppers failing to meet the minimum size requirement would read: "Fails to grade U.S. Fancy account of undersize."

Unless Otherwise Specified. If a lot does not meet the size specified in the grade but does meet a smaller size, or if the applicant wishes to specify a smaller or a larger minimum or establish a maximum size, then this size **must be** included in the "Grade" statement. **Example:** "Fails to grade U.S. No. 1, 2½ inches minimum diameter, 3¾ inches maximum diameter, 2¾ inches minimum length, account of condition."

No Size Limitation Specified in the Grade. If there are no size requirements in the grade, the applicant may specify minimum and/or maximum size upon which the inspection is to be made. Therefore, the specified sizes must qualify the grade statement. Also, report under the "Remarks" section the specified minimum and/or maximum size "at applicant's request."

Note: When the size is certified as meeting that required in the grade, it is not necessary to make a size statement in connection with the grade.

When a size statement is made in connection with grade, the size classification must be supported by the description of size in the "Other" and/or "Count" on the certificate.

Examples:

1. U.S. No. 2, 2 inch minimum diameter, 2½ inch minimum length.
2. Fails to grade U.S. No. 2, 2¼ inch minimum diameter and length account of grade defects.

Color in Connection with Grade Statements. Lots of peppers may or may not grade due to unqualified or qualified color classifications.

The grades in the U.S. standards for sweet peppers are written as unqualified green color. Therefore, any grade statement without a qualifying color is the same as certifying green color. **Example:** "U.S. No. 1" means that this lot is 100% green color or the percentage of peppers that are not green (turning red or red or some other specific color) are within the limitations of the general tolerance.

Color. In order for a lot of peppers to be certified as a specific color, 90% of the peppers in the lot must show any amount of the shade of that specific color and still meet all other requirements.

Examples:

1. U.S. No. 1 Red, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch minimum diameter, 2-1/2 inch minimum length.
2. Fails to grade U.S. Fancy Red account of condition.

Mixed Color. A lot of peppers shall be certified as "mixed color" if the peppers fail to meet the unqualified requirements (green) or qualified requirements as any other specific color. Thus, a lot showing 65% red peppers and 35% green may be certified as "U.S. No. ___ Mixed Color." A lot with 85% green peppers may be certified as "U.S. No. ___ Mixed Color" only if colored peppers were the reason for the lot not making grade. (See paragraph entitled "Color in Connection with Grade Statements.")

(11) Remarks

Under this heading any explanatory or qualifying statements that are necessary to complete the certificate should be made. They may include one or more of the following:

- Restrictions to load, size, or weight.
- Information supplied by the applicant such as, carrier number, lot number, designations, etc.
- Cross reference to another certificate number such as in reinspections, appeals, etc.
- Percentage of U.S. No. 1 or U.S. No. 2 Quality.
- Contract specifications.
- Factors not affecting grade at applicant's request.

Inspection Instructions for Other Peppers

(1) General

During the past few years the Inspection Service has experienced an increasing number of applications for inspection of peppers other than sweet peppers.

At the present time, there are only U.S. Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers. Therefore, definitions of injury, damage, or serious damage do not apply. However, if a factor of Quality or Condition occurs, it may be described as "affected by." (Describe degree and area affected.)

(2) Products Inspected

When reporting the name of the commodity in the "Product" section of the certificate, enter the common name of the peppers. If the type is marked on the container, then report that type of pepper in the "Product" section, such as: "Cubanelle Peppers," etc. If no type is marked on the container or stated by the applicant, and the inspector is not sure of the type, then describe as "Hot Peppers," "Long Green Peppers," "Long Hot Pepper," "Green Cherry Peppers," etc.

Cubanelles. Generally, cubanelles are known and recognized universally. Cubanelles are usually light to dark green with some varieties being full yellow at maturity. They all have the same general shape in common and cannot be mistaken for other types of hot peppers.

The kind of containers have varied just as varieties have. They range from lugs, wirebound crates, and cartons, to mesh sacks, jute bags, and even film bags. It is equally important that the containers be accurately noted.

(3) Pack

"Fill" will probably apply to most containers, except for bags and sacks in which the "Pack" heading should be blocked out on the notesheet. Cubanelle Peppers in bushel hampers may be the only exception, whereas, the top of the basket is faced. Thus, **well filled, fairly well filled, slightly slack, and slack** (slackness reported in inches) will apply.

(4) Condition

The following shall be reported:

- Firmness, freshness.
- Color.
- Other Condition Defects.
- Freezing, freezing injury.
- Decay.

Firmness and Freshness. Firmness and freshness descriptions and instructions mentioned in the Sweet Pepper section should be applied.

Color. Hot peppers may show a wide range of colors. Light green, dark green, turning yellow to yellow may be used to describe Cubanelles and Melrose peppers. However, other types and varieties of hot peppers may be best described as "characteristic color" or "mostly turning red to red, many light green to green." Banana Hot Peppers may be described as "light yellow to bright red."

Little emphasis should be placed on describing color due to its varying nature. A short, concise description will suffice, unless the color is unnatural due to extensive heat or aging.

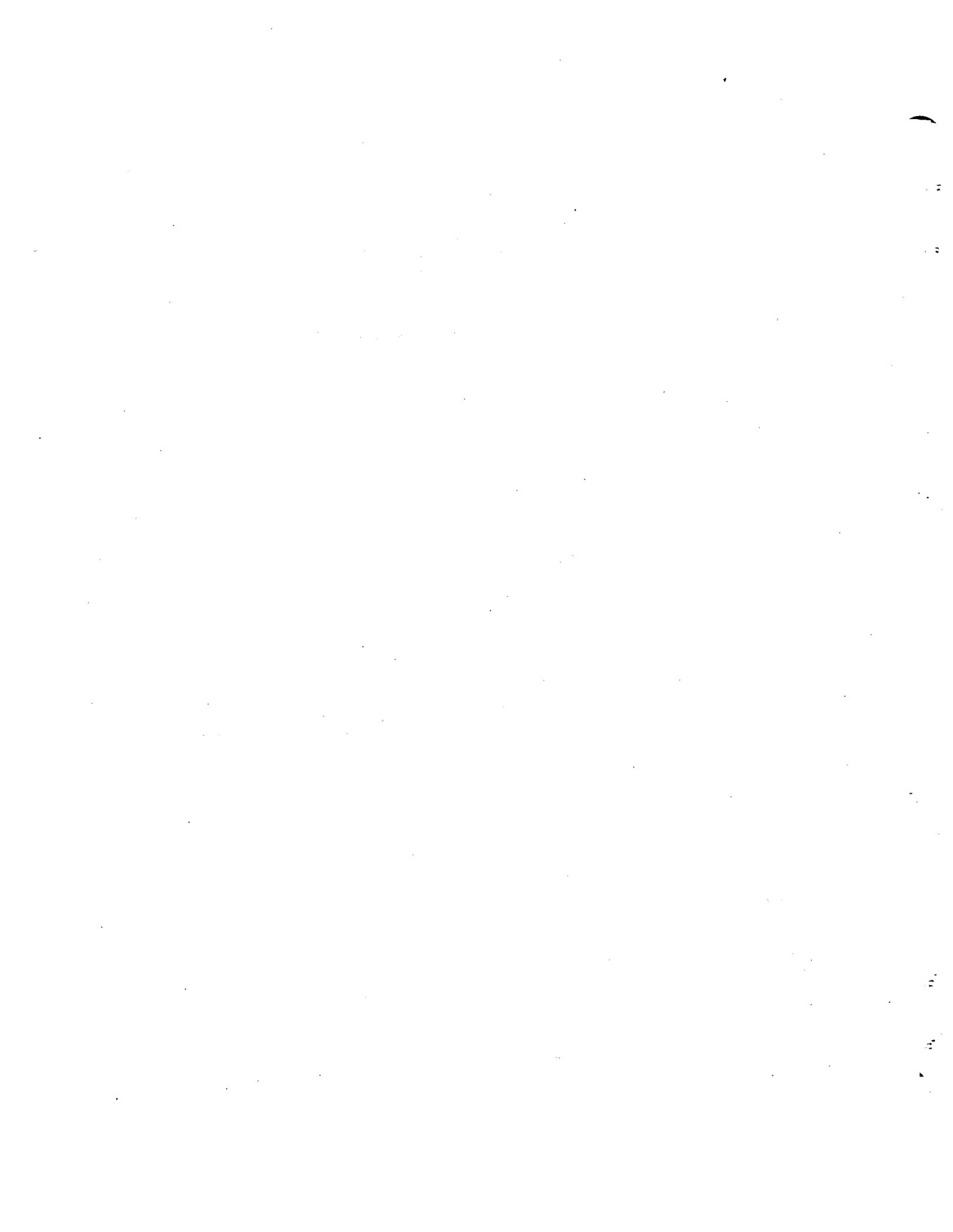
Other Condition Defects and Freezing or Freezing Injury. See paragraph covering above factors in the Sweet Pepper section.

Decay. It will not be necessary when reporting decay of peppers, other than sweet peppers, to separate the decay affecting stems from walls and calyxes. Due to the fact that this type of pepper pod is compact, the calyx and stem being smaller proportionally than that of a sweet pepper, all are considered as one. Therefore, when decay is located in the stem-calyx area, it is considered to effect the whole pepper.

Appendix I

U.S. Standards





Revised, February 2007, HU-152-15(a), Appendix I,
Sweet Peppers and Other Peppers, Shipping Point and Market
Inspection Instructions, November 1991



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Agricultural
Marketing
Service**

**Fruit and
Vegetable
Programs**

**Fresh
Products
Branch**

United States Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers

Corrected and Effective November 17, 2005

United States Standards for Grades of Sweet Peppers¹

Corrected and Effective November 17, 2005

Grades

51.3270 U.S. Fancy.

51.3271 U.S. No. 1.

51.3272 U.S. No. 2.

Reserved

51.3273 [Reserved].

Tolerances

51.3274 Tolerances.

Application of Tolerances

51.3275 Application of tolerances.

Definitions

51.3276 Mature green.

51.3277 Similar varietal characteristics.

51.3278 Firm.

51.3279 Well shaped.

51.3280 Injury.

51.3281 Fairly well shaped.

51.3282 Damage.

51.3283 Not seriously misshapen.

51.3284 Serious damage.

51.3285 Diameter.

51.3286 Length.

Grades**§51.3270 U.S. Fancy.**

"U.S. Fancy" consists of mature green sweet peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when more than one variety and/or color are marked on the container), which are firm, well shaped, and free from sunscald, freezing injury, decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, and from injury caused by scars, hail, sunburn, disease, insects, mechanical or other means.

(a) **Size.** The diameter of each pepper shall be not less than 3 inches and the length of each pepper shall be not less than 3-1/2 inches.

(b) **Color.** Any lot of peppers which meets all the requirements of this grade, except those relating to green color, may be designated as "U.S. Fancy" with the characteristic color specified in connection with this grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of the specified characteristic color, and provided further, that if the peppers fail to meet the color requirements of either "U.S. Fancy" or "U.S. Fancy (color specified)," they may, when requested, be designated as "U.S. Fancy Mixed Color" (See Tolerances, §51.3274).

§51.3271 U.S. No. 1.

"U.S. No. 1" consists of mature green sweet peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when more than one variety and/or color are marked on the container), which are firm, fairly well shaped, and free from sunscald and decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, and free from damage caused by freezing injury, hail, scars, sunburn, disease, insects, mechanical or other means.

(a) **Size.** Unless otherwise specified, the diameter of each pepper shall be not less than 2-1/2 inches and the length of each pepper shall be not less than 2-1/2 inches.

(b) **Color.** Any lot of peppers which meet all the requirements of this grade, except those relating to green color, may be designated as "U.S. No. 1" with the characteristic color specified in connection with this grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of the specified characteristic color, and provided further, that if the peppers fail to meet the color requirements of either "U.S. No. 1" or "U.S. No. 1 (color specified)," they may, when requested, be designated as "U.S. No. 1 Mixed Color" (See Tolerances, §51.3274).

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.

§51.3272 U.S. No. 2.

"U.S. No. 2" consists of mature green sweet peppers of similar varietal characteristics (except when more than one variety and/or color are marked on the container), which are firm, not seriously misshapen, and free from sunscald and decay affecting calyxes and/or walls, decay affecting stems, and free from serious damage caused by freezing injury, hail, scars, sunburn, disease, insects, mechanical or other means.

(a) **Color.** Any lot of peppers which meet all the requirements of this grade, except those relating to green color, may be designated as "U.S. No. 2" with the characteristic color specified in connection with this grade, provided that at least 90 percent of the peppers show any amount of the specified characteristic color, and provided further that if the peppers fail to meet the color requirements of either "U.S. No. 2" or "U.S. No. 2 (color specified)," they may, when requested, be designated as "U.S. No. 2 Mixed Color" (See Tolerances, §51.3274).

Reserved**§51.3273 [Reserved].****Tolerances****§51.3274 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 a total of 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, including therein not more than 2 percent for peppers affected by decay affecting calyxes and/or walls; and,

(2) **For off-size.** Not more than 10 percent of the peppers in any lot may fail to meet the size specifications.

(b) U.S. No. 2 grade.

(1) **For defects.** Not more than a total of 10 percent of the peppers in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, but not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for peppers affected by sunscald or affected by decay affecting stems only, including therein not more than 2 percent for peppers affected by decay affecting calyxes and/or walls.

Application of Tolerances**§51.3275 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**§51.3276 Mature green.**

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

§51.3277 Similar varietal characteristics.

"Similar varietal characteristics" mean that each pepper is of the same general type (except when more than one variety and/or color are marked on the container). For example, thin walled types and thick walled types of the same color shall not be mixed within the container.

§51.3278 Firm.

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

§51.3279 Well shaped.

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

§51.3280 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) Scars when scattered over the surface and aggregating more than the area of a circle five-eighths inch in diameter or one scar three-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 3-1/2 inch in length and 3 inches in diameter, or correspondingly greater areas of scars on larger peppers;
- (b) Sunburn when causing discoloration which affects an aggregate area exceeding 5 percent of the surface of the pepper;
- (c) Bacterial Spot when aggregating more than the area of a circle five-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 3-1/2 inch in length and 3 inches in diameter, or correspondingly greater areas of spots on larger peppers; and,
- (d) Hail or similar injury when the skin is healed and the affected areas aggregate more than the equivalent of a circle three-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 3-1/2 inch in length and 3 inches in diameter, or correspondingly greater areas of injury on larger peppers.

§51.3281 Fairly well shaped.

"Fairly well shaped" means that the pepper may be more than slightly indented or curved, but is not of the type commonly known as "button" or is not decidedly crooked, constricted or deformed.

§51.3282 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) Scars when scattered over the surface and aggregating more than the area of a circle five-eighths inch in diameter or one scar three-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inch in length and 2-1/2 inches in diameter, or correspondingly lesser or greater areas of scars on smaller or larger peppers;
- (b) Sunburn when causing discoloration which affects an aggregate area exceeding 15 percent of the surface of the pepper;
- (c) Bacterial Spot when aggregating more than the area of a circle five-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inch in length and 2-1/2 inches in diameter, or correspondingly lesser or greater areas of spots on smaller or larger peppers; and,
- (d) Hail or similar injury when the skin is healed and the affected areas aggregate more than the equivalent of a circle three-eighths inch in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inch in length and 2-1/2 inches in diameter, or correspondingly lesser or greater areas of injury on smaller or larger peppers.

§51.3283 Not seriously misshapen.

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

§51.3284 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) Sunscald;
- (b) Any opening or puncture through the fleshy wall of the pepper;
- (c) Scars when scattered over the surface and aggregating more than the area of a circle 1 inch in diameter or one scar three-fourths inches in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inch in length and 2-1/2 inches in diameter, or correspondingly lesser or greater areas of scars on smaller or larger peppers;
- (d) Sunburn when causing discoloration which affects an aggregate area exceeding 25 percent of the surface of the pepper;
- (e) Bacterial Spot when aggregating more than the area of a circle 1 inch in diameter on a pepper 2-1/2 inch in length and 2-1/2 inches in diameter, or correspondingly lesser or greater areas of spots on smaller or larger peppers; and,
- (f) Decay affecting stems only.

§51.3285 Diameter.

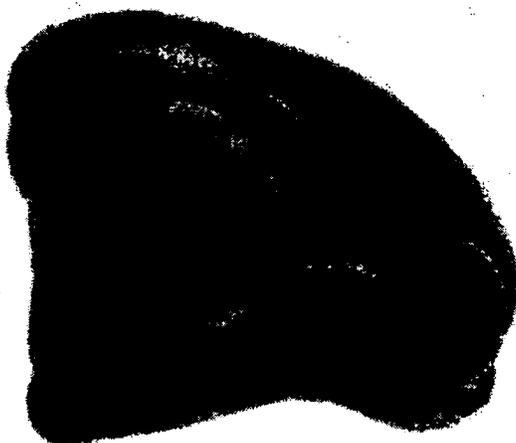
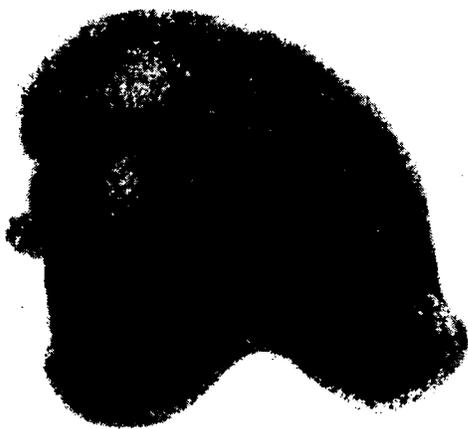
"Diameter" means the greatest dimension measured at right angles to the longitudinal axis.

§51.3286 Length.

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



Lower Limit "Well Shaped"
U.S. Fancy



Lower Limit "Fairly Well Shaped"
U.S. No. 1



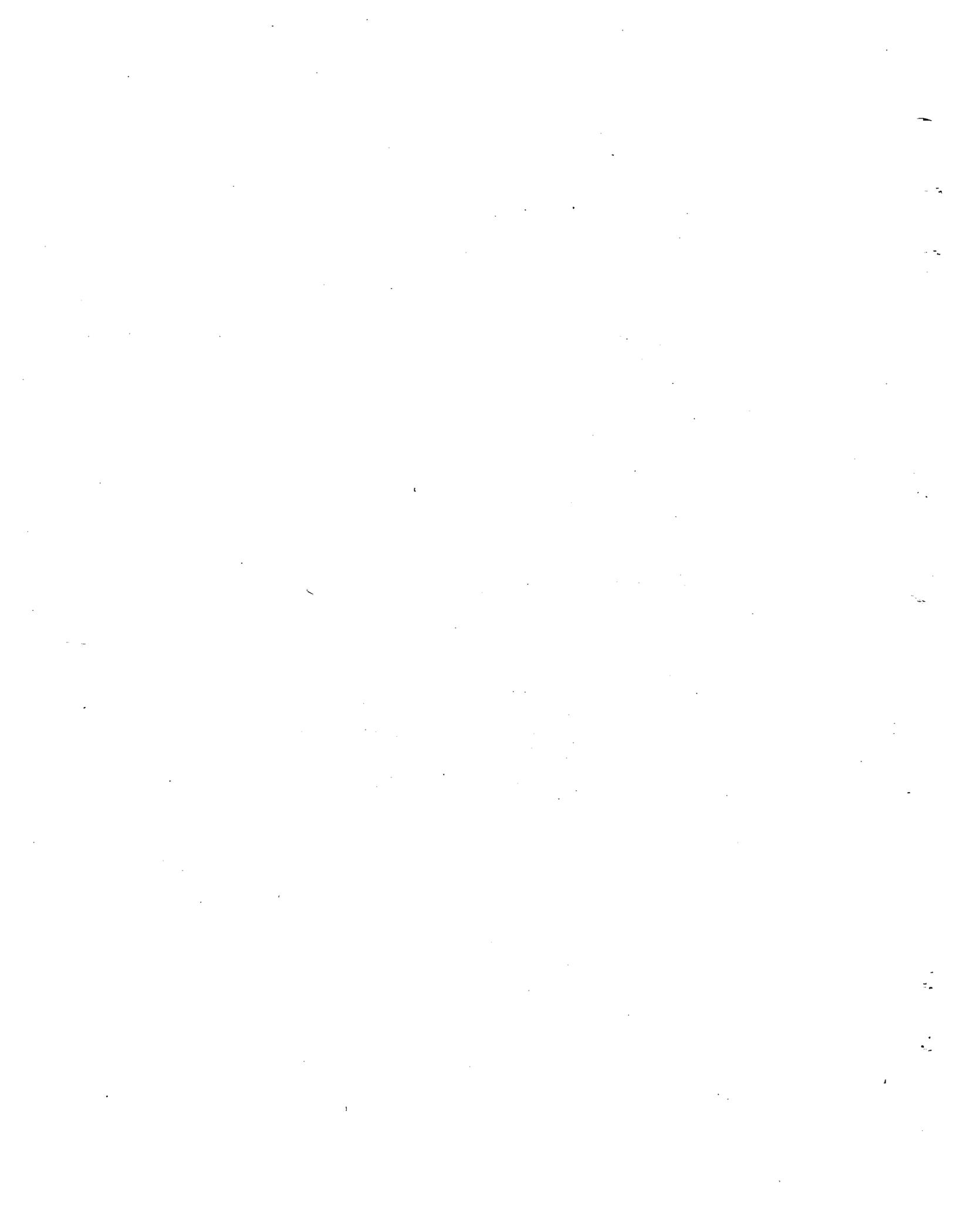
Lower Limit "Not Seriously Misshapen"
U.S. No. 2



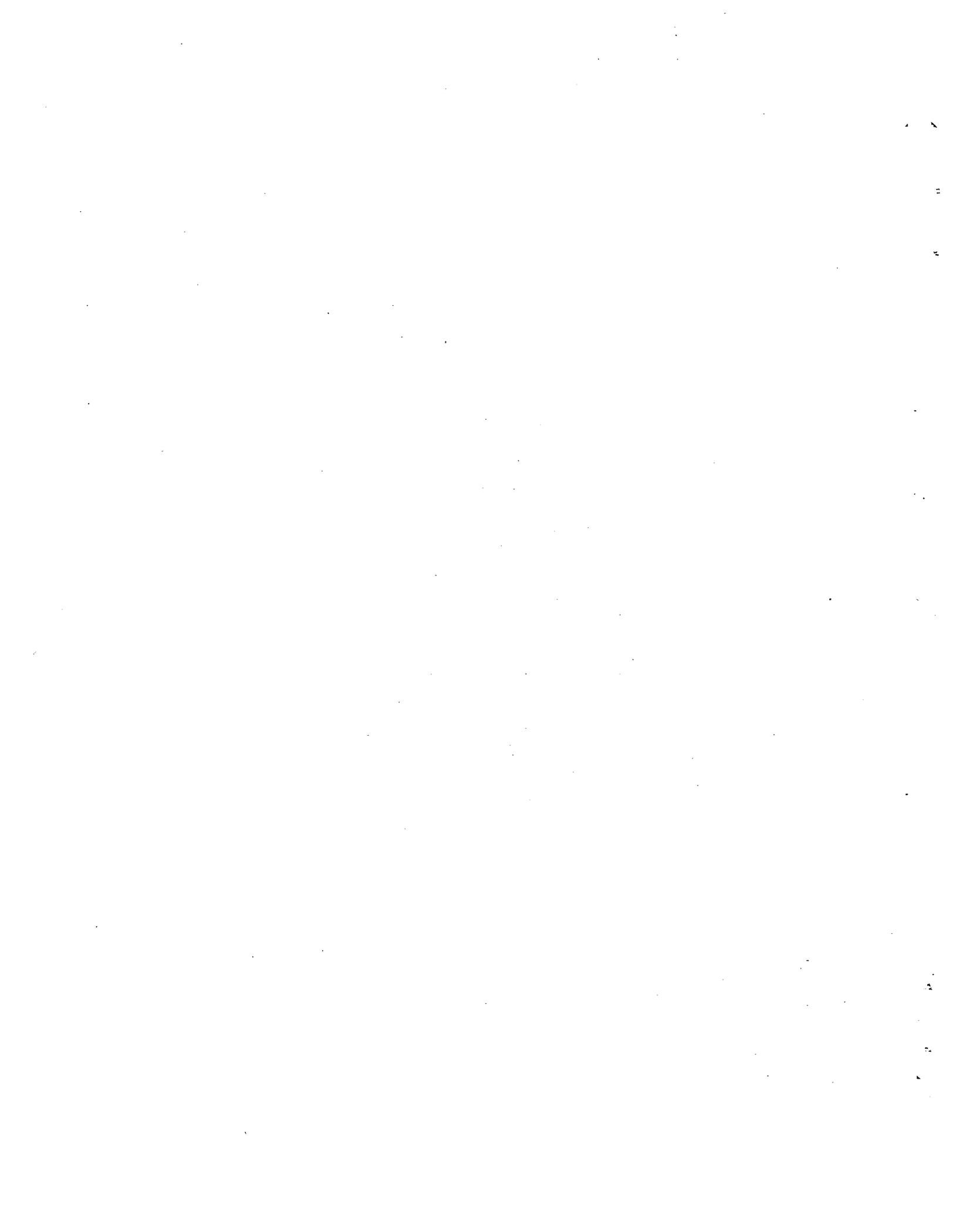
Appendix II

Certificate and Notesheet Examples





Shipping Point Certificates



SERIAL NO
EXAMPLE # 1

INITIAL AND NO.
ABCD 123456

INSPECTION POINT
YOUNTOWN, STATE

INSPECTION POINT
CARRIER TRAILER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
FEDERAL-STATE INSPECTION CERTIFICATE

APPLICANT
PRODUCE Co., Inc.
YOUNTOWN, STATE

INSPECTION BEGUN
9:00 AM DECEMBER 1, 1991

INSPECTION COMPLETED
9:30 AM DECEMBER 1, 1991

INSPECTION POINT
MECHANICAL REFRIGERATOR

GRADE
U.S. No. 1, Red

PACK, COUNT, SIZE (Range, Other)
No

SOFT ROT
Decay

TYPE AND SIZE
OF CONTAINER
CARTONS

MANIFEST
252

PRODUCT
"Thomas"
BRAND, "RED"
OR "FRESH"
VEGETABLES

PACK, COUNT, SIZE (Range, Other)
GENERALLY 2 1/2 to 3 inches
in diameter and length.
No off-size.

SOFT ROT
Decay

TYPE AND SIZE
OF CONTAINER
CARTONS

MANIFEST
756

PRODUCT
"Thomas"
BRAND LOT: FRESH, firm and crisp.
GENERALLY TURNING RED TO RED.
GRADE DEFECTS
WITHIN TOLERANCE. FRESH VEGETABLE LOT: GENERALLY FRESH, FIRM AND CRISP.
GENERALLY GREEN COLOR.
GRADE DEFECTS AVERAGE WITHIN TOLERANCE.

PACK, COUNT, SIZE (Range, Other)
GENERALLY 2 to 3, mostly average
2 1/2 to 3 inches in diameter
and length, off-size
: WITHIN TOLERANCE.
RANGE 42 to 75, average 61
peppers per carton.

SOFT ROT
decay affecting
stems.

TYPE AND SIZE
OF CONTAINER
PEPPERS PER CARTON.

MANIFEST
EACH LOT: Mature, clean, fairly well shaped, bright and fairly smooth to smooth.

PRODUCT
THOMAS BRAND LOT: FRESH, firm and crisp. GENERALLY TURNING RED TO RED. GRADE DEFECTS
WITHIN TOLERANCE. FRESH VEGETABLE LOT: GENERALLY FRESH, FIRM AND CRISP. GENERALLY GREEN COLOR.
GRADE DEFECTS AVERAGE WITHIN TOLERANCE.

REMARKS: COUNT OF PEPPERS PER CARTON IN "FRESH VEGETABLE LOT" DETERMINED AT APPLICANTS REQUEST.

WEIGHT

FEE

EXPENSE

TOTAL

INSPECTION POINT

CARRIER

TRAILER

CONDITION OF CARRIER

INSPECTION POINT

CARRIER

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

FEDERAL STATE INSPECTION CERTIFICATE

The conduct of all services and the licensing of inspecting/sampling personnel under the regulations governing such services shall be accomplished without discrimination as to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

SERIAL NO

EXAMPLE 11 22

APPLICANT: PEPPER PRODUCE Co. ADDRESS OF APPLICANT: ANYTOWN STATE
 SHIPPER: SAME AS ABOVE ADDRESS OF SHIPPER: SAME AS ABOVE
 INSPECTION BEGUN: 1:00 PM DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 1991 INSPECTION COMPLETED: NOVEMBER 7, 1991
 INSPECTION POINT: ANYTOWN, STATE
 CARRIER: TRUCK TRAILER
 INITIAL AND NO: ST-0110 FLA.

PRODUCT	BRAND OR STAMPING	MANIFEST	TYPE AND SIZE OF CONTAINER	PACK, COUNT, SIZE (Range, Ounce)	SOFT ROT DECAY	GRADE
SWEET PEPPERS	"PRETTY BRAND"	1008	CARTONS	GENERALLY 2 3/4 to 3 1/4 inches in diameter and 3 to 3 1/2 inches in length. OFF-SIZE WELL WITHIN TOLERANCE.	No	U.S. No. 1
Mature, clean, fairly well shaped, bright and fairly smooth.						
Fresh, firm and crisp. GENERALLY GREEN COLOR. GRADE						
DEFECTS WITHIN TOLERANCE.						

WEIGHT FEE
 EXPENSE TOTAL

REMARKS

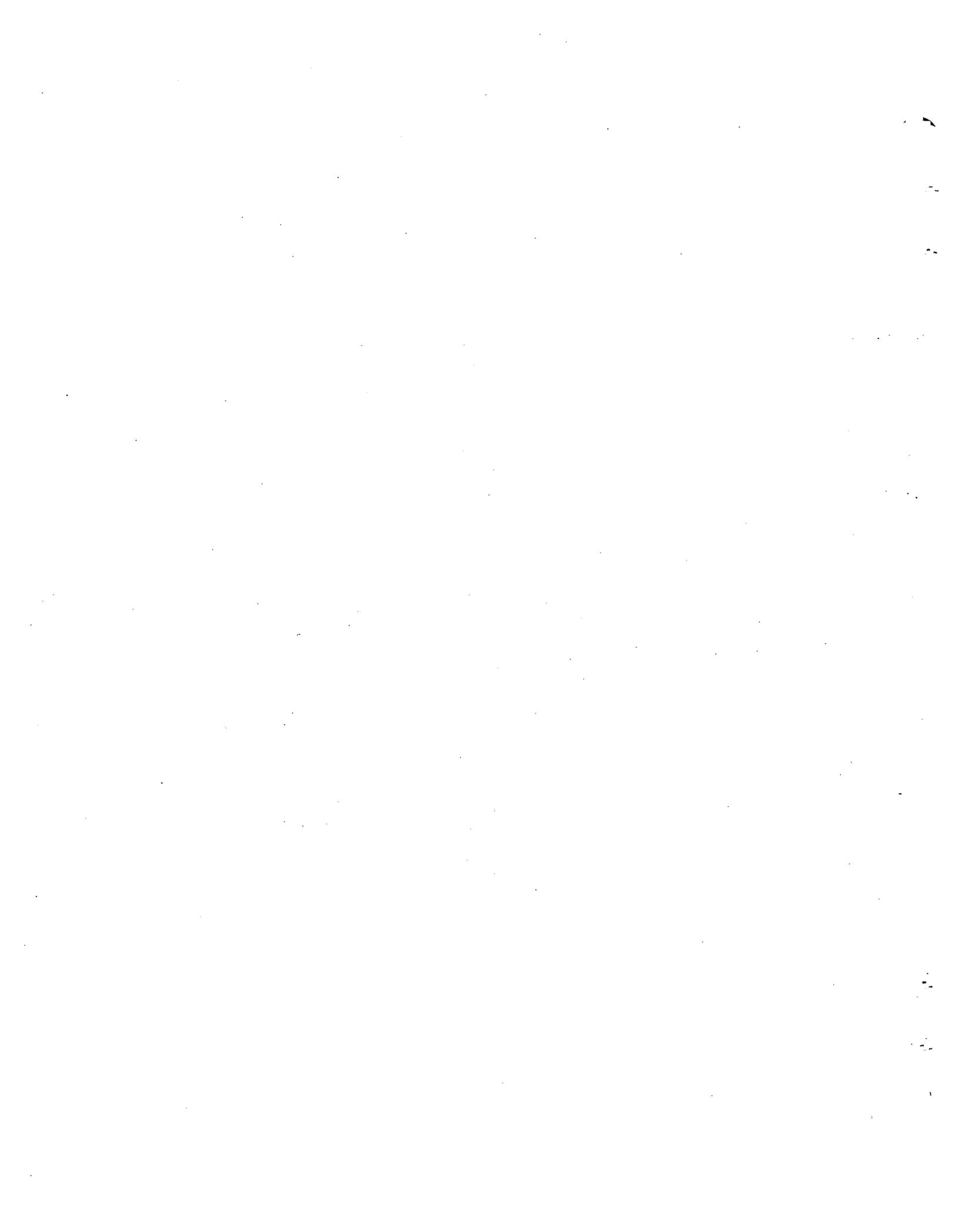
This certificate is issued in compliance with the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture governing the inspection of various products pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1621 et seq.), and the applicable statutes of the State in which issued, and is admissible as prima facie evidence in all courts of the United States and State courts where provided by law.

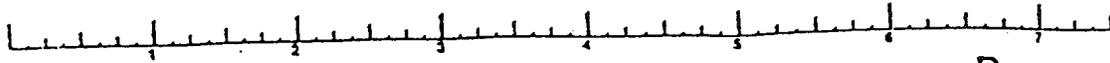
WARNING: Any person who knowingly shall falsely make, issue, alter, forge, or counterfeit this certificate, or participate in any such actions, is subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

I, the undersigned, a duly authorized inspector of the United States Department of Agriculture, hereby certify that at the request of the applicant and on the date indicated, samples of the described products were inspected and the quality and/or condition as shown by said samples were herein stated.

Jane Doe (INSPECTOR)

Market Notesheets and Certificates





A	B	C	D
WF size: 3-4 1/2" dia 3-4 1/4" L	WF size: —	X size: X	

SCORE SHEET

Lot Number	Other ID.	TEMP.	Sample	Q	DK Total	SKM	Cx W	SDA		Shriv		US
								D	2b	D	SD	
A		50	50	5	3	0	3	3	1	3	2	—
		50	50	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	—
		45	50	2	4	0	4	1	0	0	0	—
		50	53	3	7	0	7 (12)	1	0	2	1	—
				(6%)	(8%)	X	(8%)	(3%)	(Σ)	(3%)	(2%)	X
Q							4-15%					
C							stirring & water stages early					
B		41	110	0	2	0	2	1		3		
			109	0	0	0	0	1		4		
		43	112	2	0	0	0	0		2		
			103	2	3	0	3	2		1		
		41	116	1	2	0	2	2		3		
			122	1	2	0	2	0		4		
		45	124	0	0	0	0	0		2		
			115	0	4	2	2	2		2		
		45	118	1	2	0	2	2		3		
		42	112	1	0	0	0	1		1		
				(11%)	(21%)	-1/2	(11%)	(11%)		(3%)		
C							Bring water soaked dates in moderate st.					

REMARKS / RESTRICTIONS / SPI
 Lot B - Count determined & reported at applicant's request.

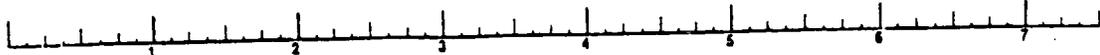
CARLOT Basis: 52-	REPORTED TO: Bill M.	INSPECTED BY: John Doe
HOURLY Basis: _____	DATE: 1-16-91 TIME: 1:50 p	ASSISTED BY: Jane Smith
TRAVEL Time: _____	REQUESTED BY: Greg R.	
EXPENSES: _____	DATE: 1-16-91 TIME: 4:30 a	
55 TOTAL: 52-		

A: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	B: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	C: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	D: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	FILE CODE HOURS: _____ MINUTE: _____ O.I. (P.M.): _____ O.I. (A.M.): _____ O.I. (M.S.): _____ OTHER: _____
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--

CARRIER or LOT IDENTIFICATION: NO I D PREFIX NUMBER STATE Carrier No. Stated by: _____ Additional Lot ID.: _____ Carrier Type / Name: _____ Refrigeration Unit: <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> OFF Doors: <input type="checkbox"/> OPEN <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSED Condition of Carrier: _____ Inspection Site: 701 Market Street	LOADING: Landed - L.O. Pkg. Under - P.U. Under - U. In Cart - L.I.	INSPECTION NOTESHEET U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE FRUIT & VEGETABLE DIVISION CERTIFICATE NUMBER: Example # 2 INSPECTION STARTED: m m d d y y Hour Min. A/P 0 6 2 0 9 1 0 9 : 1 0 A M INSPECTION COMPLETED: m m d d y y Hour Min. A/P 0 6 2 0 9 1 1 0 : 0 0 A M APPLICANT: Produce Co, Inc. Address: Anytown, State SHIPPER: Packers & Shippers Address: Yourtown, State
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A: PRODUCT: Sweet Peppers NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: 280 CTNS TEMPERATURES: 48 - 52°F WSP: COUNTY: N	BRANDS / MARKS: "Pepper, 1/4 bu, Teddy Bertven Co, McAllen TX, Produce of Mexico"
B: PRODUCT: NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: TEMPERATURES: WSP: COUNTY:	
C: PRODUCT: NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: TEMPERATURES: WSP: COUNTY:	
D: PRODUCT: NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: TEMPERATURES: WSP: COUNTY:	

Condition of Load & Containers:
 STACKED ON PALLETS AT ABOVE LOCATION
 INTACT THROUGH LOAD
 PARTLY UNLOADED



A

B

C

D

PACK WF SIZE <i>Gen 2 1/2 - 3 1/4" D</i> <i>2 1/2 - 3 1/2" L</i>	PACK SIZE:	PACK SIZE:
---	---------------	---------------

SCORESHEET				Q	DK	W	S	Brushing		Pity	US	US
					Total	+C	STAT	D	SD	Arts	2 1/2	→
PLI Number	Other ID.	TEMP.	Surge								L	D
		48	50	4	0	-		7	1	0	0	0
		49	50	2	0	-		4	0	1	-	-
			✓	6	0	-		3	1	2	-	-
		52	✓	3	0	-		3	0	0	-	-
		49	62	3	0	-		⑩ 10	4	⑥ 2	-	-
M												
Cl				7%	X			107/2%		2%	X	X
FW-WS				SCRIP								
FF				MS.								
Crisp												
GG color												

REMARKS / RESTRICTIONS / SPI

PILOT Basis: <u>52-</u> HOURLY Basis: _____ TRAVEL Time: _____ EXPENSES: _____ EST. TOTAL: <u>52-</u>	REPORTED TO: <u>Alex</u> DATE: <u>6-20-91</u> TIME: <u>10:05 A</u> REQUESTED BY: <u>Alex</u> DATE: <u>6-20-91</u> TIME: <u>05:45 A</u>	INSPECTED BY: <u>Jane Doe</u> ASSISTED BY: _____
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

INSPECTION CERTIFICATE

EXAMPLE # 2

Inspection Station: 0612019110910A
 Number of Containers: 280 ctns

Applicant: Produce Co, Inc.
 Address: Anytown State
 Shipper: Packers & Shippers
 Address: Anytown State

Lot No.: 701 Market Street
 Brand/Marking: No Brand
 Grade: No Brand

Product: Sweet Peppers
 Variety: X

Grade	Quantity	Weight	Value	Defects
A	07	00		Quality (scars, misshapen, 4 to 12%) Bruising (6 to 16%) Pitted areas Decay Check-sum
B	10	02		
C	02	00		
D	00	00		
Other	19	02		Brusing scattered throughout

Remarks: Fails to grade US No. 1. only account of condition.

Inspector: [Signature]
 Date: [Date]

Anytown, State S 52-

APPLICANT: [Name]
 ADDRESS: [Address]
 CITY: [City] STATE: [State] ZIP: [ZIP]

SHIPPER: [Name]
 ADDRESS: [Address]
 CITY: [City] STATE: [State] ZIP: [ZIP]

LOT NO.: [Lot No.] GRADE: [Grade]

INSPECTION STATION: [Station No.]

INSPECTOR: [Inspector Name]

DATE: [Date]

QUANTITY FULL: [] CANS: []
 QUANTITY HALF: [] CANS: []
 QUANTITY ONLY: [] CANS: []

LOT WEIGHTS: [] CANS: []

INSPECTION RESULTS:

A: NUMBER	05	UNIT	VAR
B: NUMBER	05	UNIT	VAR
C: NUMBER	05	UNIT	VAR
D: NUMBER	05	UNIT	VAR

QUALITY FULL: [] CANS: []
 QUALITY HALF: [] CANS: []
 QUALITY ONLY: [] CANS: []

LOT WEIGHTS: [] CANS: []

INSPECTION RESULTS:

INSPECTOR: [Signature]

A: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	B: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	C: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	D: NUMBER SIZE UNIT GRADE ACCOUNT	FEE CODE HOURS O.T. (Per) TRAIL L. HOURS O.T. (Per) HOURS O.T. (Per)	INSPECTION CODE U M D Y HOUR MIN. AM PRODUCT TYPE PRODUCT CODE	CERTIFICATE NUMBER ACTION
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CARRIER or LOT IDENTIFICATION: 10126535TN LOADING: UL INSPECTION NOTESHEET U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE FRUIT & VEGETABLE DIVISION

PREFIX NUMBER STATE: 10 126535 TN CERTIFICATE NUMBER: Example # 3

Carrier No. Stated by: Applicant INSPECTION STARTED: m m d d y y Hour Min. A/P 0 3 1 4 9 1 | 1 1 : 0 0 | A M

Additional Lot ID.: PO # 314 Inspection Completed: m m d d y y Hour Min. A/P 0 3 1 4 9 1 | 1 2 : 2 0 | P M

Carrier Type/Name: _____ APPLICANT: Produce Co, Inc

Refrigeration Unit: ON OFF Doors: OPEN CLOSED Address: Anytown, State

Condition of Carrier: _____ SHIPPER: Packers & Shippers

Inspection Site: Dock, Bay # 21 Address: Yourtown, State

A: PRODUCT: Sweet Peppers BRANDS / MARKS: "Veronica, 1 1/4 bu, Produce of Mexico"
 NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: 294 ctns WSP: COUNTY: N marked "EX-Lge" and "F"
 TEMPERATURES: 36-37°

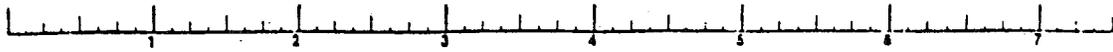
B: PRODUCT: Sweet Peppers same as above
 NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: 714 ctns WSP: COUNTY: N marked "Lge" or "Med"
 TEMPERATURES: 36-37°

C: PRODUCT: _____
 NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: _____ WSP: COUNTY: _____
 TEMPERATURES: _____

D: PRODUCT: _____
 NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: _____ WSP: COUNTY: _____
 TEMPERATURES: _____

Condition of Load & Containers: STACKED ON PALLETS AT ABOVE LOCATION () INTACT THROUGH LOAD () PARTLY UNLOADED

on dock platform.



A	B	C	D
PACK: WF SIZE: —	PACK: WF SIZE: —	PACK: SIZE: —	PACK: SIZE: —

SCORESHEET				DK	WALL	stem	Turn	Shred		
PLI Number	Other I.D.	TEMP.	Sample	Total	cap		Red	I	D	SB
A	Exlg	37	40	8	4	4	4	3	0	}
	-	36	✓	0	0	0	2	6	2	
	-		✓	2	0	2	1	3	0	
	-	36	✓	2	0	2	1	3	1	
				8%	3%	5%	5%	9%/2%		
B	Lyc	36	50	1	0	1	1	}	4	1
	-		✓	1	-	1	0		0	0
	✓		✓	0	-	0	0		1	0
	✓	37	✓	1	-	1	1		3	1
	Mid		50	0	-	0	1		4	0
	✓	37	✓	2	-	2	1		0	0
	✓		✓	1	-	2	0		7	2
✓	36	✓	1	-	1	1	0	0		
				2%	X	2%	2%	5%/1%		

Expts - Decay is tan to brown, slimy areas, water soaked, adv. stg.

A f. fruris
gen gg color

B gen f, fr crisp
gen gg color

REMARKS / RESTRICTIONS / SPI
Lot A - insp. on basis of U.S. Fund at applicant's request.

CARLOT Basis: 62-	REPORTED TO: Virrie	INSPECTED BY: June Doe
HOURLY Basis: _____	DATE: 3-14-91 TIME: 12:30 P	ASSISTED BY: _____
TRAVEL Time: _____	REQUESTED BY: Frankie D.	
EXPENSES: _____	DATE: 3-14-91 TIME: 6:55 A.	
EST. TOTAL: 62		

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
INSPECTION CERTIFICATE
EXAMPLE #3

CARRIER OF LOT IDENTIFICATION: 01265357N
ADDRESS: Produce Co, Inc
Anytown, State
SHIPPER: Packers & Shippers
Your town, State
SHIPPER'S PHONE: 404 374

INSPECTION DATE: 03/14/91
INSPECTION TIME: 11:00 AM
INSPECTOR: [Signature]

ORIGIN: FL Ex-Lye
FL Lge, Med.

NUMBER OF CONTAINERS: 244 ctms
714 ctms

LOT	TEMPERATURE	WEIGHT	DEFECTS	ORIGIN	DEFECTS	ORIGIN
A	36	37	00	Shrinking (8 to 15%)	FL	Ex-Lye
B	36	37	08	Turning Red	FL	Lge, Med.
			09	Decay (0 to 20%)		
			22	Checksum		
			05	Shrinking		
			02	Turning Red		
			02	Decay		
			09	Checksum		

REMARKS: Lot A - Inspection based on U.S. Fancy grade at applicants request.

WARNING: Any person who knowingly falsifies, makes, issues, ships, sells, or counterfeits this certificate, or participates in any such activity, is subject to a fine of not more than \$1,500 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

ESTIMATED TOTAL: 562

APPLICANT: [Name]
ADDRESS: [Address]
PHONE: [Phone]

INSPECTION DATE: 03/14/91
INSPECTION TIME: 11:20 AM
INSPECTOR: [Signature]

ORIGIN: CO, NJ, EP, SW, 82
CO, NJ, EP, SW, 200

DEFECTS: A: 0.4, 0.4, 0.5, 5 HR, 5 CL, 5 EX, 5 SW, 5 M
B: 0.8, 0.5, 0.5, 5 HR, 5 CL, 5 EX, 5 SW, 5 M
C: [Blank]
D: [Blank]

QUANTITY FULL: [Blank]
QUANTITY HALF: [Blank]
QUANTITY FULL: [Blank]
QUANTITY HALF: [Blank]
LOT BROKE: [Blank]
COMP BY: [Signature]