



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Agricultural
Marketing
Service**

**Fruit and
Vegetable
Programs**

**Fresh
Products
Branch**

United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries

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United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries ¹

Grades

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Grades

§51.3115 U.S. No. 1.

"U.S. No. 1" consists of strawberries of one variety or similar varietal characteristics with the cap (calyx) attached, which are firm, not overripe or undeveloped, and which are free from mold or decay and free from damage caused by dirt, moisture, foreign matter, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means. Each strawberry has not less than three-fourths of its surface showing a pink or red color.

(a) Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than three-fourths inch.

(b) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by count, are provided as specified:

(1) For defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of this grade, but not more than one-half of this tolerance, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein not more than two-fifths of this latter amount, or 2 percent, for strawberries affected by decay.

(2) For off-size. Not more than 5 percent for strawberries in any lot which are below the specified minimum size.

§51.3116 U.S. Combination.

"U.S. Combination" consists of a combination of U.S. No. 1 and U.S. No. 2 strawberries, except for size: **Provided**, That at least 80 percent, by count, of the strawberries meet the requirements of U.S. No. 1 grade.

(a) Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than

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.

three-fourths inch.

(b) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by count, are provided as specified:

(1) For defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which are seriously damaged, including therein not more than one-fifth of this tolerance, or 2 percent, for strawberries affected by decay. No part of any tolerance shall be allowed to reduce for the lot as a whole, the percentage of U.S. No. 1 strawberries required in the combination, and individual containers (cups or baskets) may have not less than 65 percent U.S. No. 1 strawberries:

Provided, That the entire lot averages within the required percentage.

(2) For off-size. Not more than 5 percent of the strawberries in any lot may be below the specified minimum size.

§51.3117 U.S. No. 2.

"U.S. No. 2" consists of strawberries which are free from decay and free from serious damage caused by dirt, disease, insects, mechanical or other means. Each strawberry has not less than one-half of its surface showing a pink or red color.

(a) Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than five-eighths inch.

(b) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by count, are provided as specified:

(1) For defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which are seriously damaged, including therein not more than three-tenths of this tolerance, or 3 percent, for strawberries affected by decay.

(2) For off-size. Not more than 5 percent for strawberries in any lot which are below the specified minimum size.

§51.3118 [Reserved].

Application of Tolerances

§51.3119 Application of tolerances.

(a) The contents of individual packages (cups or baskets) in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the following limitations:

(1) For a tolerance of 10 percent or more, individual packages (cups or baskets) in any lot shall have not more than one and one-half times the tolerance specified, except that when the package contains 25 specimens or less, individual packages shall have not more than double the tolerance specified: **Provided,** That the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerance specified for the grade.

(2) For a tolerance of less than 10 percent, individual packages (cups or baskets) in any lot shall have not more than double the tolerance specified, except that at least one defective and one off-size specimen may be permitted in any package: **Provided,** That the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerances specified for the grade.

Definitions

§51.3120 Overripe.

"Overripe" means dead ripe, becoming soft, a condition unfit for shipment and necessitating immediate consumption.

§51.3121 Undeveloped.

"Undeveloped" means that the berry has not attained a normal shape and development due to

frost injury, lack of pollination, insect injury, or other causes. "Button" berries are the most common type of this condition.

§51.3122 Damage.

"Damage" means any defect or any combination of defects, which materially detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the strawberries.

§51.3123 Serious damage.

"Serious damage" means any specific defect described in this section; or an equally objectionable variation of any one of these defects, any other defect, or any combination of defects, which seriously detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the strawberries. The following specific defects shall be considered as serious damage:

- (a) Soft berries;
- (b) Badly deformed berries;
- (c) Badly bruised berries;
- (d) Decayed or leaky berries;
- (e) Berries badly caked with dirt; and,
- (f) Berries with less than one-half of surface showing pink or red color.

§51.3124 Diameter.

"Diameter" means the greatest dimension measured at right angles to a straight line running from the stem to the apex.