



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 Washed and Sorted Strawberries for Freezing

Effective September 6, 2016

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Washed and Sorted Strawberries for Freezing (81 FR 51297) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since June 1, 1935.

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 Washed and Sorted Strawberries for Freezing

Section	Page No.
General	2
§51.4435 General.....	2
Grade	2
§51.4436 U.S. No. 1.....	2
Reserved	2
§51.4437 Reserved.....	2
Definitions	2
§51.4438 Properly washed.....	2
§51.4439 Well colored.....	3
§51.4440 Soft.....	3
§51.4441 Dried.....	3
§51.4442 Undeveloped.....	3
§51.4443 Damage.....	3
§51.4444 Diameter.....	3

General

§51.4435 General.

- (a) These standards are intended for use only for strawberries which have been washed and sorted just prior to being placed in containers for freezing. Samples for the purpose of determining quality shall be taken immediately after washing and grading and before any other factory operations have taken place.
- (b) Offered as companion grades to the U.S. Standards for Growers' Stock Strawberries for Manufacture, the U.S. Standards for Washed and Sorted Strawberries for Freezing may be used at a grading station either alone or in conjunction with other grades.
- (c) There are several quality factors pertaining to frozen strawberries which may be most satisfactorily determined through inspection of samples of the fruit immediately after washing and grading. For this reason, the standards may be used to advantage as a basis for buying and selling of the finished product even though they are applied to the fruit before it is frozen, but obviously the standards do not apply to the finished product.

Grade

§51.4436 U.S. No. 1.

“**U.S. No. 1**” consists of strawberries of one variety which are properly washed, well colored, free from mold and decay, and from soft, badly crushed or split, dried or undeveloped berries, and from damage caused by foreign matter, hail, sunscald, birds, disease, insects, mechanical or other means. Caps shall be entirely removed. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum size shall not be less than 5/8 inch in diameter.

- (a) In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, not more than 5 percent, by weight, of the strawberries in any lot may be below the requirements of this grade: *Provided*, That less than 1 percent shall be affected by mold or decay.

Reserved

§51.4437 Reserved.

Definitions

§51.4438 Properly washed.

“**Properly washed**” means that the berries have been washed with fresh, clean water so as to remove all soil, dirt, or other foreign matter which may be detected by the taste or naked eye.

§51.4439 Well colored.

“**Well colored**” means that at least four-fifths of the surface of the berry is covered with red or pink color.

§51.4440 Soft.

“**Soft**” means that more than one-third of the volume of the whole berry is mushy or has been removed by washing. Berries showing moist surface bruises from the recent handling in washing and sorting shall not be considered as soft.

§51.4441 Dried.

“**Dried**” means appreciably lacking in juice. Dried berries are excessively seedy and often shriveled.

§51.4442 Undeveloped.

“**Undeveloped**” means lack of development due to frost or insect injury, lack of pollination or other means which causes the berry to be badly misshapen.

§51.4443 Damage.

“**Damage**” means any defect, or any combination of defects, which materially detracts from the appearance or the edible quality of the berry for manufacturing purposes.

§51.4444 Diameter.

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