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Crops
Program

Specialty
Crops
Inspection
Division

United States Standards for Grades of Bunched Shallots

Effective September 6, 2016

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Bunched Shallots (81 FR 51297) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since December 16, 1946.

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.

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Grades

§51.1630 U.S. No. 1.

U.S. No. 1 shall consist of shallots of similar varietal characteristics, which are fairly well formed, firm, young and tender, well trimmed, fairly clean, free from decay, and from damage caused by seedstems, foreign material, disease, insects, mechanical or other means. The tops shall be fresh, of good green color, and free from damage caused by broken or bruised leaves.

- (a) Unless otherwise specified, the overall length (roots excepted) of the shallots shall not exceed 22 inches and the shallots shall be not less than one-fourth of an inch or more than three-fourths of an inch in diameter.
- (b) **Tolerance for defects.** In order to allow for variations, other than size, incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the shallots in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, but not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including not more than 2 percent for shallots affected by decay.
- (c) **Tolerance for size.** Not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the shallots in any lot may fail to meet the requirements as to the specified length, minimum diameter, or maximum diameter, but not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for any one of the requirements for size.

§51.1631 U.S. No. 2.

U.S. No. 2 shall consist of shallots which are not badly misshapen, and which are fairly firm, fairly young and tender, fairly well trimmed, fairly clean, free from decay and from serious damage caused by seedstems, foreign material, disease, insects, mechanical or other means. The tops shall be fresh, of fairly good green color, and free from serious damage caused by broken or bruised leaves.

- (a) Unless otherwise specified, the minimum size of the shallots shall be not less than one-fourth of an inch in diameter.
- (b) **Tolerance for defects.** In order to allow for variations, other than size, incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the shallots in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, including not more than 2 percent for shallots affected by decay.
- (c) **Tolerance for size.** Not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the shallots in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of the specified minimum or maximum diameter, but not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for either of the requirements for size.

Reserved

§51.1632 Reserved.

Size; Bunches

§51.1633 Size.

The following terms and definitions are provided for describing the diameters of any lot:

- “Small” means less than 3/8 inch.
- “Medium” means 3/8 to 3/4 inch, inclusive.
- “Large” means over 3/4 inch.

§51.1634 Standard bunches.

- (a) Bunches shall be fairly uniform in size and the shallots in the individual bunches shall also be of fairly uniform size. The weight of the bunches shall be not less than 4 pounds per dozen bunches. The weight of the bunched shallots shall be determined after they have been wet and shaken or drained to remove excess water.
- (b) In order to allow for variations incident to proper bunching, not more than 10 percent, by count, of the bunches in any lot may fail to meet the requirements for standard bunches.

Application of Tolerances

§51.1635 Application of tolerances.

- (a) The contents of individual containers in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the following limitations; provided the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerances specified:
- (1) When a tolerance is 10 percent or more, individual containers in any lot shall have not more than one and one-half times the tolerance specified, except that at least one defective and one off-size specimen may be permitted in any container.
- (2) When a tolerance is less than 10 percent, individual containers 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 container.

Definitions

§51.1636 Similar varietal characteristics.

“**Similar varietal characteristics**” means that the shallots shall be generally of one type, as stiff-leaved or broad-leaved type.

§51.1637 Fairly well formed.

“**Fairly well formed**” means that the shallot is not more than slightly curved, crooked, or otherwise slightly misshapen and does not show more than slight bulb formation.

§51.1638 Firm.

“**Firm**” means that the edible portion of the shallot is not soft.

§51.1639 Well trimmed.

“**Well trimmed**” means that the shallots are separated so that not more than two are attached together; that the individual bulbs are not broken above the point of root attachment and are practically free from dead, discolored or slick outer skins. Fresh, clean, loose skins which do not materially affect the appearance of the individual shallot or the bunch are permitted. The tops of shallots are sometimes clipped (pinched) back to remove discolored or otherwise injured leaves. An individual plant shall be considered as well trimmed when only the tips of the leaves have been clipped back. However, a plant or a lot shall not be considered as well trimmed when more than half of the leaves have been clipped back to the extent that the appearance of the plant, or the lot as a whole is materially injured.

§51.1640 Fairly clean.

“**Fairly clean**” means that the appearance of the shallot is not materially injured by dirt.

§51.1641 Damage.

“**Damage**” means any injury or defect which materially affects the appearance or edible or shipping quality.

- (a) **Seedstems:** A shallot with a seedstem shall be considered as damaged if the seedstem has been broken at a point other than at the top, or is coarse, fibrous, hollow or soft, or has separated naturally from the sheath or skin. Shallots often show flower buds while the seedstem is still tender. Such shallots are not objectionable if the flower buds have been removed, or if present, are not noticeably protruding; however, a shallot with a seedstem which, after the flower bud has been removed, exceeds the length of the longest leaves of the plant, shall be considered as damaged.

§51.1642 Fresh.

“**Fresh**” means that the tops are not withered or badly wilted.

§51.1643 Good green color.

“**Good green color**” means that the tops have a normal green color characteristic of healthy plants. A slight discoloration of the extreme tips is not objectionable.

§51.1644 Diameter.

“**Diameter**” means the greatest dimension of the shallot taken at right angles to the longitudinal axis. If the shallots are attached together only at the base (not enclosed in a single parchment-like sheath or skin) they shall be considered as separate shallots when determining size.

§51.1645 Not badly misshapen.

“**Not badly misshapen**” means that the shallot is not badly curved or crooked and does not show excessive bulb formation.

§51.1646 Fairly firm.

“**Fairly firm**” means that the edible portion of the shallot is not more than slightly soft.

§51.1647 Fairly young and tender.

“**Fairly young and tender**” means that the shallot is not tough, stringy, or advanced to the stage where the neck is flabby.

§51.1648 Fairly well trimmed.

“**Fairly well trimmed**” means that the shallots are separated so that not more than three are attached together; that the individual bulbs are not broken above the point of root attachment and are reasonably free from dead, discolored, or slick outer skins. Fresh, fairly clean, loose skins which do not seriously affect the appearance of the individual shallot or the bunch are permitted. An individual plant with all the tops clipped (pinched) back shall be considered as “fairly well trimmed” *Provided*, That not more than half of the leaves have been clipped (pinched) back to less than 8 inches in length.

§51.1649 Serious damage.

“**Serious damage**” means any injury or defect which seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality.

§51.1650 Fairly good green color.

“**Fairly good green color**” means that the tops are pale or yellowish green or otherwise slightly discolored.