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Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Specialty
Crops
Program

Commodity Specification for Frozen Potato Products

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GENERAL

U.S. Standards

Frozen potato products (product/commodity) produced under this Commodity Specification must meet the requirements specified in the applicable United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes or United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet potatoes, (U.S. Standards) and/or the Commercial Item Description (CID) effective on the date of the Solicitation/Invitation for Bid (IFB). The U.S. Standards and CIDs are published separately and are incorporated herein and made a part of this Commodity Specification.

Exceptions to U.S. Standards

Exceptions to the U.S. Standards for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) frozen potato and sweet potato product purchases are found in Section II, Individual Commodity Specifications, of this document. Additional exceptions may be specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. Any exceptions contained in the applicable Solicitation/IFB shall have precedence over the requirements contained herein, for that Solicitation/IFB only.

Product Origin

1. Commodities delivered pursuant to this Commodity Specification shall have originated from crops that have been 100 percent grown, processed, and packed in the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, (hereinafter referred to as the United States). See the AMS Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurements.
2. If the contractor handles any commodity originating from sources other than the United States, the contractor must have a written plan to segregate the commodity. This segregation plan will include an identification and record system for all commodities to ensure they are completely segregated and cannot be used to fulfill purchase orders awarded by USDA. Such segregation plan must be made available, within 10 days of purchase order award, to representatives of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).
3. The contractor must maintain positive written documentation records evidencing 100 percent domestic origin to the grower level. Contractors must also ensure that the documentation provided by any subcontractors demonstrates the same level of traceability. The burden of proof of compliance is on the contractor.

Documentation may include load or warehouse storage receipts for raw product (i.e., bin tags), product blend (formulation) records, product coding explanations, finished product warehousing records, shipping or payment records, or other documentation or evidence that clearly establishes the product's domestic origin.

4. Contractors must provide the domestic origin certification and supporting documentation records to representatives of the AMS, Specialty Crops Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) when requesting inspection service. USDA

Inspectors will select and review at least one code for each contract to determine compliance with the Agency's domestic origin requirements.

5. Such records must be available for review by the Government in accordance with FAR 52.214-26. In the event of an audit, AMS auditors will examine as many codes as is necessary to verify compliance.
6. Self-certifications by contractors and subcontractors will not be accepted.
7. Failure to observe this requirement may lead to suspension or debarment, purchase order/contract termination, and penalties at Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code concerning falsification of information.

Packing Season

All frozen potato products must be from the current packing season/crop year, unless otherwise specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

Shipment

Frozen potatoes shall be held, tendered, and transported at a temperature of 0 degrees F or lower. Under temporary conditions, such as may occur at the time of loading, the product temperature may exceed the 0 degrees F requirement. However, any lot exceeding a temperature of 10 degrees F at the time of loading shall be rejected.

Grade of Frozen Potatoes

All frozen potato products must be U.S. Grade A (as defined in the U. S. Standards) unless otherwise specified in Section II, Individual Commodity Specifications, herein or the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

Fill of Container

1. Contractor must meet the fill weight for the product as specified in the applicable U.S. Standards unless otherwise indicated herein.
2. The average net weight must meet the net weight as printed on the label and the Individual Commodity Specification Section II.

LABELS AND PACKAGING

Primary Containers (Packages and Labeling)

1. Vendors have the option to use commercial labeling and packaging which meets all applicable FDA requirements and contains a code which allows traceability of the product in the event of a recall or they may use non-commercial packaging and labeling as specified in the Master Solicitation.

2. The processors' own commercially acceptable "brand" labels may be used on all Solicitations/IFBs. Distributor's "brand" labels are not acceptable.
3. All products must be packed in new, commercially acceptable primary containers (packages). Frozen Potatoes shall be packed only in the container size and type specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. The primary package must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.
4. Product packed in poly bags or Kraft paper bags must be effectively sealed so as not to leak when thawed.
5. For packages 3 pounds or less, labels must also meet the following formatting criteria:
 - a. Must include, at a minimum, Two (2) color, in addition to black and/or white.
 - b. Must incorporate a graphic (photo or illustration) depicting the product/contents on the principal display panel if the packages are not clear or contain an adequate viewing window.

Secondary Containers (case) for Commercial Labels

1. Primary containers shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe storage and transportation to destinations.
2. Case flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.
3. Mixing and matching of commercial and non-commercial labeling methods will not be acceptable.
4. Two or more different commercial labels will not be acceptable within a shipping unit (truck load).

Secondary Containers (case) for Non-Commercial Labels

Packages with non-commercial labels shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. Flaps, gaps and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.

Cases must be marked in such a manner that they contain all the required symbols (USDA symbol is optional), statements and information contained in Exhibits 1, 2 or 3 as applicable. Cases may be marked by printing or stenciling or by preprinted, self-adhesive stickers. Self-

adhesive stickers must be affixed to the case in such a manner that they cannot be removed intact.

Exact arrangement and adherence to font size is not required. The case markings must be clearly marked, easily read, and substantially the same as specified in Exhibit 1, 2 or 3 as applicable.

Exhibit 3 shows an alternative placard that may be applied to a non-commercial, new, corrugated fiberboard case acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. This placard must be affixed to the case in such a manner that it cannot be removed intact.

Cases must have the recycling statement shown in Exhibit 5, "Please Recycle" Symbol and Statement or Exhibit 6, "Corrugated Recycles" Symbol and Statement.

UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODES (UPC)

Contractor UPCs are acceptable for primary containers with commercial labels and/or secondary fiberboard cases enclosing commercially labeled product.

UPCs are not required for commercial labeling with tray pack shipping containers.

Products with alternative, non-commercial labels must use the UPCs listed in Exhibit 4 on the primary and secondary containers.

PALLETIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Pallets

Products must be on 48 X 40 inch, non-reversible, flush stringer, and partial four-way entry. New pallets must be good quality wood. Used pallets must be No.1 hardwood or its equivalent in new softwood. Broken or damaged pallets are unacceptable.

If pallet exchange is desired, the contractor shall arrange for pallet exchange with consignees. USDA is in no way responsible for arrangement of pallet exchange.

Unitization

Each delivery unit of frozen potatoes must be unitized. Shipping cases must be stacked and secured from top to bottom, so that each container and layer of containers becomes an integral part of the pallet. Either stretch wrapping with plastic film or "lock 'n pop" is acceptable. The palletized product must be loaded in the conveyance in such a way that will prevent shifting and damage to the containers of product.

INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY SPECIFICATIONS

Only unsaturated vegetable oils containing "0 grams Trans Fats" as defined by FDA, shall be used in the processing of these products. Canola oil may be used. Hydrogenated oils shall not be used for the processing of these products.

The vendor is responsible for the product meeting the sodium content requirements for each

individual commodity. Vendors must make available (when requested), a laboratory analysis report to document and verify information provided in the Nutrition Facts Label.

The requirements for the products must be certified under continual **on-line grading by a USDA Inspector**.

Frozen French-Cut Strips

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes.
2. Style – Strips, crinkle cut.
3. Cross Sectional Dimension – Not less than 3/8 x 3/8 inch and not more than 1/1/2 x 1/12 inches.
4. Length – Medium or longer.
5. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
6. Fry Color type – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
7. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solids percentage of 28 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Type of Pack – Institutional.
10. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
11. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
12. Oven Heating – Oven type only –The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

Note: Not more than 10 percent by count of units present of Frozen French-Cut Strips, except chips, may consist of small pieces, slivers, and/or irregular pieces.

Preformed Rounds

Preformed Rounds shall be in accordance with the Commercial Item Description (CID), A-A-20038 - Potato Products, Preformed, Precooked, Frozen, effective at the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

1. Type of Pack – Institutional.

2. Style – Round.
3. Size and Count – Cross-sectional dimension: 3/4 to 1 inch in diameter.
4. Length – 1 to 1-1/4 inches.
5. Count – 47-54 units per pound.
6. Seasoning – Unseasoned.
7. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: CID Designation 2 - Light, to CID Designation 4 - Medium. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
10. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
11. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
12. Cooking/heating method – Oven-baked. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

Preservatives or flavor enhancers such as monosodium glutamate are **not** permitted. Not more than 15 percent by count of units present, excluding chips, may consist of irregular shaped units, small pieces, and small clusters. Clusters and chips shall be evaluated on an overall appearance basis and may no more than slightly detract from the appearance of the product.

Additional Quality Factors

Definitions of these terms are contained in CID A-A- 20038, Potato Products, Preformed, Precooked, Frozen, effective at the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

1. Defects – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, except that, in addition, any mechanically damaged unit with its interior portion exposed is scored as a major defect. The allowance for defectives is contained in the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, Table 1, Institutional Type.
2. Texture – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes, except that the product may

contain slightly more moisture. After preparation, the product shall have an internal appearance of having individual bits and pieces of properly blanched potatoes.

3. Flavor – The product shall be U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen French Fried Potatoes.

Individually Quick Frozen (IQF) Frozen Cut Potato Wedges

IQF Frozen Cut Potato Wedges shall be prepared from mature, sound, russet potatoes which have been washed, sorted, and trimmed as necessary to assure a clean and wholesome product. The potatoes shall be cut into wedges on the lengthwise axis.

Type I – Water/oil blanched

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Variety – Russet type such as, but not limited to: Burbank, Shepody, Norkotah or other mealy type potatoes which meet the solids requirement.
3. Length – Medium or longer.
4. Unit size – 8 or 10 cuts per whole potato.
5. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
6. Cooking Method – Oven baked. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.
7. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
10. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solid percentage of 28 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
11. Type of Pack – Institutional.
12. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
13. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

Type II – Fat free water blanched – baked, micro waved, or roasted

1. Grade – Equivalent to U.S. Grade A.
2. Variety – Russet type such as, but not limited to: Burbank, Shepody, Norkotah or other mealy type potatoes which meet the solids requirement.
3. Length – Medium or longer.
4. Unit size – 8 or 10 cuts per whole potato.
5. Fat Free – The product shall not contain oil.
6. Fry Color – USDA Color Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes: Fry Color 0 to 2. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used. There may be variations in surface color due to the method of cooking.
7. Optional coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Cooking Method – Oven baked.
10. Solids Requirement – Product shall contain a minimum solids percentage of 19 percent by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
11. Type of Pack – Institutional.
12. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
13. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

Frozen Potatoes, Diced

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A based on U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Hash Brown Potatoes.
2. The potatoes must be blanched but not fried.
3. Style – Diced approximately ½ x ½ inch cubes and which contain not more than 90 grams, per sample unit, of units smaller than one - half the volume of the predominant size unit.

4. Flavorings/Seasonings – No added flavoring or seasonings are permitted.
5. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
6. Type of Pack – Institutional.
7. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags).
8. Net Weight – Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds.

Frozen Sweet Potato Strips and Crinkle Cut

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Potatoes.
2. Variety – Any Golden variety.
3. Style – Strips
 - a. Straight cut, (WBSCM Material 101013).
 - b. Crinkle cut (or corrugated) surfaces, (WBSCM Material 110721).
4. Cross Sectional Dimension – Not less than 1/4 x 1/4 inch and not more than 1/2 inch x 1/2 inch.
5. Length – Medium or longer - fifty (50) percent or more are 2 inches in length or longer.
6. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must not contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
7. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
8. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
9. Color – Typical golden fried sweet potato color which may vary with coatings. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
10. Small Units – Composite weight does not exceed 5 percent (5%) by weight of all units.
11. Solids Requirements – The product shall contain a minimum percentage of 25 percent solids by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
12. Type of Pack – Institutional.

13. Pack Size – 30 pound cases (6/5 pound bags or 12/2.5 pound bags or 10/3 pound bags).
14. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 30 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.
15. Oven Heating – Oven-type only. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

Frozen Waffle-Cut Sweet Potatoes

1. Grade – Equivalent to U.S. Grade A in accordance with the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Potatoes based on the quality factors for sliced style.
2. Variety – Any Golden variety.
3. Style – Waffle-cut, which is thick slices of potato that have corrugated surfaces cut into a crisscross pattern by quarter turning the potato before each slide over a grater/cutter.
4. Optional Coating – The product may contain a coating of ingredients approved by FDA as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances but must **not** contain spices, seasoning, or MSG.
5. Free Fatty Acids – To help ensure no off flavors at no time shall the free fatty acid content of the processing oil exceed 1.5 percent.
6. Sodium Content – Not to exceed 140 mg per serving (defined as ½ cup).
7. Color – Typical golden fried sweet potato color which may vary with coatings. FDA approved vegetable or caramel additives for color may be used.
8. Small Units – Composite weight does not exceed 5 percent (5%) by weight of all units.
9. Solids Requirements – The product shall contain a minimum percentage of 25 percent solids by weight. A minimum of 5 readings per 70,000 pounds of product shall be made.
10. Type of Pack – Institutional
11. Pack Size – 15 pound cases (6/2.5 or 5/3 pound bags).
12. Net Weight – The average net weight of the cases shall not be less than 15 pounds. No individual case shall weigh less than 14.7 pounds.
13. Oven Heating – Oven-type only. The product shall be so processed as to retain sufficient oil to allow proper preparation by oven heating.

Frozen Cut or Chunks Sweet Potatoes

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Color – Golden, Yellow, or Mixed.
3. Style – Cut or Chunks.
4. Cut Size – ½ to 1 inch.
5. Net Weight – 30 pounds (6/5 pound bags).

INSPECTION AND CHECKLOADING

Inspection

NOTE: USDA inspection shall be made during on-line production of the product.

A representative of the AMS, Specialty Crops Programs, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) must perform the inspection and checkloading (See Section the AMS Master Solicitation). **The cost of inspection, samples taken for inspection, mailing of review samples submitted for evaluation, and any chemical analysis required for testing shall be for the account of the contractor.**

Inspection of frozen products must be performed not more than 60 days prior to shipment. Whether each lot offered meets the product and container requirements of the contract/purchase order must be determined on the basis of representative sample units. Representative sample units will be graded according to the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Products and Related Products (7 C.F.R. Part 52), and United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 C.F.R. Part 42.140), effective on the date of the Solicitation.

Temperature

All frozen foods shall be held, and stored at an air temperature of 0 degrees F, or lower. The internal product temperature shall be maintained at 0 degrees F, and at time of loading may not exceed 10 degrees F. Carrier temperature shall be determined after the product is loaded.

Certification

Subject to (Section the AMS Master Solicitation) the acceptability of the quality, weight, packaging, and checkloading of the product must be evidenced by certificates issued by the USDA Inspector.

No product shall be shipped unless the USDA Inspector informs the contractor that a designated lot is acceptable. Notice by the USDA Inspector that a designated lot scheduled for shipment does not meet requirements of the purchase order shall constitute rejection of such lot.

Procedures

The contractor must give the USDA Inspector at least 7 days advance notice when scheduling

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inspection service. This product must be graded online. Contractors are encouraged to submit requests for inspection in writing with verifiable receipt notice, such as email, to alleviate possible miscommunication.

Laboratory Tests

The contractor must allow 14 days after product sampling for laboratory tests (when required) to be completed and returned.

FAILURE TO MEET SPECIFICATIONS

Any lot which fails applicable specifications prescribed herein will be rejected as not acceptable for delivery. If any lot of frozen potato products fails to meet the product or packaging requirement, the contractor may request in writing that USDA accept delivery of the lot. USDA may, at its option, accept delivery, provided that the purchase price is the contract/purchase order price less a discount, to be determined by the Contracting Officer.

EXHIBITS

**Exhibit 1 - Required Markings for Non-Commercial Shipping Containers
ALL PRINTING TO BE IN BLACK INK**

<u>BOTH SIDE PANELS</u>	<u>BOTH END PANELS</u>
PRODUCT NAME	PRODUCT NAME
1/	PURCHASE ORDER NO. 3/
2/	4/
USDA SYMBOL (USDA Symbol is Optional)	
5/ KEEP FROZEN	

Product name must be printed or stenciled on a separate line in letters at least three-fourths inch high, and all other information must be in letters less than three-fourth's inch but at least three- eighths inch high. The USDA Food Symbol (optional) must be printed, stamped, or labeled and be of sufficient size to stand out prominently. Case markings must be limited to case codes and those contained in this Exhibit.

1/ Insert any additional product style, pack, packing media, or further definition as applicable; (i.e. Rounds, Wedges, etc.).

2/ Insert the size and number of packages per case, i.e. 6/5 pound bags, 30 pound bag. 3/ Insert the last five digits of purchase order number.

4/ Insert name of Packer and Packer's Address - City, State, and Zip Code. This information can be placed on the end panels or the side panels.

5/ Insert Universal Product Code (see Exhibit "4").

Recycle symbols and statements can be placed on bottom panels (Exhibit "5" and "6").

**Exhibit 2 - Alternative Label for Shipping Containers
(Includes all Required Information)**



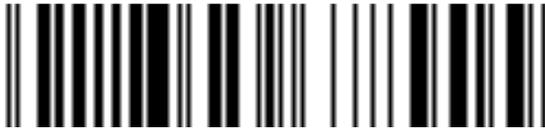
Product Name
Style
Size/Number per case
Purchase Order Number xxxxx

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999

KEEP FROZEN

USDA Symbol is optional



1234567891012345678910

**Exhibit 3 - Sample Alternative Label for Shipping Containers
(Includes all Required Information)**



**Frozen Potato
Diced**

**6/5 lb bags
Purchase Order Number xxxxx**

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999

USDA Symbol is Optional

KEEP FROZEN

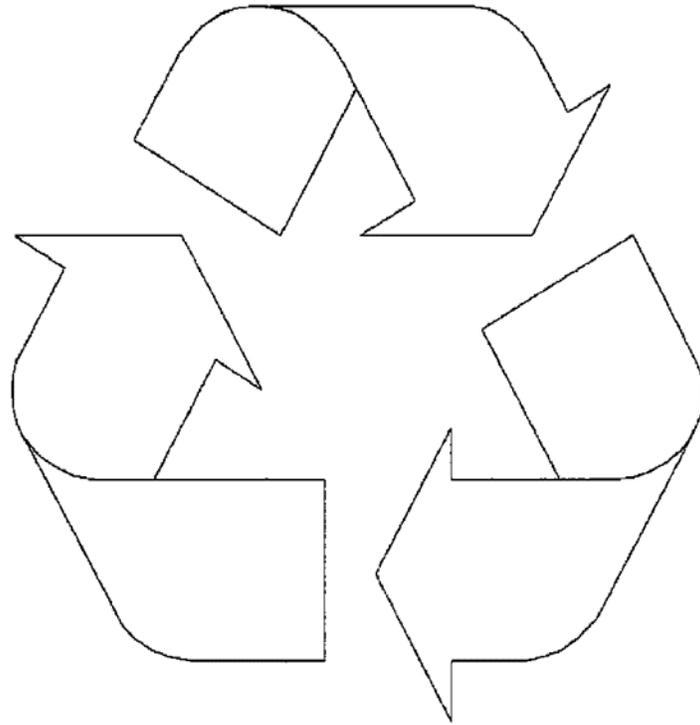


1234567891012345678910

Exhibit 4 - Universal Product Codes

Frozen Potatoes	WBSCM Material	Primary Container	Secondary Container
Potatoes, Wedge, 6/5 lb.	100355	7 15001 00355 3	1 07 15001 00355 0
Potatoes, Wedge, Fat-Free, 6/5 lb.	100356	7 15001 00356 0	1 07 15001 00356 7
Potatoes, Oven-Fry, 6/5 lb.	100357	7 15001 00357 7	1 07 15001 00357 4
Potatoes, Rounds, 6/5 lb.	100358	7 15001 00358 4	1 07 15001 00358 1
Sweet Potato, Strips, 6/5 lb.	101013	7 15001 01013 1	1 07 15001 01013 8
Sweet Potato, Waffle Cut, 6/5 lb.	110571	7 15001 10571 4	1 07 15001 10571 1
Sweet Potato, Crinkle Cut, 6/5 lb.	110721	7 15001 10721 3	1 07 15001 10721 0
Sweet Potato, Cut or Chunks, 6/5 lb.	110562	7 15001 10562 2	1 07 15001 10562 9
Potatoes, Diced, 6/5 lb.	110844	7 15001 10844 9	1 07 15001 10844 6
Sweet Potatoes Chunks (6/5 lb.)	110562	7 15001 10562 2	1 07 15001 10562 9

Exhibit 5 - "Please Recycle" Symbol and Statement



**PLEASE
RECYCLE**

Exhibit 6 - “Corrugated Recycles” Symbol and Statement



**Corrugated
Recycles**

Exhibit 7 - USDA Symbol

(USDA Symbol is Optional)

