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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

**official grade
standards and
inspection for
fresh fruits
and vegetables**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
Fruit and Vegetable Division
AMS - 520 / DECEMBER 1963

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official grade standards and inspection for fresh fruits and vegetables

What They Do

Thanks to a highly efficient marketing system, fruits and vegetables in the United States can be grown where climate, soil and geography are most suitable--and delivered fresh and wholesome to consumers thousands of miles away.

U.S. grade standards and official inspection play a vital role in the smooth functioning of this far-flung marketing system.

Grade standards developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture serve as a basis for measuring the quality of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and related commodities. They give the industry a common trading language for selling and buying.

Also, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with various State Departments of Agriculture and other State agencies, makes

impartial inspection service on these commodities available nationwide to growers, processors, shippers, receivers and other financially interested parties on a fee-for-service basis.

Yardsticks of Quality

U.S. grade standards carefully describe the quality requirements for each distinct grade of a commodity. The highest grade represents the quality that is desired most by the trade. The lower grades represent quality levels that are less desirable but are of good value and merchantable under normal market supply conditions.

The number of grades and the grade names included in a standard vary, depending on the number of distinct quality gradations that the industry normally recognizes and its established usage of grade names for the commodity. Two or three distinct grades are usually enough to meet normal trading demands for most fruits and vegetables. Most grades are designated U.S. Fancy, U.S. No. 1, and U.S. No. 2. Some commodities, however, lend themselves to separation into several quality classes. For these, a greater number of grades are provided.

Many standards also provide for additional grade names, such as U.S. Extra No. 1, U.S. Extra Fancy, U.S. Combination, U.S. Commercial and U.S. No. 3. In some cases a modification of these grade numbers is used--for example, U.S. Extra No. 1 Table Grapes, or U.S. No. 1 Bright grapefruit. A few standards, designated as Consumer Standards, use alphabetical grade names, such as U.S. Grade A, B or C.

"Grade Names Used in U.S. Standards for Farm Products," AH-157, lists all of these grade names by commodities. Single copies are available from Marketing Information Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., 20250.

The Beginning

Around the turn of the century, when fertile new areas of production were opened far from

the major markets, a common language for trading over long distances became urgently needed. To meet this demand, the U.S. Department of Agriculture began work on developing grade standards, and issued its first standards in 1917--for potatoes. Since that time, standards have been developed for nearly all fresh fruits and vegetables, a number of nuts and miscellaneous commodities. These include many standards which serve as a basis for purchasing raw commodities for processing. More than 150 standards are now in effect covering 80 different commodities.

How It's Done

The standards are developed with the cooperation of the industry and every effort is made to have them reflect good commercial practice with full recognition of the needs of growers, processors, sellers, buyers and consumers. In developing a standard, a standardization specialist studies current marketing practices for the commodity, examines representative samples and packs, analyzes the physical characteristics of the commodity, and consults industry members and other interested and helpful parties in drafting the proposed standard. The proposed standard is then published to give everyone concerned a chance to study it, and adequate time is allowed for comments. Often discussion drafts are sent to industry representatives and to key personnel of the Inspection Service prior to publishing as a formal proposal. After the closing date for submitting views concerning a proposal, all responses are carefully considered before the standards are issued in final form.

Where Can I Get A Copy?

Anyone can get a copy of a standard, free of charge, on request. Write for the standard or standards you want, to the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Also available, from the same source, is a checklist of the products for which standards have been developed.

THE INSPECTION SERVICE

.... An Aid to Business

The fresh fruits, vegetables, tree nuts and peanuts inspected by the Inspection Service during a year's time would fill about two million rail cars--enough for a train 22,000 miles long.

- ☐ Inspectors often examine produce right in the field.

Trained inspectors at shipping points or in terminal markets will inspect your commodity and issue a certificate stating its quality or condition, or whether it complies with a designated grade or specification. The inspection certificate can be based on the official U.S. grade standards, a State grade, or on other written specifications designated by the buyer or seller. These certificates are accepted by law as prima facie evidence in all Federal courts and in nearly all State courts.

State Cooperation

To provide inspection service nationwide the U.S. Department of Agriculture has cooperative inspection agreements in 49 States and Puerto Rico, with State Departments of Agriculture, or other cooperating State agencies.

Under these agreements, some 3,800 Federally-licensed inspectors perform the inspection work at points of origin. Inspectors are stationed throughout the country to provide fast,

efficient service to shippers, receivers, processors, repackers and institutions, including government procurement agencies.

The inspection service performed under these cooperative agreements is operated jointly by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service and cooperating State agencies, and is known as the Federal-State Inspection Service. The Agricultural Marketing Service establishes basic inspection policies and procedures and furnishes overall direction.

Federal inspection service is provided in 78 of the largest terminal markets in the country, with assistance from the cooperating State agencies in certain of these markets.

IT'S OF SERVICE

To Shippers

Shippers of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and other miscellaneous products, can get inspection for quality and condition at shipping point. This establishes the quality of the commodities at time of shipment, for sales purposes or for verifying compliance with contract terms. The Federal-State Inspection Service maintains seasonal or year-round offices in all major shipping areas, and inspection is available throughout the country.

☐ Inspecting grapefruit in a packing plant.

To Receivers

Receivers in terminal markets throughout the country can have shipments of produce inspected for both quality and condition, or for condition only. Many receivers use this inspection to determine whether or not a shipment meets contract terms at time of arrival, to help them decide the best use for a particular shipment, or as an aid in selling. Inspection service on any shipment is available to all parties with a financial interest in the commodity.

☐ **USDA is often asked to inspect incoming rail cars at terminal markets.**

Receivers, as a group, or as individuals, may enter into a special contract with the Department to have their entire volume of rail car and trucklot receipts inspected. This special contract service will be granted only when the anticipated volume of inspections is large enough to cover inspection costs at reasonable fee rates and when inspection manpower is available.

To receive service, application should be made to the nearest terminal market inspection office.

To Institutional Buyers and Government Agencies

The Inspection Service will help institutional buyers draw up specifications--using U.S. grade

standards wherever appropriate--to describe the quality of produce they need, and then inspect deliveries to assure that they fit the specifications. Federal, State and local governments, ship lines, hospitals, schools and other large feeding establishments make extensive use of the Federal and Federal-State Inspection Services with their experienced food quality specialists.

- ☐ Ocean liner demands top-quality produce, has it inspected for contract compliance.

This type of service is available on request from the nearest Federal or Federal-State inspection office.

To Processors and Growers

Processors or growers can contract with the Federal-State Inspection Service for inspection of their raw commodity deliveries. Trained inspectors will then be stationed at their receiving stations to impartially evaluate the produce as it is delivered--either on the basis of U.S. grade standards or on specifications designed to fit the

- ☐ Inspectors grade incoming loads of tomatoes for processing.

processor's particular needs. The official inspection certificate can be used as an equitable basis for grower payments. Many processors also find the inspection reports useful in determining the storage life of the produce, adjusting their processing to varying qualities and conditions, and deciding the best use for particular lots of produce.

Inspection of raw products for processing is available on a contract basis to fit processors' seasonal schedules and can be obtained from the nearest Federal-State inspection office in the State where the service is desired.

Continuous Inspection and What It Means

Continuous inspection is a special type of service which is made available to packers at shipping points and in terminal markets. This service was originally designed to aid packers who pack in consumer size containers, but it may be used by packers who pack in any size container.

Continuous inspection means that one or more inspectors are assigned to your packing plant during the full time packing is conducted. The inspector observes plant conditions and preparation and packing of the product. He makes frequent quality checks on the commodity from the packing lines and examines samples of the packed products to determine whether they meet the U.S. grade or specification for which the commodity is being packed.

Also, under this service the inspector gives the packing house management frequent verbal and written reports on the quality and condition of the commodities being packed. On the basis of these reports management can take immediate steps to correct problems before they become serious and thus protect the quality of the pack.

This service is offered only to packers whose packing plants and facilities meet rigid sanitary requirements and are suitable for proper handling and packing operations. To receive this service, the plant and facilities must be inspected by a specially qualified USDA or Federal-State inspector to determine compliance. Application and contract for this service must also be approved by the Agricultural Marketing Service and in addition, where service is rendered on a Federal-State basis, inspection con-

tracts must be approved by the State cooperating agency.

☐ Spinach being packed under continuous USDA inspection.

Products packed under the continuous inspection program and in compliance with the inspection contract, may be labeled with official USDA marks. These marks include the familiar Department shield with the legend, "Packed Under Continuous Inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture" and the appropriate U.S. grade designation. These marks give assurance that the commodity was prepared and packed under sanitary conditions and meets the grade as marked.

Uniform Inspection Maintained

To assure uniform application of the grade standards and inspection procedures, inspectors are thoroughly trained in every phase of inspec-

tion, including the identification of diseases that affect the commodity. Frequent refresher training schools are held in all areas and the work is closely supervised and coordinated. To further assure that the grade standards mean the same thing in all parts of the country, the Inspection Service provides its inspectors with visual aids, such as realistic hand-painted models, color comparators, photographs, sketches, and color slides to guide the inspector in rating quality factors.

- ☐ Plaster models to aid inspectors are cast from the real thing.

Inspection Fees

A fee is charged for services rendered. The fee is established at rates that will cover, as nearly as possible, the cost of performing the service.

Fee rates for terminal market inspections are outlined in Department regulations governing the inspection and certification of fresh fruits, vegetables and other products. For special contract inspection service, the fee is as specified in the contract.

For Federal-State inspection service at shipping points, reasonable fee rates to cover costs of inspection are established by the cooperating State agency.

Free to Choose

Both the U.S. grade standards and the inspec-

tion service are permissive, and their use is voluntary.

And In Conclusion

The grade standards and inspection service work together to:

- *..Help the fruit and vegetable industry do a better job of preparing and packing to better satisfy the consumer.
- *..Reduce the risks in trading, thereby increasing the efficiency of the marketing system.
- *..Provide a basis for contracts between growers and processors.
- *..Help buyers select the grade that will best suit their customers.
- *..Help settle damage claims and disputes between buyers and sellers.
- *..Provide a basis for making incentive payments for better quality.
- *..Provide guides for appropriate labeling.
- *..Serve as the basis for market reporting.

To get inspection service, write:

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection
Fruit and Vegetable Division
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington D.C., 20250

or contact the appropriate Federal or Federal-State Inspection Service office nearest you. The principle offices are listed on the following pages.

Federal Inspection Offices at Terminal Markets

Contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection, at terminal market where you want inspection

ALBANY, GEORGIA 2300 North Slappey Drive	CHARLOTTE, N.C. 711 S. Tryon St. Room 202
ALBANY, N.Y. Division of Marketing State Office Bldg. 21st Floor	CHICAGO, ILL. Room 1160 U.S. Custom House 610 S. Canal St.
ANNA, ILL. 131 West Vienna St.	CINCINNATI, OHIO Room 200 Cincinnati Terminal Warehouse 49 Central Avenue
ASHEVILLE, N.C. 302 Court House Bldg.	CLEVELAND, OHIO 2640 E. 37th Street Suite 5
ATLANTA, GA. Room 205, Administration Bldg. State Farmers Market Forest Park, Ga.	COLUMBIA, S.C. Administration Bldg. State Farmers Market
AUGUSTA, MAINE Department of Agriculture State Office Bldg.	COLUMBUS, OHIO State Office Bldg. Room 710
BALTIMORE, MD. 513 Appraiser's Stores Bldg. 103 South Gay St.	DALLAS, TEXAS 910 S. Pearl Expressway Room 220
BATON ROUGE, LA. 901 State Capitol Bldg.	DENVER, COLO. 429 State Services Bldg. 1525 Sherman St.
BELLE GLADE, FLA. U.S. Highway 441, North	DETROIT, MICH. Detroit Union Produce Terminal Rooms 80 & 82 7201 West Fort St.
BIRMINGHAM, ALA. 1308 First Avenue, North	DOVER, DEL. Bureau of Markets Delaware Dept. of Agriculture
BOSTON, MASS. 408 Atlantic Ave. Room 725	
BUFFALO, N.Y. 176 Niagara Frontier Food Terminal Room 8	

DULUTH, MINN.
528 Board of Trade Bldg.

EL PASO, TEXAS
Room 516
U.S. Court House

FARGO, N.D.
State Seed Dept.
University Station

GREAT LAKES, ILL.
Commissary Office,
Bldg. 2023
U.S. Naval Training Center

HARRISBURG, PA.
Bureau of Markets
131 S. Office Bldg., Capitol

HARTFORD, CONN.
650 Main St.
Room 340

HONOLULU, HAWAII
1428 S. King Street

HOUSTON, TEXAS
Houston Produce Terminal
3100 Produce Row

INDIANAPOLIS, IND.
North Street Bldg.
Room 426
632 E. North Street

JACKSON, MISS.
Administration Bldg.
Farmers Market
352 E. Woodrow
Wilson Drive

JACKSONVILLE, FLA.
Unit 46
3335 Bright Avenue

KANSAS CITY, MO.
Room 210,
Continental Bldg.
1021 McGee Street

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.
294 Wholesale Terminal Bldg.
784 South Central Avenue

LOUISVILLE, KY.
No. 1, Produce Terminal

MEMPHIS, TENN.
Rm. 444 Federal Bldg.
167 N. Main St.

MIAMI, FLA.
Dade County Growers Market
1200 N.W. 21st Terrace
Room 5

MILWAUKEE, WIS.
Room 300
U.S. Custom House
628 East Michigan St.

MOBILE, ALA.
Grain Inspection Office
Alabama State Docks

MONTGOMERY, ALA.
411 New Post Office Bldg.

NASHVILLE, TENN.
Hogan Road

NEWARK, N.J.
B-95 Federal Bldg.

NEW ORLEANS, LA.
5027 Federal Office Bldg.
701 Loyola Avenue

NEW YORK, N.Y.
346 Broadway
Room 306

NORFOLK, VA.
106 West Olney Road

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLA.
122 State Capitol

PHILADELPHIA, PA.
Room 239 Produce Bldg.
3301 S. Galloway Street

PHOENIX, ARIZ.
Room 107
Produce Center
2202 W. McDowell Road

PITTSBURGH, PA.
504 Victory Building
9th & Liberty Avenue

PORTLAND, ORE.
372 State Office Bldg.
1400 S. W. 5th Street

PROVIDENCE, R.I.
83 Park Street
Room 602

RALEIGH, N.C.
306 State Agriculture Bldg.

RICHMOND, VA.
203 North Governor Street
Room 326

RIVERHEAD, L.I., N.Y.
127 East Main St.

ROANOKE, VA.
3315 Williamson Road, N.E.

ROCHESTER, N.Y.
Genesee Valley
Regional Market
Room 112
900 Jefferson Road

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.
1220 N. Street
Room A-261

ST. LOUIS, MO.
944 U.S. Court &
Custom House
1114 Market Street

ST. PAUL, MINN.
540 State Office Bldg.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
State Capitol
Room B-45

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
Room 244,
Administration Bldg.
1500 S. Zarzamora Street

SAN DIEGO, CALIF.
Navy Provisions Pier

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
739 Appraisers Bldg.
630 Sansome Street

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
Edificio Industrias, Stop 19
Fernandez Juncos Avenue
Santurce, Puerto Rico

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
Room 324
King County Court House
3rd & James Streets

SHREVEPORT, LA.
State Office Bldg.
Rooms 313-315
1237 Murphy Street

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
Emmerson Bldg.,
State Fairgrounds

SYRACUSE, N.Y.
2100 Park Street
Room 207

TAMPA, FLA.
Tampa Wholesale
Produce Market
Room 58
Hillsboro Ave. & 28th St.

TOPEKA, KANSAS
Room 1030 S
State Office Bldg.

TRENTON, N.J.
606 First Trenton National
Bank Building

UTICA, N.Y.
Regional Market
9 Wurz St.

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO
223 U.S. Post Office Bldg.

WILKES-BARRE, PA.
Veterans Administration Bldg.
19 North Main Street

Headquarters for Federal-State Inspection Service*

* Local offices are maintained in major shipping areas. Check your local telephone directory under Federal-State or State department of agriculture.

ALABAMA
411 New Post Bldg.
Montgomery, Alabama

(or)
775 Warner St.
Orlando, Fla.

ARIZONA
Room 107, Produce Center
2202 West McDowell Road
Phoenix, Arizona

GEORGIA
2300 N. Slappey Dr.
Albany, Ga.

ARKANSAS
122 State Capitol Bldg.
Oklahoma City, Okla.

IDAHO
206 State House
Boise, Idaho

CALIFORNIA
1220 N Street
Room A-261
Sacramento, Calif.

ILLINOIS
610 S. Canal Street
Room 1160
Chicago, Ill.

COLORADO
Room 429,
State Services Bldg.
1525 Sherman Street
Denver, Colo.

INDIANA
North Street Bldg.
Room 426
632 E. North Street
Indianapolis, Ind.

CONNECTICUT
650 Main Street
Room 340
Hartford, Conn.

IOWA
Room 540, State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, Minn.

DELAWARE
Bureau of Markets
Del. Dept. of Agriculture
Dover, Del.

KANSAS
State Marketing Division
Room 1030-S State Office Bldg.
Topeka, Kans.

FLORIDA
103 Florida Citrus Bldg.
550-3rd St. N.W.
Winter Haven, Fla.

KENTUCKY
No. 1, Produce Terminal
Louisville, Ky.

LOUISIANA
901 State Capitol Bldg.
Baton Rouge, La.

MAINE
20 Herschel Street
Caribou, Maine

MARYLAND
Room 249 Symons Hall
University of Maryland
College Park, Md.

MASSACHUSETTS
408 Atlantic Avenue
Room 725
Boston, Mass.

MICHIGAN
Lewis Cass Bldg., 6th Floor
Lansing, Mich.

MINNESOTA
Room 540, State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, Minn.

MISSISSIPPI
901 State Capitol
Baton Rouge, La.

MISSOURI
122 State Capitol
Oklahoma City, Okla.

MONTANA
206 State House
Boise, Idaho

NEBRASKA
706 W. 27th Street
Scottsbluff, Neb.

NEVADA
State Capitol
Room B-45
Salt Lake City, Utah

NEW HAMPSHIRE
408 Atlantic Avenue
Room 725
Boston, Mass.

NORTH CAROLINA
306 State Agricultural Bldg.
Raleigh, N.C.

NEW JERSEY
Room 239
Produce Building
3301 South Galloway St.
Philadelphia, Pa.

NEW MEXICO
2202 West McDowell Road
Room 107
Phoenix, Ariz.

NEW YORK
Genesee Valley
Regional Market
Administration Bldg,
Room 112
Rochester, N.Y.

NORTH DAKOTA
Room 540
State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, Minn.

OHIO
State Office Bldg.
Room 710
Columbus, Ohio

OKLAHOMA
122 State Capitol Bldg.
Oklahoma City, Okla.

OREGON
113 Agriculture Bldg.
Salem, Oregon

PENNSYLVANIA
131 S. Office Bldg.
Capitol
Harrisburg, Pa.

RHODE ISLAND
Room 602
Veterans Memorial Bldg.
83 Park Street
Providence, R.I.

SOUTH CAROLINA
Room 205
Administration Bldg.
State Farmers Market
Forest Park, Georgia

SOUTH DAKOTA

540 State Office Bldg.
St. Paul, Minn.

TENNESSEE

Hogan Road
Nashville, Tenn.

TEXAS

Room 222
McClendon Bldg.
305 East Jackson Street
Harlingen, Texas

UTAH

State Capitol
Room B-45
Salt Lake City, Utah

VERMONT

408 Atlantic Avenue
Room 725
Boston, Mass.

VIRGINIA

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, AMS
Fruit & Vegetable Division
Washington, D.C. 20250

WASHINGTON

225 Yakima County Courthouse
Yakima, Washington

WEST VIRGINIA

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, AMS
Fruit & Vegetable Division
Washington, D.C. 20250

WISCONSIN

610 South Canal Street
Room 1160
Chicago, Ill.

WYOMING

706 West 27th Street
Scottsbluff, Nebraska