

TEFAP Fresh Produce Package Specification—2000008188

Weight: 10-12 lbs.

Type of Shipping Container: Box; All containers and packaging materials shall be constructed to meet the requirements of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for safe contact with the packaged product. The contractor shall obtain and maintain documentation from the container or packaging material manufacturer to verify that the containers and packaging materials used in the contract were in compliance with the Government's regulatory requirements for safe contact with food products.

Shipping Container:

The shipping containers (boxes) shall:

- Be good commercial fiberboard containers that are acceptable by common or other carrier for safe transport to point of destination;
- Be of such size to pack the commodity without slack filling or bulging;
- Withstand the stresses of handling, shipping, stacking, and storage as demonstrated by the Edge Crush Test, and without crushing or loss of shape and integrity, and
- Be closed by commercially accepted methods and materials. Steel or wire straps shall not be used for final closure. Staples shall not be used for final closure of shipping containers.

Marking and Labeling

The marking and labeling of the containers (boxes) shall include:

- Vendor/Shippers name and address
- Box Contents (ingredients)
- Net weight
- The contract number shall be placed on or adjacent to all exterior mailing or shipping labels of deliverable items called for by the contract.

Final Examination of Packaged and Packed Commodity:

Packaging Defects – Contractor shall ensure that packages in a delivery unit are examined for defects that affect protection, expose product, permit quality deterioration during storage, such as tears, holes, crushing, or improperly sealed or closed packages prior to shipment.

Palletized Unit Loads: All products shall be stacked on new or well-maintained pallets and palletized with shrink wrap plastic. Pallet loads shall be stacked in a manner that minimizes the overhang of the shipping containers over the edges of the pallets and that exposes each shipping container's principal display panel to facilitate certification examinations.

Size and Style of Container – Only one size and style of shipping container shall be used in any one delivery unit.

Contents: Mix of fresh fruits and vegetables (see below)

Variety: At least 4 different items

Pack Size: No more than 3 lbs. per item

Timing: The contractor is responsible for ensuring that all items contained within the box have at least a 7-10 day shelf life. The 7-10 day period starts from the date the product was received by the Recipient Agency and ends 7-10 days after receipt.

Storage: The contractor must ensure all products are kept within the cold chain. This includes, but is not limited to packaging, shipment, and distribution to recipient locations.

Grade Requirements: U.S. No. 1 or better. All products must be of 100 percent domestic origin.

Produce Quality: Fresh produce items shall be sound and wholesome, and in suitable shipping condition to arrive at the contract destination without abnormal deterioration. Produce items should not be packed in ice at any point post-harvest. No fresh cut fruit or vegetables allowed.

Boxes must contain, at a minimum:

1. At least 4 different items. It is preferred that at least 2 items are locally grown, if available.
2. Both fruits AND vegetables, including:
 - a. At least 3 lbs. of vegetables; no more than 3 lbs. of root vegetables such as potatoes, yams, carrots, onions, etc. Vendors may not justify including additional root vegetables because of cost or availability.
 - b. At least 3 lbs. of fruit.
3. 10-12 lbs. of total produce.

Local Definition: Locally and Regionally Produced Food means food that is raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed in the locality or region where the final product is marketed to consumers, so that the total distance that the product travels between the farm or ranch where the product originates and the point of sale to the end consumer is at most 400 miles, or both the final market and the origin of the product are within the same State, territory, or tribal land.