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# **United States Standards for Grades of Florida Avocados**

**Effective September 3, 1957**  
*(Reprinted September 2015)*

This is a reprint of the United States Standards for Grades of Florida Avocados which have been in effect since September 3, 1957 and were updated to modify the format.

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  
Fruit and Vegetable Program,  
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW, STOP 0240  
Washington, D.C. 20250

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**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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## United States Standards for Grades of Florida Avocados

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## **Grades**

### **§51.3050 U.S. No. 1.**

“U.S. No. 1” consists of avocados of similar varietal characteristics which are mature but not overripe, well formed, clean, well colored, well trimmed and which are free from decay, anthracnose, and freezing injury and are free from damage caused by bruises, cuts or other skin breaks, pulled stems, russeting or similar discoloration, scars or scab, sunburn, sunscald or sprayburn, cercospora spot, other disease, insects, or mechanical or other means.

- (a) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the avocados in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade: *Provided*, That not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for avocados affected by decay or anthracnose, including therein not more than 1 percent for avocados affected by decay. (See §§51.3055 and 51.3056.)

### **§51.3051 U.S. Combination.**

“U.S. Combination” consists of a combination of U.S. No. 1 and U.S. No. 2 avocados: *Provided*, That at least 60 percent, by count, of the avocados in each container meet the requirements of the U.S. No. 1 grade.

- (a) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the avocados in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of the U.S. No. 2 grade: *Provided*, That not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for avocados affected by decay or seriously damaged by anthracnose, including therein not more than 1 percent for avocados affected by decay. No part of any tolerance shall be allowed to reduce for the lot as a whole the percentage of U.S. No. 1 fruit required or specified in the combination, but individual containers may have not more than 10 percent less than the percentage of U.S. No. 1 fruit required or specified. (See §§51.3055 and 51.3056.)

### **§51.3052 U.S. No. 2.**

“U.S. No. 2” consists of avocados of similar varietal characteristics which are mature but not overripe, fairly well formed, clean, fairly well colored, well trimmed and which are free from decay and freezing injury and are free from serious damage caused by anthracnose, bruises, cuts or other skin breaks, pulled stems, russeting or similar discoloration, scars or scab, sunburn, sunscald or sprayburn, cercospora spot, other disease, insects, or mechanical or other means.

- (a) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the avocados in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade: *Provided*, That not more than

one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for avocados affected by decay or seriously damaged by anthracnose, including therein not more than 1 percent for avocados affected by decay. (See §§51.3055 and 51.3056.)

**§51.3053 U.S. No. 3.**

“U.S. No. 3” consists of avocados of similar varietal characteristics which are mature but not overripe, which are not badly misshapen, and which are free from decay and are free from serious damage caused by anthracnose and are free from very serious damage caused by freezing injury, bruises, cuts or other skin breaks, pulled stems, russeting or similar discoloration, scars or scab, sunburn, sunscald or sprayburn, cercospora spot, other disease, insects, dirt or mechanical or other means.

- (a) Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, not more than a total of 10 percent, by count, of the avocados in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, including therein not more than 2 percent for avocados affected by decay. (See §§51.3055 and 51.3056.)

**Unclassified**

**§51.3054 Unclassified.**

“Unclassified” consists of avocados which have not been classified in accordance with any of the foregoing grades. The term “unclassified” is not a grade within the meaning of these standards, but is provided as a designation to show that no grade has been applied to the lot.

**Standard Pack**

**§51.3055 Standard pack.**

- (a) The avocados shall be packed in accordance with good commercial practice and the pack shall be at least fairly tight. The weight of the smallest fruit in any container shall be not less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the container. Size of the avocados may be specified by count.
- (b) In order to allow for variations incident to proper sizing and packing, not more than 5 percent, by count, of the avocados in any container may weigh less than 75 percent of the weight of the largest fruit: *Provided*, That no fruit in any container shall weigh less than 60 percent of the weight of the largest fruit in the container. In addition, not more than 5 percent of the containers in any lot may fail to meet the requirement as to tightness of pack.

**Application of Tolerances**

**§51.3056 Application of tolerances.**

- (a) The contents of individual packages in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the following limitations: *Provided*, That the averages for the entire lot

are within the tolerances specified for the grade:

- (1) For packages which contain more than 20 avocados and a tolerance of 10 percent or more is provided, individual packages in any lot shall have not more than one and one-half times the tolerance specified. For packages which contain more than 20 avocados and a tolerance of less than 10 percent is provided, individual packages 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 package; and,
- (2) For packages which contain 20 avocados or less, individual packages 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 package.

### **Definitions**

#### **§51.3057 Similar varietal characteristics.**

“**Similar varietal characteristics**” means that the avocados in any container are similar in shape, texture, and color of skin and flesh.

#### **§51.3058 Mature.**

“**Mature**” means that the avocado has reached a stage of growth which will insure a proper completion of the ripening process.

#### **§51.3059 Overripe.**

“**Overripe**” means that the avocado is dead ripe with flesh soft or discolored and past commercial use.

#### **§51.3060 Well formed.**

“**Well formed**” means that the avocado has the normal shape characteristic of the variety.

#### **§51.3061 Clean.**

“**Clean**” means that the avocado is practically free from dirt, staining or other foreign material.

#### **§51.3062 Well colored.**

“**Well colored**” means that the avocado has the color characteristic of the variety.

**§51.3063 Well trimmed.**

“**Well trimmed**” means that the stem, when present, is cut off fairly smoothly at a point not more than one-fourth inch beyond the shoulder of the avocado.

**§51.3064 Damage.**

“**Damage**” means any defect which materially affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual fruit, or the general appearance of the avocados in the container. Any one of the following defects, or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as damage:

- (a) Cuts or other skin breaks when not healed and penetrating beneath the epidermis or the aggregate area exceeds that of a rectangle 1 inch in length and one-eighth inch in width, or when healed and the appearance is materially affected;
- (b) Pulled stems when the exposed stem cavity is excessively deep, or when skin surrounding the stem cavity is more than slightly torn;
- (c) Russeting or similar discoloration when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown surface discoloration aggregating 10 percent of the fruit surface;
- (d) Scars or scab when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown superficial, fairly smooth scars aggregating 10 percent of the fruit surface;
- (e) Sunburn when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has greenish-yellow colored sunburn aggregating 10 percent of the fruit surface; and,
- (f) Sunscald or sprayburn when not well healed, or when soft, or when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown, superficial scars aggregating 10 percent of the fruit surface.

**§51.3065 Fairly well formed.**

“**Fairly well formed**” means that the avocado may be slightly abnormal in shape but not to the extent that the appearance is seriously affected.

**§51.3066 Fairly well colored.**

“**Fairly well colored**” means that the avocado shows a shade of color which is fairly characteristic of the variety.

**§51.3067 Serious damage.**

“**Serious damage**” means any defect which seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual fruit, or the general appearance of the avocados in the container. Any one of the following defects, or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as serious damage:

- (a) Anthracnose when any spot exceeds the area of a circle one-fourth inch in diameter, or when more than 3 spots each of which exceeds the area of a circle three-sixteenths inch in diameter;
- (b) Cuts or other skin breaks when not healed and penetrating into the flesh of the fruit, or the aggregate area exceeds that of a rectangle 1 inch in length and one-fourth inch in width, or when healed and the appearance is seriously affected;
- (c) Pulled stems when the skin surrounding the exposed stem cavity is torn more than an aggregate area of a circle one-fourth inch in diameter, or when the flesh is torn;
- (d) Russeting or similar discoloration when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown surface discoloration aggregating 25 percent of the fruit surface;
- (e) Scars or scab when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown superficial fairly smooth scars aggregating 25 percent of the fruit surface;
- (f) Sunburn when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has greenish-yellow colored sunburn aggregating 25 percent of the fruit surface;
- (g) Sunscald or sprayburn when not well healed, or when soft, or when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown superficial, fairly smooth scars aggregating 25 percent of the fruit surface; and
- (h) Cercospora spot when any spot exceeds the area of a circle one-fourth inch in diameter, or when more than 3 spots each of which exceeds the area of a circle three-sixteenths inch in diameter, or when the aggregate area of all spots exceeds the area of a circle 1 inch in diameter.



**§51.3068 Badly misshapen.**

“**Badly misshapen**” means that the avocado is so badly curved, constricted, pointed or otherwise deformed that the appearance is very seriously affected.

**§51.3069 Very serious damage.**

“**Very serious damage**” means any defect which very seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the avocado. Any one of the following defects, or any combination of defects the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect, shall be considered as very serious damage:

- (a) Cuts or other skin breaks when not healed and penetrating into the flesh of the fruit, or any skin break very seriously affecting the appearance or the edible or shipping quality;
- (b) Pulled stems when the skin surrounding the exposed stem cavity is torn more than an aggregate area of a circle one-half inch in diameter, or when the flesh is torn;
- (c) Russeting or similar discoloration when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown surface discoloration aggregating 50 percent of the fruit surface;
- (d) Scars or scab when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown superficial, fairly smooth scars aggregating 50 percent of the fruit surface;
- (e) Sunburn when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has greenish-yellow colored sunburn aggregating 50 percent of the fruit surface; and,
- (f) Sunscald or sprayburn when not well healed, or when the appearance of the avocado is affected to a greater extent than that of an avocado which has light brown superficial, fairly smooth scars aggregating 50 percent of the fruit surface.