



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Agricultural
Marketing
Service**

**Fruit and
Vegetable
Division**

**Processed
Products
Branch**

United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Peppers

Effective date March 13, 1959

This is the first issue, as amended, of the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Peppers published in the **FEDERAL REGISTER** of March 13, 1959 (24 FR 1825) to become effective March 13, 1959. This issue supersedes the first issue, which has been in effect since June 28, 1957.

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 processed fruits and vegetables, 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 standards also serve as a basis for the inspection and grading of commodities by the Federal inspection service, the only activity authorized to approve the designation of U.S. grades as referenced in the standards, as provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. This service, available as on-line (in-plant) or lot inspection and grading of all processed fruit and vegetable products, is offered to interested parties, upon application, on a fee-for-service basis. The verification of some specific recommendations, requirements, or tolerances contained in the standards can be accomplished only by the use of on-line inspection procedures. In all instances, a grade can be assigned based on final product factors or characteristics.

In addition to the U.S. grade standards, grading manuals or instructions for inspection of several processed fruits and vegetables are available upon request for a nominal fee. These manuals or instructions contain detailed interpretations of the grade standards and provide step-by-step procedures for grading the product.

Grade standards are issued by the Department after careful consideration of all data and views submitted, and the Department welcomes suggestions which might aid in improving the standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of standards and grading manuals obtained from:

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United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Sweet Peppers

Section	Page No.
§52.3001	Product description. 2
§52.3002	Types of frozen sweet peppers. 2
§52.3003	Styles of frozen sweet peppers. 2
§52.3004	Grades of frozen sweet peppers. 3
§52.3005	Ascertaining the grade. 3
§52.3006	Ascertaining the rating for the factors which are scored. 4
§52.3007	Color. 4
§52.3008	Uniformity of size and symmetry. 5
§52.3009	Defects. 6
§52.3010	Character. 7
§52.3011	Ascertaining the grade of a lot. 8
§52.3012	Score sheet for frozen sweet peppers. 8

Authority: Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, Secs. 203, 205, 60 Stat. 1087, as amended, 1090, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1622, 1624).

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.

§52.3001 Product description.

Frozen sweet peppers is the frozen product prepared from fresh, clean, sound, firm pods of the common commercial varieties of sweet peppers, which have been properly prepared, may or may not be blanched and are then frozen in accordance with good commercial practice and maintained at temperatures necessary for the preservation of the product.

§52.3002 Types of frozen sweet peppers.

- (a) **Type I, green.**
- (b) **Type II, red.**
- (c) **Type III, mixed (green and red).**

§52.3003 Styles of frozen sweet peppers.

- (a) **Whole stemmed** means whole unpeeled pepper pods with stem and core removed.
- (b) **Whole unstemmed** means whole unpeeled pepper pods with stems trimmed to not more than 1/2 inch length.
- (c) **Halved** means whole stemmed, unpeeled, pepper pods which have been cut approximately in half from stem to blossom end.
- (d) **Sliced** means whole stemmed, unpeeled pepper pods or pieces of pepper pods which have been cut into strips.
- (e) **Diced** means whole stemmed, unpeeled pepper pods or pieces of pepper pods which have been cut into approximate square pieces measuring 1/2 inch or less.
- (f) **Unit** means a whole unpeeled pepper pod or portion of a pepper pod in frozen sweet peppers.

§52.3004 Grades of frozen sweet peppers.

- (a) U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy** is the quality of frozen sweet peppers that possess similar varietal characteristics; that possess a normal flavor; that possess a good color; that are practically uniform in size and symmetry; that are practically free from defects; that possess a good character; and for those factors which are scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart the total score is not less than 85 points: **Provided**, that the frozen sweet peppers may be reasonably uniform in size and symmetry if the total score is not less than 85 points.
- (b) U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard** is the quality of frozen sweet peppers that possess similar varietal characteristics; that possess a normal flavor; that possess a reasonably good color; that are reasonably uniform in size and symmetry; that are reasonably free from defects; that possess a reasonably good character; and for those factors which are scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart the total score is not less than 70 points: **Provided**, that the frozen sweet peppers may be variable in size and symmetry if the total score is not less than 70 points.
- (c) Substandard** is the quality of frozen sweet peppers that fail to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard.

§52.3005 Ascertaining the grade.

- (a) General.** In addition to considering other requirements outlined in the standards the following quality factors are evaluated:

 - (1) Factors not rated by score points.**

 - (i) Varietal characteristics.**
 - (ii) Flavor.**
 - (2) Factors rated by score points.** The relative importance of each factor which is scored is expressed numerically on the scale of 100. The maximum number of points that may be given such factors are:

Factors:	Points
Color	20
Uniformity of size and symmetry	20
Defects	30
Character	<u>30</u>
Total Score	100

The evaluation of the factors of quality are made immediately after thawing to the extent that the product is substantially free from ice crystals and can be handled as individual units.

- (b) **Normal flavor.** **Normal flavor** means that the product is free from objectionable flavor and objectionable odors of any kind.

§52.3006 Ascertaining the rating for the factors which are scored.

The essential variations within each factor which is scored are so described that the value may be ascertained for each factor and expressed numerically. The numerical range within each factor which is scored is inclusive. (For example, **27 to 30 points** means 27, 28, 29, or 30 points.)

§52.3007 Color.

- (a) **General.** The color of frozen sweet peppers has a reference to the predominating and characteristic color of the exterior surface of the units of frozen sweet peppers.
- (b) **"A" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that possess a good color may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Good color** means a good characteristic bright color for the type and with respect to type I and type II variations in color do not materially affect the appearance of the product.
- (c) **"B" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that possess a reasonably good color may be given a score of 14 to 16 points. Frozen sweet peppers that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Reasonably good color** means a reasonably bright characteristic color for the type and with respect to Type I and Type II variations in color do not seriously affect the appearance of the product.

NOTE: When the appearance of the product is seriously affected by a mixture of Type I and Type II units consider as Type III.

- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section or are definitely dull or off color for any reason may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.3008 Uniformity of size and symmetry.

- (a) **General.** Uniformity of size and symmetry refers to the degree of variation in size and symmetry of the units in the respective styles of frozen sweet peppers.
- (b) **"A" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that are practically uniform in size and symmetry may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Practically uniform in size and symmetry** has the following meanings with respect to the following styles of frozen sweet peppers:
- (1) **Whole stemmed; whole unstemmed; halved.** Not less than 90 percent, by count, of the pods shall be at least 2 1/2 inches in length, exclusive of the stem, and 2 1/2 inches in diameter and shall be practically uniform in size and symmetry.
 - (2) **Sliced.** The units are practically uniform in size and the aggregate weight of all strips less than 1-1/4 inches in length does not exceed 30 percent, by weight, of all the units.
 - (3) **Diced.** The units are practically uniform in size and the aggregate weight of all the units which are noticeably smaller than one-half the area of an average sized unit and of all markedly large and irregular-shaped units does not exceed 10 percent, by weight, of all the units.
- (c) **"B" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that are reasonably uniform in size and symmetry may be given a score of 14 to 16 points. **Reasonably uniform in size and symmetry** has the following meanings with respect to the following styles of frozen sweet peppers:
- (1) **Whole stemmed; whole unstemmed; halved.** Not less than 80 percent, by count, of the pods shall be at least 2-1/2 inches in length, exclusive of the stem, and 2-1/2 inches in diameter and shall be reasonably uniform in size and symmetry.

- (2) **Sliced.** The units are reasonably uniform in size and the aggregate weight of all strips less than 1-1/4 inches in length does not exceed 40 percent, by weight, of all the units.
- (3) **Diced.** The units are reasonably uniform in size and the aggregate weight of all the units which are noticeably smaller than one-half the area of an average sized unit and of all markedly large and irregular-shaped units does not exceed 20 percent, by weight, of all the units.
- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a partial limiting rule).

§52.3009 Defects.

- (a) **General.** The factor of defects refers to the freedom from grit, sand or silt, seeds, undeveloped seeds, core and stem material; the trimmings; and damaged and seriously damaged units.
 - (1) **Grit, sand, or silt** means any particle of earthy material.
 - (2) **Well trimmed** means that the unit is free from gouges or knife marks and with respect to whole unstemmed style that the stem is trimmed to not more than one-half inch length and with respect to whole stemmed and halved styles that the stem, core, seeds, and placenta tissue are neatly removed so as to retain substantially the appearance of a whole or halved unit.
 - (3) **Reasonably well trimmed** means that the unit is practically free from gouges or knife marks and with respect to whole unstemmed style that the stem is trimmed to not more than one-half inch length and with respect to whole stemmed and halved styles that the stem, core, seeds, and placenta tissue have been removed so as to retain to a reasonable extent the appearance of a whole or halved unit.
 - (4) **Damage** means any injury or blemish which materially affects the appearance or eating quality of the unit.
 - (5) **Serious damage** means any injury or blemish which seriously affects the appearance or eating quality of the unit.

- (b) **"A" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that are practically free from defects may be given a score of 26 to 30 points. **Practically free from defects** means that the pods in whole unstemmed, whole stemmed, and halved styles are well trimmed; that no grit, sand or silt may be present that affects the appearance and eating quality; and that seeds, undeveloped seeds, core and stem material, damaged and seriously damaged units individually or collectively do not materially affect the appearance and eating quality of the product.
- (c) **"B" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that are reasonably free from defects may be given a score of 21 to 25 points. Frozen sweet peppers that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Reasonably free from defects** means that the pods in whole unstemmed, whole stemmed and halved styles are reasonably well trimmed; that no grit, sand, or silt may be present that affects the appearance and eating quality; and that seeds, undeveloped seeds, core and stem material, damaged and seriously damaged units individually or collectively do not seriously affect the appearance and eating quality of the product.
- (d) **"SStd" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 20 points and shall not be graded above Substandard regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.3010 Character.

- (a) **"A" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that possess a good character may be given a score of 25 to 30 points. **Good character** means that the units are firm, full, fleshed and tender.
- (b) **"B" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that possess a reasonably good character may be given a score of 21 to 24 points. Frozen sweet peppers that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Reasonably good character** means that the units are reasonably full fleshed, may lack firmness but are not soft or mushy.
- (c) **"SStd" classification.** Frozen sweet peppers that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 20 points and shall not be graded above Substandard regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.3011 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.

The grade of a lot of frozen sweet peppers covered by these standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the **Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Fruits and Vegetables, Processed Products Thereof, and Certain Other Processed Food Products** (7 CFR 52.1 to 52.83).

§52.3012 Score sheet for frozen sweet peppers.

Size and kind of container			
Container marks or identification			
Label			
Net weight (ounces)			
Type			
Style			
Count of peppers (whole, halved)			
Factors		Score Points	
Color	20	"A"	17-20
		"B"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Uniformity of size and symmetry	20	"A"	17-20
		"B"	14-16
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>2/</u>
Defects	30	"A"	26-30
		"B"	21-25 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-20 <u>1/</u>
Character	30	"A"	25-30
		"B"	21-24 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-20 <u>1/</u>
Total Score	100		
Grade			
Flavor			

1/ Indicates limiting rule.

2/ Indicates partial limiting rule.

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