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# United States Standards for Grades of Romaine

**Effective September 6, 2016**

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Romaine (81 FR 51297) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since August 10, 1960.

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  
Specialty Crops 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 Romaine

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## **Grades**

### **§51.3295 U.S. No. 1.**

“**U.S. No. 1**” consists of romaine plants of similar varietal characteristics which are fresh, well developed, well trimmed, and which are free from decay, and free from damage caused by seedstems, broken, bruised or discolored leaves, tipburn, wilting, foreign material, freezing, dirt, disease, insects, mechanical or other means.

## **Reserved**

### **§51.3296 Reserved.**

## **Tolerances**

### **§51.3297 Tolerances.**

In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling, the following tolerances, by count, are provided:

- (a) 10 percent of the plants in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of the grade: *Provided*, That not more than one-half of this amount, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for serious damage, including therein not more than 2 percent for decay.

## **Application of Tolerances**

### **§51.3298 Application of tolerances.**

The contents of individual packages are subject to the following limitations: *Provided*, That the averages for the entire lot are within the tolerances specified for the grade:

- (a) A package shall have not more than one and one-half times a specified tolerance of 10 percent and not more than double a specified tolerance of less than 10 percent, except that at least one defective plant may be permitted in any package.

## **Definitions**

### **§51.3299 Similar varietal characteristics.**

“**Similar varietal characteristics**” means that the plants in any container are of the same general type.

### **§51.3300 Fresh.**

“**Fresh**” means that the plant has normal succulence but the outermost leaves may be slightly wilted.

### **§51.3301 Well developed.**

“**Well developed**” means that the plant shows normal growth and shape.

**§51.3302 Well trimmed.**

“**Well trimmed**” means that the stem is trimmed off close to the point of attachment of the outer leaves.

**§51.3303 Damage.**

“**Damage**” means the specific defect described in this section; any other defect, or any combination of defects, which materially detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the plants.

- (a) Seedstems when the length of the attached seedstem is more than one-fourth the overall plant length or when any portion of the seedstem has been removed.

**§51.3304 Serious damage.**

“**Serious damage**” means any defect, or any combination of defects, which seriously detracts from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the plant.