



United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
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Specialty
Crops
Program

Specialty
Crops
Inspection
Division

United States Standards for Grades of Canned Spinach

Effective January 20, 2017

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Spinach (81 FR 93572) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since May 8, 1971.

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

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 Canned Spinach

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Product Description, Styles, and Grades

§52.1901 Product Description.

Canned Spinach as defined in the definitions and standards of identity for canned vegetables (21 CFR 155.200) issued pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, means the product properly prepared from the succulent leaves of the spinach plant and is packed with the addition of water in hermetically sealed containers and sufficiently processed by heat to prevent spoilage. Citric acid or vinegar may be added in a quantity not more than sufficient to permit effective processing by heat without discoloration or other impairment of the product. One or more of the optional seasoning ingredients specified in the aforesaid standards of identity may be added.

§52.1902 Styles of canned spinach.

- (a) **Whole leaf** spinach consists substantially of the leaf and adjoining portion of the stem.
- (b) **Cut leaf or Sliced** spinach consists of the leaf and adjoining portion of stem that has been cut predominantly into large pieces approximating three-fourths inch or more in the longest dimension or cut predominantly into approximate strips.
- (c) **Chopped** spinach consists of the leaf and adjoining portion of stem that has been cut predominantly into small pieces less than approximately three-fourths inch in the longest dimension.

§52.1903 Grades of canned spinach.

- (a) **U.S. Grade A** is the quality of canned spinach that has a good flavor and odor and is attractive in appearance and eating quality within the limitations set forth in this subpart as to:
 - (1) Color,
 - (2) Character,
 - (3) Stem material,
 - (4) Damage, and
 - (5) Harmless extraneous material.
- (b) **U.S. Grade B** is the quality of canned spinach that has a good flavor and odor and is reasonably attractive in appearance and eating quality within the limitations set forth in this subpart as to:

- (1) Color,
 - (2) Character,
 - (3) Stem material,
 - (4) Damage, and
 - (5) Harmless extraneous material.
- (c) **Substandard** is the quality of canned spinach that fails to meet the requirements for U.S. Grade B.

Definitions of Terms and Symbols

§52.1904 Definitions of terms and symbols.

(a) **Terms.**

Defect. Any specifically defined variation from a particular requirement.

Deviant. A sample unit that exceeds an upper limit (such as for stem material or various defect classifications) or fails to meet a lower limit (such as drained weights).

Sample. Any number of sample units to be used for inspection of a lot.

Sample unit. The entire contents of a container, a portion of the contents of a container, or a combination of the contents of two or more containers as specified to be used for inspection.

Sample average value. The numerical value calculated by dividing the total number of applicable defects in a sample by the total number of sample units in that sample.

(b) **Symbols.**

\overline{X}_d . Minimum sample average drained weight.

LL. Lower limit for individual drained weights.

UL. Upper limit is the value which represents the maximum amount of stem material or the maximum number of defects a sample unit may have for a grade classification.

Fill Of Container

§52.1905 Recommended fill of container.

The recommended fill of container is not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since fill of container, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purpose of these grades. The recommended fill of container for canned spinach is the maximum amount of spinach that can be sealed in a container and processed by heat without impairment of quality. It is recommended that the product and packing medium occupy not less than 90 percent of the water capacity of the container.

Recommended Drained Weights

§52.1906 Recommended drained weights.

- (a) General.** The recommended drained weight values in Table I of the subpart are not incorporated in the grades of the finished product, since drained weight, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purpose of these grades.
- (b) Method for ascertaining drained weight.**
 - (1)** The drained weight of canned spinach is determined when the product is at approximately room temperature (68°F). The contents of the container is emptied upon a dry, previously weighed, U.S. Standard No. 8 circular sieve of proper diameter containing 8 meshes to the inch (0.0937 inch, ±3 percent, square openings). With the sieve flat on the tray, the container of spinach is placed open end down in the sieve in an upright position. The container is lifted off the spinach without spreading the spinach out on the sieve. The spinach is allowed to drain for exactly 2 minutes. The weight of the spinach and sieve minus the weight of the dry sieve is the drained weight of the spinach.
 - (2)** A sieve 8 inches in diameter is used for the equivalent of a No. 3 size can (404 x 700) and smaller and a sieve 12 inches in diameter is used for containers larger than the equivalent of a No. 3 size can.

Table I – Recommended Minimum Drained Weights for Canned Spinach

| Container designation (metal, unless otherwise stated) | Container size overall dimensions | | Capacity: weight H ₂ O at 68°F. (avoirdupois ounces) | Minimum drained weight (avoirdupois ounces) | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--|--|-------------|
| | Diameter (inches) | Height (inches) | | LL | \bar{X}_d |
| 8Z tall | 2-11/16 | 3-4/16 | 8.65 | 4.8 | 5.2 |
| No. 1 picnic | 2-11/16 | 4 | 10.90 | 6.3 | 6.8 |
| No. 300 | 3 | 4-7/16 | 15.20 | 8.6 | 9.1 |
| No. 1 tall | 3-1/16 | 4-11/16 | 16.60 | 9.4 | 10.0 |
| No. 303 | 3-3/16 | 4-6/16 | 16.85 | 9.6 | 10.2 |
| No. 303 glass | -- | -- | 17.70 | 9.4 | 10.0 |
| No. 2 | 3-7/16 | 4-9/16 | 20.50 | 11.9 | 12.6 |
| No. 2 1/2 | 4-1/16 | 4-11/16 | 29.75 | 17.6 | 18.6 |
| No. 2 1/2 glass | -- | -- | 29.50 | 15.8 | 16.6 |
| No. 10 | 6-3/16 | 7 | 109.45 | 54.7 | 58.4 |

Factors of Quality

§52.1907 Factors of quality.

The grade of a lot of canned spinach is based on requirements for product characteristics with respect to the following quality factors:

- (a) Flavor and odor,
- (b) Color,
- (c) Character,
- (d) Stem material,
- (e) Damage, and
- (f) Harmless extraneous material.

§52.1908 Sample unit size.

- (a) Compliance with the factors of flavor and odor, color, and character may be determined on:

- (1) The contents of an entire container, or
 - (2) A representative subsample from containers yielding more than 10 ounces of drained weight.
- (b) Compliance with requirements for harmless extraneous material other than plant material is determined on the contents of an entire container.
 - (c) Compliance with requirements for the factors of stem material, damage, and extraneous plant material shall be determined on subsamples as specified in Table II of this subpart.

Table II – Sample Unit Size-Drained Spinach

| Style | Containers smaller than No. 2 1/2 | No. 2 1/2 Containers | No. 10 Containers |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Whole leaf; cut leaf | 10 ounces | 15 ounces | 30 ounces |
| Chopped | 2 ounces | 3 ounces | 6 ounces |

Product Characteristics

§52.1909 Classification of defects.

- (a) **General.** Scoreable defects in the factors of color, character, extraneous plant material, other extraneous material, and damaged spinach are outlined in Tables III, IV, and V.
- (b) **Extraneous plant material.** Extraneous plant material includes root crowns, root stubs, and seed heads of the spinach plant and harmless grass and weeds of various kinds and texture.
- (c) **Other extraneous material.** Other harmless extraneous material includes grit, sand, silt, or other earthy material.
- (d) **Damage.** Damage includes discoloration or other similar injury on a leaf or stem or portion thereof which damage affects, materially affects, or seriously affects the appearance or eating quality of the portion of spinach and/or entire product.
- (e) **Degrees of defect classes.** Defects are classified as to minor, major, or severe. Each X mark in Tables III, IV, and V represents one (1) defect.

Table III – Whole Leaf; Cut Leaf; Chopped Styles

| Quality Factors | Defects | Minor | Major | Severe |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Color | Color appearance is: | | | |
| | Adversely affected to a degree that is noticeable | | X | |
| | Adversely affected to a degree that is objectionable | | | X |
| Character | Appearance or eating quality, due to: | | | |
| | (1) A mushy texture, disintegration, ragged cutting, or shredded leaves and shredded stems, or portions thereof; and/or (2) A tough texture, course, or fibrous stems or portions thereof; and/or (3) Any other causes, as applicable for the style is: | | | |
| | Adversely, but not seriously, affected | | X | |
| | Seriously affected | | | X |
| Extraneous Plant Material | Root Crown: | | | |
| | Any significant portion of the solid area of the plant between the root and attached leaves | | X | |
| | Root Stub: | | | |
| | Any portion of the root whether or not the leaves are attached | | | X |
| | Seed Head-Whole leaf, Cut Leaf Styles | | | |
| | Longer than one (1) inch or objectionable regardless of length | | X | |
| | Seed head-Chopped Style | | | |
| | Pieces affecting appearance or eating quality- | | | |
| | More than slightly but not materially | X | | |
| | Materially | | X | |
| | Seriously | | | X |
| Other Extraneous Material | Grit, sand, silt, or other earthy material: | | | |
| | A trace that no more than slightly affects appearance or eating quality | | X | |
| | Presence materially affects appearance or eating quality | | | X |

**Table IV – Whole Leaf; Cut Leaf; Chopped Styles
Grass and Weeds (Aggregate Measurement)**

| Quality Factors | Defects | Minor | Major | Severe |
|---|--|-------|-------|--------|
| Extraneous Plant Material | Whole Leaf and Cut Leaf Styles | | | |
| | Green, fine, tender, string like blades, and stems: | | | |
| | 3 inches or less | X | | |
| | More than 3 inches but not more than 8 inches | | X | |
| | More than 8 inches | | | X |
| | Green and Coarse: | | | |
| | 1/2 inch or less | X | | |
| | More than 1/2 inch but not more than 2 inches | | X | |
| | More than 2 inches | | | X |
| | Other than green – of any texture or kind: | | | |
| | 1/2 inch or less | | X | |
| | More than 1/2 inch | | | X |
| | Chopped Style | | | |
| | Green, fine, tender, string-like blades, and stems: | | | |
| | 3/4 inch or less | X | | |
| | More than 3/4 inch but not more than 2 inches | | X | |
| | More than 2 inches | | | X |
| | Green and Coarse: | | | |
| | 3/4 inch or less | | X | |
| | More than 3/4 inch | | | X |
| Other than green – of any texture or kind: | | | | |
| Any amount | | | X | |

**Table V – Discoloration or Other Injury
(Affecting the Appearance or Eating Quality)**

| Quality Factors | Defects | Minor | Major | Severe |
|-----------------|--|-------|-------|--------|
| Damage | Whole Leaf and Cut Leaf Styles | | | |
| | Less than 1 square inch that more than slightly but not materially affects | X | | |
| | Less than 1 square inch that materially affects | | X | |
| | 1 square inch or more but less than 4 square inches that affects to any degree | | X | |
| | More than 4 square inches that affects to any degree | | | X |
| | Chopped Style | | | |
| | Any area that materially affects | X | | |

Tolerances for Grade Compliance

§52.1910 Tolerances for stem material.

Stem material is that portion of the spinach plant below the point of attachment to the leaf. Allowances for stem material for the respective grade are shown in Table VI, based on the method for ascertaining the amount of stem material outlined in this subpart (See §52.1912).

Table VI – Tolerances for Stem Material (All styles)

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Grade classification | Upper Limit (UL) for the sample unit |
| U.S. Grade A | 25 percent by weight. |
| U.S. Grade B | 30 percent by weight. |

§52.1911 Tolerances for color, character, damage, harmless extraneous material.

Table VII(a) – Whole Leaf; Cut Leaf Styles

| For container sizes: less than No. 2-1/2; sample unit size - 10 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 1 | 2 | 0.25 |
| | Major | 4 | 6 | 1.50 |
| | Total ¹ | 8 | 11 | 4.0 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 2 | 3 | 0.50 |
| | Major | 8 | 11 | 4.0 |
| | Total ¹ | 18 | 23 | 12.0 |

¹ Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects.

Table VII(b) – Whole Leaf; Cut Leaf Styles

| For container sizes: less than No. 2-1/2; sample unit size - 15 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 1 | 3 | 0.375 |
| | Major | 5 | 8 | 2.25 |
| | Total ¹ | 10 | 14 | 6.0 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 2 | 4 | 0.75 |
| | Major | 10 | 14 | 6.0 |
| | Total ¹ | 26 | 32 | 18.0 |

¹ Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects.

Table VII(c) – Whole Leaf; Cut Leaf Styles

| For container sizes: less than No. 10; sample unit size - 30 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper Limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 2 | 4 | 0.75 |
| | Major | 8 | 12 | 4.5 |
| | Total ¹ | 18 | 23 | 12.0 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 4 | 6 | 1.5 |
| | Major | 18 | 23 | 12.0 |
| | Total ¹ | 47 | 55 | 36.0 |

¹Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects.

Table VIII(a) – Chopped Style

| For container sizes: less than No. 2-1/2; sample unit size - 2 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 1 | 2 | 0.25 |
| | Major | 4 | 6 | 1.50 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 4 | 7 | 2.0 |
| | Total ² | 22 | 27 | 15.0 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 2 | 3 | 0.50 |
| | Major | 8 | 11 | 4.0 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 10 | 14 | 6.0 |
| | Total ² | 51 | 59 | 40.0 |

²Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects including minor grass and weeds.

Table VIII(b) – Chopped Style

| For container sizes: less than No. 2-1/2; sample unit size - 3 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 1 | 3 | 0.375 |
| | Major | 5 | 8 | 2.25 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 6 | 9 | 3.0 |
| | Total ² | 31 | 38 | 22.5 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 2 | 4 | 0.75 |
| | Major | 10 | 14 | 6.0 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 14 | 14 | 9.0 |
| | Total ² | 74 | 85 | 60.0 |

²Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects including minor grass and weeds.

Table VIII(c) – Chopped Style

| For container sizes: less than No. 2-1/2; sample unit size - 6 ounces | | Number of defects permitted in a sample unit | | |
|---|-------------------------|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Grade Classification | Defect Classification | Upper limit (UL) | Maximum allowed for deviants | Sample average value |
| U.S. Grade A | Severe | 2 | 4 | 0.75 |
| | Major | 8 | 12 | 4.5 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 10 | 14 | 6.0 |
| | Total ² | 57 | 66 | 45.0 |
| U.S. Grade B | Severe | 4 | 6 | 1.50 |
| | Major | 18 | 23 | 12.0 |
| | Minor (grass and weeds) | 26 | 32 | 18.0 |
| | Total ² | 140 | 153 | 120.0 |

²Total – the sum of severe, major, and minor defects including minor grass and weeds.

Ascertaining Percentage of Stem Material

§52.1912 Method for ascertaining percentage of stem material.

(a) Method for separation.

(1) Whole leaf; cut leaf styles.

- (i) Have available two dry, previously weighed U.S. standard No. 8 circular sieves containing 8-meshes to the inch (0.0937, ± 3 percent, square openings), not to exceed 8 inches in diameter.
- (ii) Place the sample unit of spinach in water in a deep grading tray. With gently agitation, separate the leaves. Remove the individual leaves from the water and cut the attached stem off just below the last point of attachment of leaf material.
- (iii) Place the stem material on one sieve and the leaf material on another sieve. Remove all detached stems and pieces of stem and detached leaves and pieces of leaves from the water and place on their respective screen.

- (2) **Chopped style.** Place the sample unit, approximately one ounce at a time, in water in a deep grading tray. Remove the loose stem material and place on a dry sieve as mentioned under (a) (1) of this section. Pour the remaining leaf material on another sieve. Repeat until the stem material has been removed from the entire sample unit.

(b) Drained weight of separated material.

- (1) Allow the leaf material and stem material to drain for 2 minutes from the time the separation has been completed.
- (2) Weigh separately:
 - (i) The screen and leaf material, and
 - (ii) The screen and stem material. The weight of the screen and leaf material minus the weight of the screen is the weight of the leaf material. The weight of the screen and stem material minus the weight of the screen is the weight of stem material.

- (c) **Calculations.** The percent of stem material is the weight of drained stem material divided by the sum of the weights of drained stem material and drained leaf material.

$$\frac{\text{Weight of stem material}}{\text{Weight of stem material} + \text{Weight of leaf material}} = \text{Percent of Stem Material}$$

Lot Acceptance

§52.1913 Lot acceptance for drained weights.

A lot of canned spinach is considered as meeting the minimum drained weights when the following criteria are met:

- (a) The average of the drained weights from all the containers in the sample meets the average drained weight in Table I of this subpart (designated as \bar{X}_d); and
- (b) The number of deviants for drained weight do not exceed the applicable acceptance number specified in the single sampling plan in the Regulations Governing Inspection of Processed Fruits, Vegetables, and Related Products (§52.1 to §52.83).

§52.1914 Lot acceptance for quality.

A lot of canned spinach shall be considered as meeting the quality requirements for the applicable grade when the following criteria are met:

- (a) **Flavor and odor.** All sample units meet the requirements for flavor and odor.
- (b) **Stem material.**
 - (1) The number of sample units which exceed the upper limits (UL) for stem material as applicable for the grade (deviants), specified in Table VI, does not exceed the acceptance number specified for the sample size in the Single Sampling Plan of the Regulations Governing Inspection of Processed Fruits, Vegetables, and Related Products (§52.1 to §52.83).
 - (2) Deviants for stem material are permitted in addition to the deviants allowed for other quality factors.
- (c) **Color, character, damage, harmless extraneous material.**
 - (1) The number of sample units which exceed the upper limit (UL) for these defects for the applicable grade (deviants), specified in Tables VII(a), VII(b), VII(c), VIII(a), VIII(b), and VIII(c), does not exceed the acceptance number specified for the sample size in the Single Sampling Plan of the regulations Governing Inspection of Processed Fruits, Vegetables, and Related Products (§52.1 to §52.83); and
 - (2) The sample average values for the various defect classifications specified in Tables VII(a), VII(b), VII(c), VIII(a), VIII(b), and VIII(c) are not exceeded; and

- (3)** No sample unit exceeds the maximum number of defects allowed for deviants as specified in Tables VII(a), VII(b), VII(c), VIII(a), VIII(b), and VIII(c).

Tally Sheet
§52.1915 Tally sheet for canned spinach.

| NO., SIZE, AND KIND OF CONTAINER | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-------|--------|-------------|-------|--------|-------------|-------|--------|
| LABEL | | | | | | | | | | |
| CONTAINER MARK OR IDENTIFICATION | PRIMARY | | | | | | | | | |
| | CASE | | | | | | | | | |
| Net Weight (Ounces) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vacuum (Inches) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Drained Weight (Ounces) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Headspace | | | | | | | | | | |
| Quality Factors | | Sample Unit | | | Sample Unit | | | Sample Unit | | |
| | | Major | Minor | Severe | Major | Minor | Severe | Major | Minor | Severe |
| Color | | | | | | | | | | |
| Character | | | | | | | | | | |
| Damage | | | | | | | | | | |
| Harmless Extraneous Material | Plant | | | | | | | | | |
| | Green, fine | | | | | | | | | |
| | Green, course | | | | | | | | | |
| | Other | | | | | | | | | |
| | Seed head | | | | | | | | | |
| | Root crown | | | | | | | | | |
| | Root stub | | | | | | | | | |
| Other Than Plant | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total (Each Class) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cumulative Total (All Classes) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flavor and Odor | A, SSTD | | | | | | | | | |