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Crops
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Specialty
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Inspection
Division

United States Standards for Grades of Chili Sauce

Effective January 20, 2017

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Chili Sauce (81 FR 93572) supersedes the previous issue which has been in effect since October 20, 1953.

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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§52.2191 Product description.

Chili sauce is the product prepared from mature, clean, sound, tomatoes, of the red or reddish varieties which are peeled and chopped or crushed, or all (or a portion) of the tomatoes may be chopped, crushed, or macerated and the peelings screened out in a manner so that at least a substantial portion of the seed remains in the product, to which are added salt, spices, vinegar, nutritive sweetening ingredients, and to which may be added vegetable flavoring ingredients such as chopped onion, chopped green or red pepper, chopped green tomatoes, chopped celery, and sweet pickle relish in such quantities as will not materially alter the appearance of the product with respect to the predominance of the tomato ingredient, and any other ingredients permissible under the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. The chili sauce is processed in accordance with good commercial practice; is packed in hermetically sealed containers; and is sufficiently processed by heat, before or after sealing, to assure preservation of the product. The refractive index of the filtrate of the chili sauce at 20 degree C. is not less than 1.3784.

§52.2192 Grades of chili sauce.

- (a) **U.S. Grade A** is the quality of chili sauce that possesses a good color; that possesses a good consistency; that possesses a good character; that is practically free from defects; that possesses a good flavor; and that scores not less than 85 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart: *Provided*, That the chili sauce may score not less than 14 points on the factor of character if the total score is not less than 85 points.
- (b) **U.S. Grade C** is the quality of chili sauce that possesses a fairly good color; that possesses a fairly good consistency; that possesses a fairly good character; that is fairly free from defects; that possesses a fairly good flavor; and that scores not less than 70 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart.
- (c) **Substandard** is the quality of chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of U.S. Standard.

§52.2193 Recommended fill of container for chili sauce.

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 purposes of these grades. It is recommended that each container for chili sauce be filled as full as practicable without impairment of quality and that the product occupy not less than 90 percent of the capacity of the container.

§52.2194 Ascertaining the grade.

- (a) The grade of the chili sauce is ascertained by considering, in conjunction with the

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requirements of the respective grade, the respective ratings for the factors of color, consistency, character, absence of defects, and flavor. 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 for each such factor is:

Factors:	Points
Color	20
Consistency	20
Character	20
Absence of defects	20
Flavor	20
Total Score	100

§52.2195 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, 17 to 20 points means 17, 18, 19, or 20 points).

§52.2196 Color.

- (a) **“A” classification.** Chili sauce that possesses a good color may be given a score of 17 to 20 points.

Good color means that the color of the chili sauce is bright; the color of the tomato ingredient is predominant and characteristic of properly prepared, well ripened, properly processed tomatoes; and that the added seasoning ingredients do not materially detract from the appearance of the product.

- (b) **“C” classification.** If the chili sauce possesses a fairly good color, a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Chili sauce that scores in this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

Fairly good color means that the color of the chili sauce may be slightly dull but not off color; the color of the tomato ingredient is characteristic of properly prepared, fairly well ripened, properly processed tomato; and that the added seasoning ingredients do not seriously detract from the appearance of the product.

- (c) **“SStd” classification.** Chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of

paragraph (b) of this section 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 limiting rule).

§52.2197 Consistency.

- (a) **“A” classification.** Chili sauce that possesses a good consistency may be given a score of 17 to 20 points.

Good consistency means that the chili sauce is heavy bodied and when emptied from the container to a flat surface, forms a moderately mounded mass and shows not more than a slight separation of free liquid at the edges of the mass.

- (b) **“C” classification.** If the chili sauce possesses only a fairly good consistency a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Chili sauce that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

Fairly good consistency means that the chili sauce, when emptied from the container to a flat surface, may tend to level itself, or may show a moderate separation of free liquid at the edges of the mass, but is not excessively stiff or excessively liquid.

- (c) **“SStd” classification.** Chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section 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).

§52.2198 Character.

- (a) **General.** The factor of character refers to the degree of disintegration of the tomatoes and the tenderness and texture of the onion, celery, pickle relish, of other similar ingredients.

- (b) **“A” classification.** Chili sauce that possesses a good character may be given a score of 17 to 20 points.

Good character means that the product does not have a finely comminuted appearance and that the onion, celery, pickle relish, and other similar ingredients are tender, reasonably firm, or crisp in texture.

- (c) **“C” classification.** If the chili sauce possesses a fairly good character a score of 14 to 16 points may be given.

Fairly good character means that the product may be finely comminuted and that the other vegetable ingredients may be only fairly tender.

- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given 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).

§52.2199 Absence of defects.

- (a) **General.** The factor of absence of defects refers to the degree of freedom from dark specks or scale-like particles, discolored seeds or pieces of abnormally discolored ingredients, tomato peel, and other defects.
- (b) **“A” classification.** Chili sauce that is practically free from defects may be given a score of 17 to 20 points.

Practically free from defects means that any defects present do not more than slightly affect the appearance or eating quality of the product.

- (c) **“C” classification.** If the chili sauce is fairly free from defects, a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Chili sauce that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

Fairly free from defects means that any defects present may be noticeable but are not so large, so numerous, or so prominent as to seriously affect the appearance or eating quality of the product.

- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of this section 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).

§52.2200 Flavor.

- (a) **“A” classification.** Chili sauce that possesses a good flavor may be given a score of 17 to 20 points.

Good flavor means a good distinct flavor characteristic of chili sauce properly prepared from good quality ingredients. Such flavor is free from scorching or any objectionable flavor of any kind.

- (b) **“C” classification.** If the chili sauce possesses a fairly good flavor, a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Chili sauce that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

Fairly good flavor means that the product may be lacking in good characteristic flavor, but is free from objectionable or off-flavors of any kind.

- (c) **“SStd” classification.** Chili sauce that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section 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 limiting rule).

§52.2201 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.

The grade of a lot of chili sauce covered by these standards is determined by the procedures found in the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Fruits and Vegetables Processed Products Thereof, and Related Products (7 CFR 52.1 through 52.83).

§52.2202 Score sheet for chili sauce.

Number, size, and kind of container			
Label			
Container marks or identification			
Net weight (ounces) or volume (fluid ounces)			
Vacuum (inches)			
Refractive index of filtrate			
	Factors	Grade	Score Points
Color	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 ¹
		"SStd"	0-13 ¹
Consistency	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 ¹
		"SStd"	0-13 ¹
Character	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16
		"SStd"	0-13 ¹
Absence of defects	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 ¹
		"SStd"	0-13 ¹
Flavor	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 ¹
		"SStd"	0-13 ¹
Total Score		100	
U.S. Grade			

¹Indicates limiting rule.