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# United States Consumer Standards for Beet Greens

**Effective November 1, 1958**

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This is a reprint of the United States Consumer Standards for Beet Greens which have been in effect since November 1, 1958 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  
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 Consumer Standards for Beet Greens

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## **General**

### **§51.3170 General.**

The standards contained in this subpart are applicable to beet greens consisting of either plants (with or without attached roots) or cut leaves, but they shall not be applicable to a mixture of plants and cut leaves in the same container. The standards apply only to the common red-rooted table varieties of beets (*Beta vulgaris*) but not to mangel wurzel varieties primarily grown for stock feed, or to sugar beets (*Beta vulgaris* var. *saccharifera*).

## **Grades**

### **§51.3171 U.S. Grade A.**

“**U.S. Grade A**” consists of washed beet greens of similar varietal characteristics which are fresh, clean, fairly tender, well trimmed, and free from other kinds of leaves, weeds, grass or other foreign material, and decay; which are free from damage caused by discoloration, freezing, disease, insects or mechanical or other means; and which are not infested by insects, larvae, or worms.

- (a) In the case of beet greens with roots attached, the roots shall be free from damage by any cause and the maximum diameter of the root shall not be larger than five-eighths inch.
- (b) The leaf blades of beet greens shall not be longer than six and one-half inches.
- (c) Incident to proper grading and handling, the following tolerances shall be permitted in any lot (see §51.3173):
  - (1) For over-size roots. 5 percent for beet greens with roots in any lot which are larger than five-eighths inch in diameter;
  - (2) For over-size leaf blades. 3 percent for beet leaves in any lot which are longer than six and one-half inches;
  - (3) For small pieces. 3 percent for pieces of beet leaf blades in any lot which are smaller than a circle three-fourths inch in diameter;
  - (4) For mixtures of whole plants, clusters and leaves. Not more than 10 percent of the beet greens may consist of cut leaves in a lot consisting of plants and not more than 3 percent of the beet greens may consist of whole plants and clusters in a lot consisting of cut leaves;
  - (5) For leaves other than beet leaves, weeds, grass or other foreign material. Not more than 3 pieces in a one-pound sample; and,
  - (6) For other defects. Not more than a total of 5 percent, but not more than two-fifths of this tolerance, or 2 percent, shall be allowed for defects

causing serious damage, including therein not more than one percent for decay.

**Off-grade**

**§51.3172 Off-grade.**

“Off-grade” consists of beet greens which fail to meet the requirements of the forgoing grade.

**Basis for Calculating Percentages**

**§51.3173 Basis for Calculating Percentages.**

Percentages shall be calculated on the basis of weight or an equivalent basis, except that the amount of leaves other than beet leaves, blades of grass, weeds or other foreign material shall be calculated on the basis of count, using one pound of beet greens as the sample. In inspecting the sample, the unit shall be the plant or leaf exactly as it occurs in the sample. A plant or portion of plant shall not be broken to remove the defective portion, but shall be considered as a unit.

**Definitions**

**§51.3174 Similar varietal characteristics.**

“Similar varietal characteristics” means that the beet greens in any container are similar in color and type.

**§51.3175 Fresh.**

“Fresh” means that the greens are not more than slightly wilted.

**§51.3176 Clean.**

“Clean” means that the beet greens do not show more than a trace of grit, sand, dirt, silt, muck or other similar water insoluble, inorganic material.

**§51.3177 Fairly tender.**

“Fairly tender” means that the beet greens are not tough, or excessively fibrous.

**§51.3178 Well trimmed.**

“Well trimmed” in the case of cut leaf beet greens means that the length of leaf stem or petiole is not more than the length of the leaf blade and that the overall length of the leaf including blade and petiole is not more than 11 inches.

**§51.3179 Whole plant.**

“Whole plant” means a single beet plant having all its component parts—root, petioles, and leaf blades.

### **§51.3180 Clusters.**

“Clusters” means that there are more than 3 leaves attached, except that clusters of heart leaves with any number of leaves shall not be considered as a cluster: *Provided*, That the length of the longest leaf in the cluster is not over 3 inches.

### **§51.3181 Damage.**

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

- (a) **Discoloration** when the appearance of the individual leaf or plant is materially affected by yellowing, spotting, or any other type of discoloration, except that leaves showing a reddish color, often caused by cold weather, shall not be considered as damaged by discoloration. Plants which have small dried, withered, or slightly yellowed leaves at the base of the plant shall not be considered as damaged by discoloration unless the general appearance of the plant or of the plants in the container is materially affected; and,
- (b) **Mechanical damage** when the individual leaf is badly crushed, torn or broken.

### **§51.3182 Diameter.**

“Diameter” means the greatest dimension of the root measured at right angles to a line from the center of the crown to the base of the root.

### **§51.3183 Serious damage.**

“Serious damage” means any defect which seriously affects the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the individual beet leaf, or plant, or the general appearance of the beet greens 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) **Discoloration** when the individual leaf, or plant is badly discolored;
- (b) **Insects** when the individual leaf or plant is mutilated by feeding or other means to the extent that the appearance or edibility is affected; and,
- (c) **Decay.**