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Crops
Inspection
Division

United States Consumer Standards for Italian Sprouting Broccoli

Effective October 28, 1950

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This is a reprint of the United States Consumer Standards for Italian Sprouting Broccoli which have been in effect since October 28, 1950 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

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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Grades

§51.400 U.S. Grade A.

U.S. Grade A consists of stalks, or parts of stalks of Italian sprouting broccoli which are well trimmed, and have good characteristic color, and fairly compact bud clusters; and which are fresh, tender, and clean, and are free from decay and from damage caused by discoloration, freezing, hollow stem or pithiness, scars, disease, insects, or mechanical or other mean. Broccoli stalks on the shown face shall be reasonably representative in size and quality of the contents of the container.

- (a) The length of the stalks or parts thereof shall be not more than 6 inches nor less than 3 inches, and the diameter of the stem shall be not less than 1/4 inch.
- (b) Incident to proper grading and handling, not more than 5 percent, by weight, of broccoli stalks or parts thereof in any lot may fail to meet the size requirements and, in addition, not more than 5 percent, by weight, may fail to meet the remaining requirements of the grade, including not more than 1 percent for decay.

§51.401 U.S. Grade B.

U.S. Grade B consists of stalks or parts of stalks of Italian sprouting broccoli which meet the requirements of U.S. Grade A except as to compactness of bud clusters and except for the increased tolerances specified below.

- (a) Stalks or parts of stalks of broccoli of this grade shall have reasonably compact bud clusters.
- (b) Incident to proper grading and handling, not more than 10 percent, by weight, of the broccoli stalks or parts thereof in any lot may fail to meet the size requirements and in addition, not more than 10 percent, by weight, may fail to meet the remaining requirements of the grade, including not more than 1 percent for decay.

Off-Grade

§51.402 Off-Grade Italian sprouting broccoli.

Italian sprouting broccoli which fails to meet the requirements of either of the foregoing grades shall be Off-Grade Italian sprouting broccoli.

Definitions

§51.403 Stalk.

“Stalk” means a portion of the broccoli plant including the stem, bud clusters and leaves.

§51.404 Well trimmed.

“Well trimmed” means that all coarse, damaged, and discolored leaves and leaves extending more than 1-1/2 inches above the top of the head have been removed, and that cross cuts on butts and lengthwise cuts on spilt stalks are smooth.

§51.405 Good characteristic color.

“Good characteristic color” means that the stem and external portion of the head or part thereof has a light green or darker shade of green color except that purplish color shall be allowed on the external portion of the head or part thereof.

§51.406 Fairly compact bud clusters.

“Fairly compact bud clusters” means that the individual florets of bud clusters are relatively small and fairly tightly crowded together and that the bud clusters on the stalk or part of a stalk are generally close together.

§51.407 Fresh.

“Fresh” means that the broccoli is not flabby or more than slightly wilted.

§51.408 Tender.

“Tender” means that the broccoli is succulent, and that the stems are not fibrous, tough or stringy.

§51.409 Clean.

“Clean” means that the broccoli is practically free from sand, dirt, silt, muck and other water-insoluble inorganic material.

§51.410 Damage.

“Damage” means any defect which more than slightly affects the appearance, of the edible affects the appearance, of the edible, shipping, or keeping quality of the individual stalks or parts thereof, or the lot as a whole. The following defects or any combination of defects, the seriousness of which exceeds the maximum allowed for any one defect shall be considered as damage:

- (a) **Discoloration**, when more than very slight.
- (b) **Freezing**, when causing more than slight discoloration of the individual unit.
- (c) **Hollow stem or pithiness**, when discolored, or when more than slightly affecting the appearance of the individual unit.
- (d) **Scars**, when discolored, or when more than slight or superficial.

- (e) **Disease**, when showing discoloration, or when more than slightly affecting the appearance of the individual unit.
- (f) **Insects**, when worms or worm frass are present or when there is more than slight infestation by other insects.

§51.411 Diameter.

“Diameter” means the greatest thickness of the stem measured at the base.

§51.412 Reasonably compact bud clusters.

“Reasonably compact bud clusters” means that the individual florets of clusters are not on the verge of opening but the pedicels on florets may be moderately elongated and bud clusters may be moderately open and spreading.