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# United States Consumer Standards for Husked Corn on the Cob

**Effective May 11, 1950**  
Reprinted December 13, 2018

This is a reprint of the United States Consumer Standards for Husked Corn on the Cob which have been in effect since May 11, 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

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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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## **Grades**

### **§51.810 U.S. Grade A.**

U.S. Grade A shall consist of husked ears or portions of ears of corn on the cob of similar varietal characteristics which are well trimmed, well formed, clean, free from decay and insect injury, and free from damage caused by bruising, mechanical or other means. Cobs shall be well filled with tender, plump and milky kernels. Each ear may be clipped at one or both ends but the length of each unit, clipped or unclipped, shall be not less than 3 inches. Each clipped ear shall be properly clipped. Units on the shown face shall be reasonably representative of the size and quality of the contents of the package.

- (a) Incident to proper grading and handling, not more than 10 percent, by count, of the units of corn in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, including not more than 5 percent for defects other than damage caused by bruising: *Provided*, That not more than one-fifth of this amount, or 1 percent, shall be allowed for units affected by decay.

### **§51.811 U.S. Grade B.**

U.S. Grade B shall consist of husked ears or portions of ears of corn on the cob which meet the requirements of U.S. Grade A except for the increased tolerance specified below.

- (a) Incident to proper grading and handling, not more than 20 percent, by count, of the units of corn in any lot may fail to meet the requirements of this grade, including not more than 5 percent for units having insect injury and not more than 1 percent for units affected by decay.

## **Off-Grade**

### **§51.812 Off-Grade husked corn on the cob.**

Husked ears or portions of ears of corn on the cob which fail to meet the requirements of the foregoing grades shall be Off-Grade husked corn on the cob.

## **Definitions**

### **§51.813 Similar varietal characteristics.**

“Similar varietal characteristics” means that the units in any package are of similar color and character of growth. Units of white and yellow corn shall not be mixed in the same package.

### **§51.814 Well trimmed.**

“Well trimmed” means that the unit is practically free from husks and silk and that the shank does not extend more than 1/2 inch from the base of the cob.

**§51.815 Well formed.**

“Well formed” means that the unit is not stunted. Nubbins shall not be considered well formed units.

**§51.816 Clean.**

“Clean” means that the unit is practically free from dirt or other foreign material.

**§51.817 Damage.**

“Damage” means any injury or defect which materially affects the appearance, or the edible, shipping or keeping quality of the unit.

**§51.818 Well filled.**

“Well filled” means that the rows of kernels show fairly uniform development, and that the appearance of the unit is not materially affected by poorly developed rows.

**§51.819 Tender.**

“Tender” means that the kernels break with only moderate pressure from the thumbnail.

**§51.820 Plump and milky.**

“Plump and milky” means that the kernels are well developed but are not over-mature or shriveled.

**§51.821 Units.**

“Units” as used in these standards, mean whole ears or portions of ears of husked corn on the cob.

**§51.822 Properly clipped.**

“Properly clipped” means that the end or ends of the ear have been neatly cut off at approximately a right angle to the longitudinal axis.