

Vermont Regulations and Standards for Strawberries

Effective: June 1, 1973

“Grades” shall mean the quality and size standard for strawberries established by the United States Department of Agriculture and those promulgated by the Secretary of Agriculture as the official grades on strawberries for Vermont under authority provided by Title 6, Vermont Statutes Annotated, Section 171, Revision 1972.

Every individual retail package containing fresh strawberries transported, sold, or offered for sale by any person, shall be truthfully, plainly, and conspicuously marked with the Vermont or US Grade for strawberries to which it complies, excepting those sold directly from the producer to the consumer, and for “pick you own” operations.

Mandatory grade markings must accompany any type advertising which mentions price. Additional quality descriptive term such as Home-grown, Native, etc. must be provable truthful statements of fact and must include the place where grown, such as Native Vermont or Native New York. Marking “Product of Canada” is recognized already by a requirement of F.D.A.

Section I: Grades

- Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1
- Vermont Combination or U.S. Combination
- Vermont No. 2 or US No. 2
- Unclassified

Section II: Application of Tolerances

Section III: Definitions

- Overripe
- Undeveloped
- Damaged
- Serious Damage
- Diameter

Section I: Grades

Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1

“Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1” consists of strawberries of one variety or similar varietal characteristics with the cap (calyx) attached, which are firm, not overripe or undeveloped, and which are free from mold or decay and free from damage caused by dirt, moisture, foreign matter, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means. Each strawberry has not less than three-fourths of its surface showing a pink or red color.

- a. Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than three-fourths inch.
- b. Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by volume, are provided as specified:
 1. For defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which fail meet the requirements of this grade, but not more than one-half of this tolerance, or 5 percent, shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein not more than two-fifths of this latter amount, or 2 percent, for strawberries affected by decay.
 2. For off-size. Not more than 5 percent for strawberries in any lot which are below the specified minimum size.

Vermont Combination or US Combination

“Vermont Combination or US Combination” consists of a combination of Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1 and Vermont No. 2 or US No. 2 strawberries, except for size: Provided, that at least 80 Percent, by volume, of the strawberries meet the requirements of Vermont No.1 or US No. 1 grade.

- a. Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than three-fourths inch.
- b. Tolerances. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by volume, are provided as specified:
 1. For defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which are seriously damaged, including therein not more than one-fifth of this tolerance, or 2 percent, for strawberries affected by decay. No part of any tolerance shall be allowed to reduce for the lot as a whole, the percentage of Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1 strawberries required in the combination, and individual containers (cups or baskets) may have not less than 65 percent Vermont No. 1 or US No. 1 strawberries: Provided, That the entire lot averages within the required percentages.
 2. For off-size. Not more than 5 percent of the strawberries in any lot may be below the specified minimum size.

Vermont No. 2 or US No. 2

“Vermont No. 2 or US No.2” consists of strawberries which are free from decay and free from serious damage caused by dirt, disease, insects, mechanical or other means. Each strawberry has not less than one-half of its surface showing a pink or red color.

- a. Size. Unless otherwise specified, the minimum diameter of each strawberry is not less than five-eighths inch.
- b. Tolerance. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling the following tolerances, by volume, are provided as specified:
 1. For Defects. Not more than 10 percent for strawberries in any lot which are seriously damaged, including therein not more than three-tenths of this tolerance, or 3 percent for strawberries affected by decay.
 2. For off-size. Not more than 5 percent for strawberries in any lot which are below the specified minimum size.

Unclassified

Not permitted for retail sales, but intended for sale in crate lots for repacking, processing or direct from producer to consumer.

Section II: Application of Tolerances

- a. The contents of individual packages (cups or baskets) in the lot, based on sample inspection, are subject to the following limitations:
 1. For tolerance of 10 percent or more, individual packages (cups or baskets) in any lots shall have not more than and one-half times the tolerance specified, except that when the package contains 25 specimens or less, individual packages shall have not more than double the tolerance specified: Provided, That the average for the lot are within the tolerances specified for the grade.
 2. For tolerance of less than 10 percent, individual packages (cups or baskets) in any lot shall have not more than double the tolerance specified, except that at least one defective and one off-size specimen may be permitted in any package: Provided, That the averages for the entire lot are within tolerances specified for the grade.

Section III: Definitions

Overripe: “Overripe” means dead ripe, becoming soft, a condition unfit for shipment and necessitating immediate consumption.

Undeveloped: “Undeveloped” means any defect or any combination of defects, which materially detract from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the strawberries.

Serious Damage: “Serious Damage” means any specific defect described in this section; or an equally objectionable variation of any one of these defects, any other defect, or any

combination of defects, which seriously detract from the appearance, or the edible or shipping quality of the strawberries. The following specific defects shall be considered as serious damage:

- a. Soft berries
- b. Badly deformed berries
- c. Badly bruised berries
- d. Decayed or leaky berries
- e. Berries badly caked with dirt
- f. Berries with less than one-half of surface showing pink or red color

Diameter: "Diameter" means the greatest dimension measured at right angles to a straight line running from the stem to the apex.