



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service

Fruit and  
Vegetable  
Division

Processed  
Products  
Branch

# United States Standards for Grades of Dried Prunes

Effective date October 11, 1965

This is the fourth issue, as amended, of the United States Standards for Grades of Dried Prunes. These standards are issued by the Department after careful consideration of all data and views submitted.

These standards were published in the Federal Register on October 25, 1956, (21 FR 8177), to become effective November 26, 1956.

In 1965 the standards were amended (30 FR 11595) by:

- (1) providing that **safe and suitable preservatives may be added;**
- (2) adding a style of **Whole Pitted** prunes; and
- (3) waiving the moisture limits in bulk packs when safe and suitable preservatives have been added.

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 processed fruits and vegetables, 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 standards also serve as a basis for the inspection and grading of commodities by the Federal inspection service, the only activity authorized to approve the designation of U.S. grades as referenced in the standards, as provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. This service, available as on-line (in-plant) or lot inspection and grading of all processed fruit and vegetable products, is offered to interested parties, upon application, on a fee-for-service basis. The verification of some specific recommendations, requirements, or tolerances contained in the standards can be accomplished only by the use of on-line inspection procedures. In all instances, a grade can be assigned based on final product factors or characteristics.

In addition to the U.S. grade standards, grading manuals or instructions for inspection of several processed fruits and vegetables are available upon request for a nominal fee. These manuals or instructions contain detailed interpretations of the grade standards and provide step-by-step procedures for grading the product.

Grade standards are issued by the Department after careful consideration of all data and views submitted, and the Department welcomes suggestions which might aid in improving the standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of standards and grading manuals obtained from:

Chief, Processed Products Branch  
Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
P.O. Box 96456, Rm. 0709, So. Bldg.  
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## United States Standards for Grades of Dried Prunes

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Authority: Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, Secs. 203, 205, 60 Stat. 1087, as amended, 1090, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1622, 1624).

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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.

**§52.3181 Product description.**

Dried prunes are prepared from sound, properly matured prune plums from which the greater portion of moisture is removed by drying. The dried prunes are cleaned to assure a wholesome product; they may be treated with water or steam; and a safe and suitable preservative may be added.

**§52.3182 Varietal types of dried prunes.**

- (a) **Type I.** French; or Robe; or a mixture of French and Robe.
- (b) **Type II.** Italian.
- (c) **Type III.** Imperial; or Sugar; or a mixture of Imperial and Sugar.
- (d) **Type IV.** Any other types; or mixtures of any types other than mixtures in Type I and Type III of this section.

**§52.3183a Styles of dried prunes.**

- (a) **Whole Unpitted**--from which pits have not been removed.
- (b) **Whole Pitted**--from which pits have been removed.

**§52.3183b Count-sizes of whole unpitted dried prunes.**

- (a) **Count-sizes of whole unpitted dried prunes. Count-sizes.** Except for U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy, the count-sizes of dried prunes are not incorporated in the grades of dried prunes. The count-sizes of dried prunes in this subpart refer to the count (or number) of prunes per pound of dried prunes. The various sizes of dried prunes for the respective varietal types are commonly designated as follows, but may be designated by other numerical expressions:

- (1) **Type I; Type IV.** 30/40, 40/50, 50/60, 60/70, 70/80, 80/90, 90/100, 100/120. 120 and over.
- (2) **Type II.** 25/35, 35/45, 30/40, 40/50, 50/60, 60/70, 70/80, 80/90, 90/100.
- (3) **Type III.** 15/20, 18/24, 20/30, 30/40, 40/50, 50/60, 60/70.

- (b) **Recommended size nomenclature.** The following size nomenclature is recommended for the respective **count-sizes** of dried prunes:

Extra large	Average: Not more than 43 prunes per pound.
Large	Average: Not more than 53 prunes per pound.
Medium	Average: Not more than 67 prunes per pound.
Small	Average: Not more than 85 prunes per pound.

**§52.3184 Grades of dried prunes.**

- (a) **U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy** is the quality of dried prunes that, except for mixed types, possess similar varietal characteristics; that are fairly uniform in size and average 85 prunes or less per pound; that meet the applicable moisture limits in Table IV of this subpart but regardless of size and kind of packaging are reasonably uniform in moisture; and that do not exceed the total allowances and limitations for defects shown in Table I of this subpart.
- (b) **U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice** is the quality of dried prunes that, except for mixed types, possess similar varietal characteristics; that are fairly uniform in size; that meet the applicable moisture limits in Table IV of this subpart but regardless of size and kind of packaging are reasonably uniform in moisture; and that do not exceed the total allowances and limitations for defects shown in Table II of this subpart.
- (c) **U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard** is the quality of dried prunes that, except for mixed types, possess similar varietal characteristics; that are fairly uniform in size; that meet the applicable moisture limits in Table IV of this subpart but regardless of size and kind of packaging are reasonably uniform in moisture; and that do not exceed the total allowances and limitations for defects shown in Table III of this subpart.
- (d) **Substandard** is the quality of dried prunes that meet the applicable moisture limits in Table IV of this subpart but regardless of size and kind of packaging are reasonably uniform in moisture; and that may fail to meet other requirements for U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, but not more than 5 percent, by weight, of the dried prunes may be affected by mold, dirt, foreign material, insect infestation, or decay: **Provided**, that not more than 1 percent, by weight, of the dried prunes may be affected by decay.

Table I--U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy; Allowances for Defects.

Total allowance	Limitations		
Not more than a total of 10 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 6 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 3 percent, by weight, may be affected by:	Not more than 1 percent, by weight, may be affected by:
Off-color. Poor texture. End cracks. Skin or flesh damage. 2/ Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Poor texture. End cracks. Skin or flesh damage. 2/ Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Decay.

Table II--U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice; Allowances for Defects.

Total allowance	Limitations		
Not more than a total of 15 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 8 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 4 percent, by weight, may be affected by:	Not more than 1 percent, by weight, may be affected by:
Off-color. Poor texture. End cracks. Skin or flesh damage. 2/ Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Poor texture. End cracks. Skin or flesh damage. 2/ Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Decay.

1/ Except that each 1 percent of end cracks to, and including, 8 percent, by weight, shall be considered as 1/2 percent damaged by end cracks; and any additional end cracks shall be calculated as true percentage, by weight.

2/ Not applicable to **Whole Pitted** style.

Table III--U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard; Allowances for Defects

Total allowance	Limitations		
Not more than a total of 20 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 10 percent, by weight, may be damaged or affected by:	Not more than 8 percent, by weight, may be affected by:	Not more than 5 percent, by weight, may be affected by:
Off-color. Poor texture. End cracks. <u>1/</u> Skin or flesh damage. <u>2/</u> Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	End cracks. <u>1/</u> Skin or flesh damage. <u>2/</u> Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Skin or flesh damage. <u>2/</u> Fermentation. Scars. Heat damage. Insect injury. Other means. Mold. Dirt. Foreign material. Insect infestation. Decay.	Mold. Dirt. Foreign Material. Insect infestation. Decay.  <b>Provided</b> , that not more than 1 percent, by weight, may be affected by decay.

1/ Except that each 1 percent of end cracks to, and including, 8 percent, by weight, shall be considered as 1/2 percent damaged by end cracks; and any additional end cracks shall be calculated as true percentage, by weight.

2/ Not applicable to **Whole Pitted** style.

**§52.3185 Moisture limits.**

Dried prunes shall not exceed the moisture limits for the applicable grades and kind and size of packaging as designated in Table IV of this subpart except there is no moisture limit when safe and suitable preservatives have been added. **Moisture** means the percentage be weight of the finished dried prunes, exclusive of pits, that is moisture when determined by the Dried Fruit Moisture tester Method or in accordance with methods that give equivalent results. The moisture limits in Table IV apply only to so-called **bulk packs** of dried prunes packaged in non-hermetically sealed containers holding 10 pounds or more of dried prunes when safe and suitable preservatives have not been added. Such containers include, but are limited to, wood boxes or fiber boxes.

Table IV - Moisture Allowances for Dried Prunes  
(Non-hermetically sealed containers; 10 pounds or more)

Grades	Maximum moisture limits	
	Counts averaging 60 or less per pound	Counts averaging 61 or more per pound
	Percent	Percent
U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy . . . . .	25	24
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice . . . . .	25	24
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard . . . . .	25	24
Substandard . . . . .	25	24

**§52.3186 Definitions for uniformity of size.**

- (a) **Fairly uniform in size.** Fairly uniform in size means that in a sample of 100 ounces:
  - (1) For prunes that average 53 prunes or less per pound, the count per pound, the count per pound of 10 ounces of the smallest prunes does not vary from the count per pound of 10 ounces of the largest prunes by more than 25 points; or
  - (2) For prunes that average 54 prunes or more per pound, the count per pound of 10 ounces of the smallest prunes does not vary from the count per pound of 10 ounces of the largest prunes by more than 45 points.

**§52.3187 Definitions and explanations of defects.**

Dried prunes damaged or affected by the following are scorable as defects:

- (a) **Off-color.** **Off-color** means a skin color different from characteristic black, blue-black, reddish-purple, or other characteristic skin color for the type.
- (b) **Poor texture.** **Poor texture** means porous, woody, or fibrous flesh or immature prunes or prunes possessing flesh interspersed with excessive air pockets in which the texture of the flesh is noticeably different from the flesh of mature prunes which have been properly dried, handled, and processed. **Excessive air pockets** means that the prunes are affected by air pockets to the extent that the appearance and eating quality is seriously affected.
- (c) **End cracks.** **End cracks** means callous apex-end cracks which, singly or in the aggregate on a prune, are more than 3/8 inch in length but not more than 1/2 inch in length.
- (d) **Skin or flesh damage.** **Skin or flesh damage** in the case of **Whole Unpitted** style means:
  - (1) Callous growth cracks (other than callous apex-end cracks) which, singly or in the aggregate on a prune, exceed 3/8 inch in length; and callous ape-end cracks which, singly or in the aggregate on a prune, exceed 1/2 inch in length.
  - (2) Splits or skin breaks not having callous edges when the flesh is mashed out beyond the protecting skin so as to affect materially the normal appearance of the prune;
  - (3) Any cracks, splits, or skin breads open to the pit;
  - (4) Any skin damage from multiple short skin breaks giving a very **rough** appearance to the prune such as may result from over-dipping, rain damage, processing, or other causes which in Type I dried prunes affect materially the appearance or edibility of the prune, or which in other types or other mixtures affect markedly the appearance or edibility of the prune.
- (e) **Fermentation.** **Fermentation** means that the prune is fermented as evidenced by a distinct sour taste or odor or by darkening in color characteristic of fermentation or souring.
- (f) **Scars.** **Scars** means:

- (1) Tough or thick scab which, singly or in combination on a prune, exceeds the area of a circle 3/8 inch in diameter such as may result from thrip injury, mildew, leaf chafing, limb rubs, or other means; or
- (2) Scab which is not tough or thick and which, singly or in combination on a prune, exceeds the area of a circle 3/4 inch in diameter and which is inconsequential but un slightly though practically blending in color with the skin on the portion of the prune not affected.
- (g) **Heat damage.** **Heat damage** means burning or scorching from the sun or in dehydration so as to damage materially the skin or flesh, or both, of the prune.
- (h) **Insect injury.** **Insect injury** means healed or unhealed surface blemishes and healed or unhealed blemishes extending into the flesh which affect materially the appearance, edibility, or keeping quality of the prune but which do not possess evidence of insect infestation.
- (i) **Other means.** **Other means** includes damage by any injury or defect or group of defects not specifically mentioned in this section which materially affects the appearance, edibility, or keeping quality of the fruit, but **other means** does not include defects of a nature such as defined in paragraph (j), (k), (l), (m), or (n) of this section.
- (j) **Mold.** **Mold** means a characteristic fungus growth as evidenced by a moldy or smutty condition and which, singly or in the aggregate on a prune, is equal to or exceeds the area of a circle 3/16 inch in diameter.
- (k) **Dirt.** **Dirt** means the presence of any quantity of such substance, whether imbedded or adhering to the prune, which gives the prune a dirty, smudgy appearance and which may not be removed readily by washing.
- (l) **Foreign material.** **Foreign material** means leaves, twigs, pieces of wood, and similar extraneous materials which are objectionable.
- (m) **Insect infestation.** **Insect infestation** means the presence of dead insects, insect fragments, or insect remains. (No live insects are permitted).
- (n) **Decay.** **Decay** means a state of decomposition, wholly or in part, of the prune.

**§52.3188 Work sheet for dried prunes.**

Size and kind of container .....				
Container mark or identification .....				
Label or brand .....				
Varietal type..... Style .....				
Size: Count per pound (Average)..... Uniformity .....				
( ) Extra large. ( ) Large.				
( ) Medium. ( ) Small.				
Moisture content. . . . percent; Uniformity .....				
Varietal characteristics: ( ) Similar ( ) Dissimilar .....				
Defects and summary of allowances 1/	Grade A maximum	Grade B maximum	Grade C maximum	Substandard maximum
Total of all defects, including off-color .....	10 percent	15 percent	.....	No limit except as indicated below.
Total of all defects, including off-color and poor texture .....	.....	.....	20 percent	
Poor texture, end cracks, skin or flesh damage, <b>3/</b> fermentation, scars, heat damage, insect injury, other means, mold, dirt, foreign material, insect infestation, decay	But no more than 6 percent.	But no more than 8 percent.	.....	
End cracks, <b>2/</b> skin or flesh damage, <b>3/</b> fermentation, scars, heat damage, insect injury, other means, mold, dirt, foreign material, insect infestation, decay	.....	.....	10 percent 2/	
Skin or flesh damage, <b>3/</b> fermentation, scars, heat damage, insect injury, other means, mold, dirt, foreign material, insect infestation, decay	.....	.....	But no more than 8 percent.	
Mold, dirt, foreign material, insect infestation, decay .....	3 percent	4 percent	5 percent	5 percent
Decay .....	But no more than 1 percent	But no more than 1 percent	But no more than 1 percent	But no more than 1 percent
Total .....				
U.S. Grade (including all factors) .....				

- 1/ Percentage of defects are **by weight**.
- 2/ Except that each 1 percent of end cracks to, and including 8 percent, by weight, shall be considered as 1/2 percent damaged by end cracks; and any additional end cracks shall be calculated as true percentage by weight.
- 3/ Allowances for **skin or flesh damage** apply only to **Whole Unpitted** style.

The United States Standards for Grades of Dried Prunes (which is the fourth issue) contained in this subpart shall become effective 30 days after the date of publication hereof in the Federal Register and thereupon will supersede the United States Standards for Grades of Dried Prunes which have been in effect since June 30, 1945.

Dated: October 19, 1956.

[SEAL]

Frank E. Blood  
Acting Deputy Administrator,  
Marketing Service.

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