

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheri L. Emery, at the above address or call (202) 720-2185, e-mail Cheri.Emery@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627), as amended, directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices. AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and makes copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables not connected with Federal Marketing Orders or U.S. Import Requirements, no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations, but are maintained by the USDA/AMS/Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

AMS is proposing to establish voluntary United States Standards for Grades of Mixed Commodities using the procedures that appear in Part 36, Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36).

Background

At a meeting of the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee, AMS was asked to identify fresh fruit and vegetables that may be better served if grade standards are developed. AMS identified fresh produce that are uniformly packaged with different types of commodities in the same container, as possibly in need of official grade standards. Such standards are used by the fresh produce industry to describe the products they are trading, thus facilitating the marketing of those products.

AMS has developed proposed voluntary grade standards for shipments of mixed commodities. These standards would establish a grade U.S. Mixed as well as sections pertaining to sampling, tolerances, application of tolerances, and definitions for Injury, Damage and Serious Damage.

The adoption of these proposed standards would provide the ever expanding mixed commodity industry with U.S. grade standards similar to those extensively in use by the fresh produce industry to assist in orderly marketing of other commodities.

The official grade of a lot of mixed commodities covered by these standards will be determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing

Inspection, Certification, and Standards of Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Other Products (Sec. 51.1 to 51.61).

This notice provides for a 60 day comment period for interested parties to comment on the proposed United States Standards for Grades of Mixed Commodities.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621-1627.

Dated: January 18, 2006.

Lloyd C. Day,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. E6-780 Filed 1-23-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Agricultural Marketing Service**

[Docket Number **FV-05-308**]

United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is soliciting comments on the proposed voluntary United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods. This action is being taken at the request of the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee, which asked AMS to identify commodities that may be better served if grade standards are developed. The proposed standards would provide industry with a common language and uniform basis for trading, thus promoting the orderly and efficient marketing of pea pods.

DATES: Comments must be received by March 27, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 1661 South Building, Stop 0240, Washington, DC 20250-0240; Fax (202) 720-8871, E-mail FPB.DocketClerk@usda.gov. Comments should make reference to the dates and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public inspection in the above office during regular business hours and on the Internet.

The draft of the proposed United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods is available by accessing AMS, Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fvfpbdocketlist.htm>. Based on the

www.ams.usda.gov/fvfpbdocketlist.htm.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheri L. Emery, at the above address or call (202) 720-2185; E-mail Cheri.Emery@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627), as amended, directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture "To develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade, and packaging, and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices." AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and makes copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables that are not requirements of Federal Marketing Orders or U.S. Import Requirements, no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations, but are maintained by USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

AMS is proposing to establish voluntary United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods using the procedures that appear in Part 36, Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36).

Background

At a meeting of the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee, AMS was asked to identify fresh fruit and vegetables that may be better served if grade standards are developed. As a result, AMS identified pea pods, or as they are sometimes called snow peas, as a commodity possibly in need of official grade standards. Such standards are used by the fresh produce industry to describe the product they are trading, thus facilitating the marketing of the product.

Prior to undertaking research and other work associated to develop the standards, AMS published a notice on May 2, 2005 in the **Federal Register** (70 FR 83) soliciting comments on the possible development of the United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods.

In response to the request for comments, AMS received one comment on the development of U.S. standards for pea pods. The comment was from an industry group that expressed support for the development of standards for pea pods. The comment is available by accessing AMS, Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fvfpbdocketlist.htm>. Based on the

comment received and information gathered, AMS has developed proposed grade standards for pea pods. This proposal would establish the following grades, as well as a tolerance for each grade: U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1. In addition, there are proposed "Tolerances," and "Application of Tolerances" sections. AMS is proposing to define "Injury," "Damage" and "Serious Damage," along with specific basic requirements and definitions for defects.

The official grade of a lot or shipment of fresh vegetables covered by U.S. standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing Inspection, Certification, and Standards of Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Other Products (Sec. 51.1 to 51.61).

This notice provides for a 60-day comment period for interested parties to comment on the proposed United States Standards for Grades of Pea Pods.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

Dated: January 18, 2006.

Lloyd C. Day,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. E6–784 Filed 1–23–06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket Number FV–05–301]

United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is revising the United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries. AMS received a request from an industry group to modify the standards to allow that percentages be determined by count and not volume. The change will make tolerance determination more objective and more uniform.

DATES: Effective Date: February 23, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cheri L. Emery, Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 1661 South Building, STOP 0240, Washington, DC 20250–0240, Fax (202) 720–8871 or call (202) 720–2185; E-mail

Cheri.Emery@usda.gov. The revised United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries will be available either through the address cited above or by accessing the AMS, Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/standards/stanfrfv.htm>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627), as amended, directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture "To develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices." AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and makes copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables not connected with Federal Marketing Orders or U.S. Import Requirements, no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations, but are maintained by USDA/AMS/Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

AMS is revising the voluntary United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries using procedures that appear in Part 36, Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36).

Background

Prior to undertaking detailed work to develop a proposed revision to the standard, AMS published a notice on March 11, 2005, in the **Federal Register** (70 FR 12175) soliciting comments on a possible revision to the United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries. After receiving comments, a second notice was published in the September 7, 2005, **Federal Register** (70 FR 53148–9) concerning the proposed percentage determination. In response to this notice, AMS received one comment from a state agricultural representative opposing the proposed revision. The comment is available by accessing the AMS, Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbdoctlist.htm>.

The comment stated that the size variance is too great to make a count-based inspection an accurate representation of the lot and that maybe the commodity should be inspected by weight. However, AMS believes that allowing percentages to be determined by count and not volume would establish a uniform procedure for determining the percentages, thereby

providing more objectivity to an inspection.

Additionally, AMS is eliminating the unclassified category. This section is being removed in all standards, when they are revised. This category is not a grade and only serves to show that no grade has been applied to the lot. It is no longer considered necessary.

The official grade of a lot of strawberries covered by these standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing Inspection, Certification, and Standards of Fresh Fruits, Vegetables and Other Products (Sec. 51.1 to 51.61).

The United States Standards for Grades of Strawberries will become effective 30 days after the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

Dated: January 18, 2006.

Lloyd C. Day,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. E6–781 Filed 1–23–06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket Number FV–06–304]

United States Standards for Grades of Table Grapes (European or Vinifera Type)

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA), is soliciting comments on a proposal to revise the United States Standards for Grades of Table Grapes (European or Vinifera Type). AMS has received petitions from the California Grape and Tree Fruit League and Western Growers Association, requesting that the current standards be modified by adding a 10 percent allowance for shattered berries in consumer containers for en route or at destination.

DATES: Comments must be received by March 27, 2006.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 1661 South Building, Stop 0240, Washington, DC 20250–0240; Fax (202) 720–8871, E-mail