

Standards for Grades of Okra for possible revisions. AMS would remove the "Unclassified" category from the standards. AMS is seeking comments regarding this change as well as any other possible revisions that may be necessary to better serve the industry.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 9, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Standardization and Training Branch, Fresh Products Division, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Training and Development Center, Riverside Business Park, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406; Fax (540) 361-1199, or on the Web at:

www.regulations.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.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Dr. Carl Newell, Standardization and Training Branch, Fresh Products Division, (540) 361-1120. The United States Standards for Grades of Okra are available by accessing the Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/freshinspection>.

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. AMS 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 United States Standards for Grades of Okra using the procedures that appear in Part 36, Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR Part 36). These standards were last revised December 18, 1928.

Background and Proposed Notice: AMS has been reviewing the fresh fruit and vegetable grade standards for usefulness in serving the industry and

has identified that the "Unclassified" section needs to be eliminated from the United States Standards for Grades of Okra. AMS is removing this section in all standards as 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. Therefore, AMS is soliciting comments on this proposed revision and any other comments regarding revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Okra.

This notice provides for a 60 day comment period for interested parties to comment on the proposed revisions in the standard. Should AMS go forward with the revisions, it will develop the proposed revised standards that will be published in the **Federal Register** with a request for comments in accordance with 7 CFR part 36.

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

Dated: February 3, 2012.

Robert C. Keeney,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-3029 Filed 2-8-12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Document No. AMS-FV-11-0050, FV-12-327]

United States Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is soliciting comments on the proposed revision to the United States Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice. The proposal includes changes to the grade standards for grapefruit juice to remove the parameters for maximum "free and suspended pulp" to account for advances in industry processing technology.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 9, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> or to Brian E. Griffin, Inspection and Standardization Branch, Processed Products Division, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400

Independence Avenue SW., Room 0709, South Building; STOP 0247, Washington, DC 20250; telephone (202) 720-4693; fax (202) 690-1527, email brian.griffin@ams.usda.gov. Comments should make reference to the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public inspection at the above office during regular business hours.

Please be advised that all comments submitted in response to this notice will be included in the record and will be made available to the public on the Internet via <http://www.regulations.gov>. Also, the identity of the individuals or entities submitting the comments will be made public. The U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice identified in this notice are available either at the above address or by accessing the AMS Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/processedinspection>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brian E. Griffin, Inspection and Standardization Branch, Processed Products Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, telephone (202) 720-5021; or fax (202) 690-1527.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, 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 grade standards available upon request. Those voluntary U.S. standards for grades of fruits and vegetables no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations, 7 CFR Part 52, but are maintained by USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Programs. AMS is revising the U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice using the procedures that appear in part 36 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36).

Background

AMS received a petition from the Florida Citrus Processors Association, an association of citrus producers, requesting revisions to the U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice. The petitioners requested the removal of the maximum limit for "free and suspended pulp" (referred to in the industry as "sinking pulp") from the U.S. grade standards for all forms of grapefruit juice.

The grade standards, effective since September 12, 1983, provided that grapefruit juice from concentrate, grapefruit juice, and frozen concentrated grapefruit juice establish limits for maximum free and suspended pulp as follows: "Grade A"—10 percent by volume, "Grade B"—15 percent by volume. Concentrated grapefruit juice for manufacturing requirements for maximum free and suspended pulp are as follows: "Grade A"—10 percent by volume, and "Grade B"—12 percent by volume.

The petitioners believe that, with respect to maximum values for "free and suspended pulp", the existing U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice do not take into account modern extraction and finishing technologies, nor are they supported by evidence of a correlation between these criteria and acceptable flavor. The petitioners also believe that removing the "free and suspended pulp" values from the grade standards would allow processors to process the entire grapefruit crop without resorting to expensive technologies that increase the cost of juice with no concomitant benefit. More mature grapefruit tends to be sweeter, but when juiced tends to cause the product to exceed maximum free and suspended pulp values.

Processing technologies used in the early 1940's were considerably different than the technologies in place today. In the developmental stages of the citrus industry, the amount of sinking pulp was an indication of excessive pressures used in extraction and finishing of citrus juice, resulting in bitter flavor. It was noted that sinking pulp levels could be correlated to bitter flavor. The bitter flavors are due to the naturally occurring naringin and limonin components found in grapefruit juice. Although bitterness is an inherent contributor to what we know as "grapefruit flavor," an excessive amount of bitterness can be objectionable to some consumers.

Current industry practices have shown us that sinking pulp levels can be greatly influenced by modern processing techniques, which eliminate the correlation between sinking pulp and excessive bitterness.

The petitioners submitted research data covering a six season period which illustrates levels of sinking pulp vs. naringin, and levels of sinking pulp vs. limonin using variations in extractor settings. The petitioners also submitted data on a sensory evaluation performed by the University of Florida on consumer acceptability of grapefruit juice with two free and suspended pulp levels. The petitioner's research data

supports the premise that modern extraction and finishing technologies produce a product where there is no correlation between grapefruit juice flavor components associated with bitter and off flavor, *i.e.*, naringin and limonin, and free and suspended pulp levels.

Prior to undertaking research and other work associated with revising the grade standards, AMS sought public comments on the petition (see 76 FR 51343).

Two comments were received regarding this petition. One comment was from a trade association with international membership; and one comment was from a trade association in the U.S. representing over 8,000 citrus growers. Both comments were in support of the petition to remove the maximum limit for "free and suspended pulp" from the U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice.

AMS is soliciting comments on the proposed revision of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice. Further details are provided in the petition and are available from Brian E. Griffin at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section or can be found on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>. This notice provides for a 60-day comment period for interested parties to comment on the proposed revision of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Grapefruit Juice.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

Dated: February 3, 2012.

Robert C. Keeney,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. # AMS–FV–11–0052]

United States Standards for Grades of Eggplant

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 revision to the United States Standards for Grades of Eggplant. AMS is reviewing the fresh fruit and vegetable grade standards for usefulness in serving the industry. As a result, AMS has noted the current grade standards do not have provisions for

mixed or specialty packs. Therefore, AMS is proposing to amend the similar varietal characteristic requirement in the U.S. Fancy and No. 1 grades to allow mixed colors and/or types of eggplant when designated as a mixed or specialty pack. In addition, AMS proposes to remove the unclassified section.

DATES: Comments must be received by April 9, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Standardization and Training Branch, Fresh Products Division, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Training and Development Center, Riverside Business Park, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406; Fax (540) 361–1199, or on the Web at: www.regulations.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. Comments can also be viewed on the www.regulations.gov Web site. The current United States Standards for Grades of Eggplant will be available either through the address cited above or by accessing the AMS, Fresh Products Division Web site at www.ams.usda.gov/freshinspection.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Carl Newell, at the above address or call (540) 361–1120.

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