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United States Standards for Grades of Apple Butter

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This is a reprint of the United States Standards for Grades of Apple Butter (22 FR 4709) which have been in effect since August 5, 1957 and were updated to modify the format and to correct and align the text as originally published in the CFR.

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

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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Identity and Grades

§52.2801 Identity.

Apple butter is a fruit butter prepared from clean, sound, wholesome, mature apples (either fresh, frozen, canned, or dried) and other ingredients as defined in the amended Standards of Identity for Fruit Butter (21 CFR 150.110) issued pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. The apples are prepared by cooking, with or without added water, and the skins, seeds, and cores are screened out. The soluble solids are not less than 43 percent.

§52.2802 Grades of apple butter.

- (a) **U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy** is a quality of apple butter that possesses a good color; that possesses a good consistency; that possesses a good finish; that is practically free from defects; that possesses good flavor, and that scores not less than 85 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart.
- (b) **U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard** is the quality of apple butter that possesses a fairly good color; that possesses a fairly good consistency; that possesses a fairly good finish; that is fairly free from defects; that possesses a fairly good flavor, and that scores not less than 70 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined in this subpart.
- (c) **Substandard** is the quality of apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard.

Fill of Container

§52.2803 Recommended fill of container.

The recommended fill of container is not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since fill of container, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purposes of these grades. It is recommended that each container of apple butter be filled as full as practicable without impairment of quality and that the product occupy not less than 90 percent of the capacity of the container.

Factors of Quality

§52.2804 Ascertaining the grade of a sample unit.

- (a) The grade of a sample unit of apple butter is ascertained by considering the factors of quality which are scored. The relative importance of each such factor is expressed numerically on the scale of 100. The maximum number of points that may be given such factors are:

Factors	Points
Color	20
Consistency	20
Finish	20
Defects	20
Flavor	20
Total Score	100

§52.2805 Ascertaining the rating for the factors which are scored.

The essential variations within each factor which is scored are so described that the value may be ascertained for each factor and expressed numerically. The numerical range within each factor which is scored is inclusive. (For example, **17 to 20 points** means 17, 18, 19, or 20 points.)

§52.2806 Color

- (a) **General.** Information concerning the USDA Apple Butter Color Standards, referred to in this section, may be obtained by writing to the:

Chief, Processed Products Branch
Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS
U.S. Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 96456, Rm.0709, So. Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20090-6456

- (b) **“A” classification.** Apple butter that possesses a good color may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Good color** means a lustrous, practically uniform color characteristic of properly prepared and properly processed apple butter. Such color may be moderately reddish brown or moderately dark brown but is equal to or better than USDA Apple Butter Color Standard No. 1 or USDA Apple Butter Color Standard No. 2, whichever most nearly matches the color of the apple butter.
- (c) **“C” classification.** If the apple butter possesses a fairly good color a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Apple butter that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Fairly good color** means a characteristic apple butter color which may be somewhat lacking in luster. Such color may be dark brown or light brown but is equal to or better than USDA Apple Butter Color Standard No. 3 or USDA Apple Butter Color Standard No. 4, whichever most nearly matches the color of the apple butter.

- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.2807 Consistency.

- (a) **General.** The factor of consistency refers to the viscosity of the product and to the degree of separation of free liquor.
- (b) **“A” classification.** Apple butter that possesses a good consistency may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Good consistency** means that the apple butter after stirring and emptying from the container to a dry flat surface forms a moderately mounded mass and that at the end of two minutes there is practically no separation of free liquor.
- (c) **“C” classification.** Apple butter that possesses a fairly good consistency may be given a score of 14 to 16 points. Apple butter that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Fairly good consistency** means that the apple butter after stirring may possess a thick consistency so that it does not pour readily from the container or after emptying from the container to a dry flat surface may form only a slightly mounded mass and at the end of two minutes there is no more than a slight separation of free liquor.
- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.2808 Finish.

- (a) **General.** The factor of finish refers to the size and texture of the apple particles.
- (b) **“A” classification.** Apple butter that possesses a good finish may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Good finish** means that the apple particles are evenly divided; that the product is fine grained and smooth.
- (c) **“C” classification.** If the apple butter possesses only a fairly good finish a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Apple butter that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Fairly good finish** means that the apple particles are evenly divided; that the product may be slightly coarse; but the apple particles are neither hard nor excessively grainy.

- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.2809 Defects.

- (a) **General.** The factor of defects refers to the degree of freedom from such defects as black specks, dark scale-like particles, particles of carpel tissue, peel, stem, seed-coat, and blossom-end material. This factor is evaluated by observing a layer of the product on a smooth white surface. Such a layer is prepared by drawing a scraper, with an indentation 3/32 inch high by 7 inches long for clearance, rapidly through the product in two horizontal planes so as to form an approximate square.
- (b) **“A” classification.** Apple butter that is practically free from defects may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Practically free from defects** means that any defects present do not more than slightly affect the appearance or edibility of the product.
- (c) **“C” classification.** If the apple butter is fairly free from defects a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Apple butter that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Fairly free from defects** means that any defects present may be noticeable but are not so large, so numerous, or of such contrasting color as to seriously affect the appearance or edibility of the product.
- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

§52.2810 Flavor.

- (a) **General.** The score for the factor of flavor of apple butter is ascertained by considering the flavor and aroma of the apple butter with particular consideration being given to the prominence and excellence of the flavor of the apple ingredient.
- (b) **“A” classification.** Apple butter that possesses a good flavor may be given a score of 17 to 20 points. **Good flavor** means a good and distinct flavor and aroma characteristic of properly prepared and properly processed apple butter prepared from good quality ingredients.

- (c) **“C” classification.** If the apple butter possesses a fairly good flavor a score of 14 to 16 points may be given. Apple butter that falls into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule). **Fairly good flavor** means a characteristic apple butter flavor and odor that may be excessively sweet or excessively spiced or lacking in proper spicing, or may be excessively caramelized but is not seriously objectionable for any reason.
- (d) **“SStd” classification.** Apple butter that fails to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 13 points and shall not be graded above Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

Lot Certification

§52.2811 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.

The grade of a lot of apple butter covered by these standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Fruits and Vegetables, Processed Products Thereof, and Certain Other Processed Food Products (7 CFR 52.1 through 52.83).

Score Sheet

§52.2812 Score sheet for apple butter.

Size and kind of container			
Label			
Container marks or identification			
Net weight (ounces)			
Soluble solids (percent by refractometer)			
Factors		Score Points	
Color	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Consistency	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Finish	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Defects	20	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Flavor	<u>20</u>	"A"	17-20
		"C"	14-16 <u>1/</u>
		"SStd"	0-13 <u>1/</u>
Total Score		100	
Grade			

1/ Indicates limiting rule