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Commodity Specification for Frozen Fruit

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Commodity Specification for Frozen Fruit

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GENERAL

U.S. Standards

Frozen fruit (product/commodity) produced under this Commodity Specification must meet the requirements specified in the applicable United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Fruit (U.S. Standards) effective on the date of the Solicitation/Invitation for Bid (IFB). The U.S. Standards are published separately and are incorporated herein and made a part of this Commodity Specification.

Exceptions to the U.S. Standards and/or or Commercial Item Description

Exceptions to the U.S. Standards for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) frozen fruit purchases and/or Commercial Item Description are found in Section II, Individual Commodity Specifications, of this document. Additional exceptions may be specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. Any exceptions contained in the applicable Solicitation/IFB shall have precedence over the requirements contained herein, for that Solicitation/IFB only.

Product Origin

In accordance with the latest version or the AMS Master Invitation for Bids (MIFB-D) Sections 4A52.225-1a,b,c,d,e,f, and 4A52.225-3, contractors must meet all domestic origin requirements with further clarifications shown below.

- 1. Contractors will make all paperwork available to USDA that confirms fruit, vegetable, and nut commodities purchased for USDA food assistance outlets are 100 percent grown in the United States. This means that products shall have originated entirely from crops grown, processed, and packed in the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (hereinafter referred to as the United States) in accordance with responsible commercial practices, during the packing season, and from the crop year(s) specified.**
- 2. If the contractor handles any commodity originating from sources other than the United States, the contractor must have a written plan to segregate the commodity. This segregation plan will include an identification and record system for all commodities to ensure they are completely segregated and cannot be used to fulfill purchase orders awarded by USDA. Such segregation plan must be made available, within 10 days of purchase order award, to representatives of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).**
- 3. The responsibility for compliance is borne by the contractor, regardless of whether the product was processed/packed in their facility or if it originated from other sources (i.e., subcontractors and suppliers). If a contractor receives crops or products originating from other sources, it is up to the contractor to obtain proof of domestic origin compliance from those sources.**

4. **Examples of documentation submitted may include but are not limited to: load or warehouse storage receipts for raw product (i.e., bin tags), product blend (formulation) records, product coding explanations, finished product warehousing records, shipping or payment records, or other documentation or evidence that clearly establishes the product's domestic origin.**
5. **An acceptable domestic origin verification traceback must include the following:**
 - **Signed Exhibit 1 Domestic Origin Certification**
 - **Table of Contents**
 - **Narrative or flow chart explaining the documentation provided**
 - **An explanation of the code. (Code Breakdown)**
 - **Each page should be numbered and referenced in Table of Contents**
 - **All pertinent information should be highlighted on each document**
 - **Documentation must be clear and concise and must relate directly to the code being traced**
 - **Trace information submitted must include the physical location of the originating field, farm, orchard, or vineyard**

NOTE: Failure to comply with the above requirements, or any submittals consisting of mass unorganized “data dumps” will not be reviewed by SCI and final statuses will be reported to the Commodity Procurement representative as “Incomplete”.

6. **Such records must be available for review by the Government in accordance with FAR 52.214-26. In the event of an audit, AMS auditors will examine as many codes as is necessary to verify compliance.**
7. **Self-certifications by contractors and subcontractors will not be accepted.**
8. **Failure to observe this requirement may lead to suspension or debarment, purchase order termination, and penalties at Title 18, Section 1001 of the U.S. Code concerning falsification of information.**

Kosher Products

Occasionally, USDA solicits offers to sell Kosher products that comply with applicable dietary (kosher) laws as established by the “613 Vaad.” Such products are identified on the solicitation with the letter “K” incorporated into the WBSCM material descriptions (see Exhibit 4 for specific products.) Manufacturing plants shall be certified for compliance with the aforementioned requirement by contacting the Rabbinical Committee at the phone number listed in the New York State (NYS) Kosher Commodities Co-op Resource linked below. **Additional information regarding practices and protocols required for kosher certified production for the NYS Kosher Commodities Co-op can be found at the following link: [New York State \(NYS\) Kosher Commodities Co-op Resource \(usda.gov\)](#).**

At no cost to the vendor, a rabbinic supervisor will be sent to certify compliance of the manufacturing plant with the dietary (kosher) laws. Vendors must not bid on these purchase units unless they can be properly certified. Kosher products purchased solely for the #613 Vaad do not require a symbol on the primary or secondary container.

Packing Season

All fruit used to pack these commodities must be from the current season/crop year, unless otherwise specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

Shipment

Frozen foods shall be held, tendered, and transported at a temperature of 0 degrees F. or lower. Under temporary conditions, such as may occur at the time of loading, the product temperature may exceed the 0 degrees F. requirement. However, any lot exceeding a temperature of 10 degrees F at the time of loading shall not be acceptable.

Grades of Frozen Fruit

All frozen fruit must be U.S. Grade A (as defined in the U. S. Standards) unless otherwise specified in Section II, Individual Product Specifications, herein or the applicable Solicitation/IFB.

Fill of Container

1. Contractor must meet the net weight for the product as specified in the applicable U.S. Standards unless otherwise indicated herein.
2. The average net weight must meet the net weight as printed on the label and Individual Commodity Specification Section II.

LABELS AND PACKAGING

Primary Containers (Packages and Labeling)

1. Vendors have the option to use commercial labeling and packaging which meets all applicable FDA requirements and contains a code which allows traceability of the product in the event of a recall, or they may use non-commercial packaging and labeling as specified in the Master Invitation for Bids.
2. The processors' own commercially acceptable "brand" labels may be used on all Solicitations/IFBs. Distributor's "brand" labels are not acceptable.

3. All products must be packed in new, commercially acceptable primary containers (packages). Frozen fruit shall be packed only in the container size and type specified in the applicable Solicitation/IFB. The primary package must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.
4. Product packed in poly bags must be effectively sealed so as not to leak when thawed.
5. For packages 3 pounds or less, labels must also meet the following formatting criteria:
 - a. Must include, at a minimum, Two (2) colors, in addition to black and/or white.
 - b. Must incorporate a graphic (photo or illustration) depicting the product/contents on the principal display panel if the packages are not clear or contain an adequate viewing window.
 - c. Suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection certificates.

Secondary Containers (case) for Commercial Labels

1. Primary containers shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe storage and transportation to destinations.
2. Case flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.
3. Mixing and matching of commercial and non-commercial labeling methods will not be acceptable.
4. Two or more different commercial labels will not be acceptable within a shipping unit (truck load).

Secondary Containers (case) for Non-Commercial Labels

Packages with non-commercial labels shall be further enclosed within new, corrugated fiberboard cartons (cases) acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. Flaps, gaps, and other openings may not exceed 1 inch and must be fully glued or sealed with tape. If tape is used in lieu of glue, it must be clear and of commercially acceptable width and strength. The tape must extend at least two inches down the sides or ends.

Cases must be marked in such a manner that they contain all the required symbols, statements and information contained in Exhibits 1, 2 or 3 as applicable.

Cases may be marked by printing or stenciling or by preprinted, self-adhesive stickers. Self-adhesive stickers must be affixed to the case in such a manner that they cannot be removed intact.

Exact arrangement and adherence to font size is not required. The case markings must be clearly marked, easily read, and substantially the same as specified in Exhibit 1, 2 or 3 as applicable.

Exhibit 3 shows an alternative placard that may be applied to a non-commercial, new, corrugated fiberboard case acceptable by common or other carriers for safe transportation to destinations. This placard must be affixed to the case in such a manner that it cannot be removed intact.

Cases must have the recycling statement shown in Exhibit 5, “Please Recycle” Symbol and Statement or Exhibit 6, “Corrugated Recycles” Symbol and Statement.

UNIVERSAL PRODUCT CODES (UPC)

Contractor UPCs are acceptable for primary containers with commercial labels and/or secondary fiberboard cases enclosing commercially labeled product.

UPCs are not required for commercial labeling with tray pack shipping containers.

Products with alternative, non-commercial labels must use the UPCs listed in Exhibit 3 on the primary and secondary containers.

PALLETIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Pallets

Products must be on 48 X 40 inch, non-reversible, flush stringer, and partial four- way entry. New pallets must be good quality wood. Used pallets must be No.1 hardwood or its equivalent in new softwood. **Broken or damaged pallets are unacceptable; however, broken or damaged pallets may be repaired with No.1 hardwood or its equivalent in new softwood.** If pallet exchange is desired, the contractor shall arrange for pallet exchange with consignees. USDA is in no way responsible for arrangement of pallet exchange.

Unitization

Each delivery unit of frozen fruit must be unitized. Shipping cases must be stacked and secured from top to bottom, so that each container and layer of containers becomes an integral part of the pallet. Either stretch wrapping with plastic film or “lock ‘n pop” is acceptable. The palletized product must be loaded in the conveyance in such a way that will prevent shifting and damage to the containers of product.

INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY SPECIFICATIONSApple slices

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A, in accordance with the U.S. Standard for Grades of Frozen Apples.
2. Style – Sliced.
3. Type of Pack – Individually Quick Frozen (IQF).
4. The varieties used will be suitable for slicing and freezing. No mixing of varieties is allowed.
5. Ascorbic acid and citric acid may be added to inhibit oxidation.
6. Sulfites cannot be substituted for ascorbic acid and citric acid.
7. No added nutritive or non-nutritive sweeteners or salt, including sodium chloride and calcium chloride.
 - a. Once the product is thawed and free of ice crystals: Will be reasonably bright and show no more than slight oxidization (browning)
 - b. The texture will be reasonably uniform and firm but not hard, with not more than 3 percent of the weight of the product consisting of mushy apples.
8. Net Weight –
 - a. 30 pounds per case.
 - b. 12/2.5-pound bags.

Apricots

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Style – Sliced.
3. Pack Formula – The fruit shall be packed into syrup at a ratio of 5+1 fruit to sugar, resulting in a final average Brix measurement of 60 degrees. Ascorbic acid and citric acid may be added.
4. Net Weight –
 - a. 24 pounds per case (12/2 lb. bag)

- b. 20 pounds per case.
 - c. 30 pounds per case (6/5 lb. bags).
6. **Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 60 percent (by weight).**

Frozen Apricots in Individual Serving Sizes

- 1. Grade – U.S. Grade B or better, except for U.S. Grade A for defects.
- 2. Style – Diced (3/8 to 1/2 inch) or machine-pitted.
- 3. Individual Net Weight – 4.5 ounces per cup, 96 cups per case
- 4. Size of Primary Container – Individual portion serving cups. Cups **must** show suitable code marking.
- 5. Pack Formula – The fruit shall be packed into syrup at a ratio of 5+1 fruit to sugar, resulting in a final average Brix measurement of 60 degrees or composed of apricot puree. Ascorbic acid and citric acid may be added.
- 6. **No water may be added directly to the finished product.**
- 7. Average Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 55 percent (by weight).
- 8. There shall be NO cooked product of any kind used.

Blackberries

- 1. Grade – U.S. Grade B or better, except U.S. Grade A for defects.
- 2. Style – Individually Quick Frozen (IQF).
- 3. Variety –
 - a. Sweet – Marion, Kotata, Black Diamond.
 - b. Tart – Silvan, Chester, Evergreen.
- 4. Net Weight – 30 pounds per case.

Blackberry Puree

- 1. Grade – Made from frozen blackberries, U.S. Grade B or Better for Manufacturing. The blackberry puree shall be produced from U.S. Grade B or Better for manufacturing

blackberries as determined in accordance with the requirements of the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Berries.

2. Inspection – Inspection/grading of the frozen blackberries shall be performed by representatives of the AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division prior to the blackberries being processed into puree. The SCI will inspect/grade the puree to ensure the quality of the puree produced is in accordance with the requirements of the individual Solicitation/IFB and the commodity specifications.
3. Pasteurized – processed puree will be accepted in lieu of inspection prior to processing if the puree is in accordance with all other requirements of the individual Solicitation/IFB and commodity specifications as determined by the SCI Division.
4. Variety – Evergreen or Marion.
5. Color – The blackberry pulp shall be reasonably bright and the typical reddish purple to dark purple color of ripened blackberries.
6. Flavor and Aroma – The flavor and aroma of the pulp will be characteristic of the blackberry types, tart, free from fermentation, and any off flavors or odors.
7. Brix – The minimum single strength berry puree Brix will be stated below for each berry type, with no sugar or water added, measured by a refractometer.
 - a. Blackberries, Evergreen – 10.5 degrees.
 - b. Blackberries, Marion – 10.0 degrees.
 - c. pH Range –
 - i. Blackberries, Evergreen – 3.2 to 4.0.
 - ii. Blackberries, Marion – 2.9 to 3.6.
 - d. The puree shall be processed and packed in accordance with good manufacturing practices, under strict sanitary conditions. The berries will be finished by passing them through one or more finishing machines with the final screen opening not to exceed 0.033 inches. The puree will be packaged as specified below, frozen immediately and kept frozen at 0 degrees F to –10.
8. Absence of Defects – The finished puree shall be practically free of defect material; not more than 3 pieces of brown, black, green, or other discolored tissue including seeds that is readily noticeable in a 16-ounce sample unit. The finished puree shall not include more than 1 piece that is over 3/16 inch in any dimension.

9. Consistency – The consistency of the single strength, seedless puree will be fairly thick and reasonably smooth with a slight amount of free liquid at the edge of the mass. Product may flow fairly quickly on a tray tilted to a 30-degree angle but should not exhibit a watery quality.
10. Howard Mold Count – The mold count as determined by the Howard Method will not exceed an average of 30 percent positive fields, with a maximum of 37 percent positive fields for any individual count.
11. Analytical Requirements – Analytical and microbiological requirements for blackberry puree shall comply with the following:
 - a. Aerobic (Standard) plate count – Less than 50,000 per gram in any sample.
 - b. Yeast – Less than 10,000 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram.
 - c. Mold – Less than 10,000 CFU per gram.
 - d. Coliform – Less than 100 per gram using the MPN (Most Probable Number) technique.
 - e. E. coli – Less than 3 per gram using the MPN technique.
 - f. Salmonella – Negative per 25 grams.

Blueberries

1. Grade – U.S. Grade B or better in accordance with the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Blueberries.
2. Types of frozen blueberries.
 - a. native or wild (lowbush) type or
 - b. cultivated (highbush) type.
 - c. Types a and b cannot be mixed.

As specified in the solicitation/IFB.

3. Variety – Cultivated or native (as specified in the Solicitation/IFB).
4. Net Weight –
 - a. 30 pounds per case.

- b. 30 pounds per case (12/2.5 lb.).
- c. 24 pounds per case (8/3 lb.).
- d. 20 pounds per case (20/1 lb.).**

Cherries

1. Grade – U.S. Grade B or better, except U.S. Grade A for Pit Score.
2. Pit Score – A tolerance of not more than one pit per 160 ounces is permitted.
3. Type of Pack – Regular 5+1 or Individually Quick Frozen (IQF).
4. Variety
 - a. Red Tart, Pitted (RTP) - Regular 5+1 or Unsweetened IQF as specified in IFB/Solicitation.
 - b. Sweet Cherries, Pitted, Unsweetened - IQF only.
5. Net Weight
 - a. Regular RTP - 5+1 Fruit Sugar Ratio
 - i. One 30-pound plastic container. 30 pounds per container.
 - ii. Twelve-two and a half pound clear bags per box (12/2 ½-lb). 30 pounds per container.
 - b. IQF - RTP – Unsweetened Whole pitted
 - i. One 40-pound plastic container. 40 pounds per container.
 - ii. Twelve- two and a half pound clear bags per box (12/2 ½-lb). 30 pound per container.
 - b. IQF - Sweet Cherries - Unsweetened Whole pitted
 - i. Twelve- two and a half pound bags per box (12/2 ½-lb). 30 pound per container.

Peaches

20 Pound Frozen Sliced Freestone Peaches

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A. Character shall be category II, Firm ripe – except may include 20 percent soft ripe fruit. Mushy peaches will not be allowed.
2. Style – Sliced.
3. Variety – Yellow Freestone.
4. Net Weight – 20 pounds per case.
5. Pack Formula – 11.5+1 (by weight) fruit to sugar ratio. The packing media may consist of syrup, peach puree, dry sugar, ascorbic acid, or citric acid.
- 6. Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 60 percent (by weight).**

Frozen Freestone Peaches in Individual Serving Sizes

1. Grade U.S. Grade B or better, except for U.S. Grade A for defects.
2. Style – Diced (3/8 to 1/2 inch).
3. Variety – Yellow Freestone.
4. Individual Net Weight – 4.4 ounces per cup. 96 cups per case.
5. Size of Primary Container – Individual portion serving cups.
6. Pack Formula – The pack ratio must be 11.5 +1 fruit to sugar ratio. Packing media is sugar, syrup, ascorbic acid and citric acid, or juice.
or,
The packing media must be 5.5 + 1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is 45 degrees brix syrup and may also be composed of peach puree, sugar, ascorbic acid, and citric acid.
7. No water may be added directly to the finished product.
8. There shall be NO cooked product of any kind used.
9. Average Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 55 percent (by weight).

Two-pound (2-pound) Frozen Sliced Freestone Peaches

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A, except Grade B for Character.
2. Style – Sliced.

3. Pack Formula – The pack ratio must be 11.5+1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is sugar, syrup, ascorbic acid and citric acid, or juice. The packing media must be 5.5 + 1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is 45 degrees brix syrup composed of peach puree, sugar, ascorbic acid, and citric acid.
4. Variety – Yellow Freestone.
5. Net Weight – 24 pounds per case. 12/2-pound cartons per case.
6. **Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 60 percent (by weight).**

Red Raspberries

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Style – Individually Quick Frozen (IQF).
3. Net Weight – 25 or 30 pounds per case, as specified in the Solicitation/IFB.

Red Raspberry Puree

1. Grade – Made from frozen raspberries, U.S. Grade B or Better for Manufacturing. The red raspberry puree shall be produced from U.S. Grade B or Better for Manufacturing raspberries as determined in accordance with the requirements of the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Raspberries.
2. Inspection – Inspection/grading of the frozen raspberries shall be performed by representatives of the AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division prior to the raspberries being processed into puree. SCI will inspect/grade the puree to ensure the quality of the puree produced is in accordance with the requirements of the individual Solicitation/IFB and the commodity specifications.
3. Pasteurized – Processed puree will be accepted in lieu of inspection prior to processing if the puree is in accordance with all other requirements of the individual Solicitation/IFB and commodity specifications as determined by SCI. The vendor must furnish SCI with traceable pasteurization records for each lot submitted. These records must be from an automatic time and temperature recorder. Handwritten records are not acceptable.
4. Color – The red raspberry pulp shall be reasonably bright, red to reddish purple color typical of ripened red raspberries.
5. Flavor and Aroma – The flavor and aroma of the pulp will be characteristic of red raspberry, tart, free from fermentation and any off flavors or odors.

6. Brix – The minimum single strength berry puree Brix will be as stated below for each berry type, with no sugar or water added, measured by refractometer 8.0 degrees.
7. pH Range – 2.9 to 3.7.
8. The puree shall be processed and packed in accordance with good manufacturing practices, under strict sanitary conditions. The berries will be finished by passing them through one or more finishing machines with the final screen opening not to exceed 0.033 inches. The puree will be packaged as specified below, frozen immediately and kept frozen at 0-degree F or lower.
9. Absence of Defects – The finished puree shall be practically free of defect material; not more than three pieces of brown, black, green, or other discolored tissue including seeds that is readily noticeable in a 16-ounce sample unit. They shall not include more than one piece that is over 3/16 inch in any dimension.
10. Consistency – The consistency of the single strength, seedless puree will be fairly thick and reasonably smooth with a slight amount of free liquid at the edge of the mass. Product may flow fairly quickly on a tray tilted to a 30-degree angle but should not exhibit a watery quality.
11. Howard Mold Count – The mold count as determined by the Howard Method will not exceed an average of 30 percent positive fields, with a maximum of 37 percent positive fields for any individual count.
12. Analytical Requirements – Analytical and microbiological requirements for raspberry puree shall comply with the following:
 - a. Aerobic (Standard) plate count – Less than 50,000 per gram in any sample.
 - b. Yeast – Less than 10,000 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram.
 - c. Mold – Less than 10,000 CFU per gram.
 - d. Coliform – Less than 100 per gram using the MPN (Most Probable Number) technique.
 - e. E. coli – Less than 3 per gram using the MPN technique.
 - f. Salmonella – Negative per 25 grams

Strawberries

Strawberries (Unsweetened)

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Style
 - a. IQF Frozen Whole
 - i. Size - Medium (over 5/8 inch to units that will pass through a 2-inch diameter circle in any direction)
 - ii. Net Weight - 12/2.5, 6/5, and 30-pound case
 - iii. For 30-pound case, the average net weight of the case shall be no less than 30 pounds and no individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

Net Weight specified in the solicitation/IFB

- b. IQF Frozen Sliced
 - i. Size - (approximately 3/8 to 1/2 inch)
 - ii. Net Weight – 6/5 and 30 pounds
 - iii. For 30-pound case, the average net weight of the case shall be no less than 30 pounds and no individual case shall weigh less than 29.4 pounds.

Net Weight specified in the solicitation/IFB

3. Mold Count – should be in accordance with FDA requirements.

Strawberries (Sweetened)

1. Grade – U.S. Grade A.
2. Style – Sliced.
3. Net Weight – 30 pounds per pail.
4. Fruit/Sugar Ratio – 11.5 + 1.
5. Mold Count – must be in accordance with FDA requirements.

Frozen Strawberries in Individual Serving Sizes

1. Grade – Equivalent to U.S. Grade A based on tolerances established in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Strawberries, sliced style. Style used for this pack is diced.

2. Style – Diced (approximately 3/8 to 1/2 inch).
3. Individual Net Weight – 4.5 ounces per cup, 96 cups per case.
4. Size of Primary Container – Individual portion serving cups. Cups must be suitably code marked.
5. Pack Formula – The pack ratio must be 11.5+1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is sugar, syrup, ascorbic acid and citric acid, or juice.
or,
The packing media must be 5.5 + 1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is 45 degrees Brix syrup and may also be composed of strawberry puree, sugar, ascorbic acid, and citric acid. Use of ascorbic acid and citric acid is optional.
6. No water may be added directly to the finished product.
7. There shall be NO cooked product of any kind used.
8. The primary containers or lids will contain the name of product, ingredient statement, the net weight in pounds and kilograms, and a keep frozen statement. Identity coding must be on the cases and primary containers.
9. Product must meet FDA Defect Action Level.
10. USDA Inspection shall be made during on-line production or repacking of the product.
11. Average Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 60 percent (by weight).

Whole Cranberries

1. Grade – U.S. Grade B or better.
2. Net Weight – 40 pounds per container.
3. Nutrition – Must be fully ripe for natural antioxidants benefit.

Mixed Berry Cup

Individual Serving Size

1. Grade
 - a. Blueberries – U.S. Grade B or better – Variety – Cultivated or native (as specified in the Solicitation/IFB).

- b. Strawberries - Equivalent to U.S. Grade A based on tolerances established in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Strawberries, sliced style. Style used for this pack is diced.
- 2. Types of frozen blueberries.
 - a. native or wild (lowbush) type or
 - b. cultivated (highbush) type.
 - c. types a and b cannot be mixed.

As specified in the solicitation/IFB.

- 3. Style
 - a. Blueberries – IQF whole.
 - b. Strawberries – Fresh or frozen diced (approximately 3/8 to 1/2 inch).
 - i. Berries used and processed for this formulation must result in the end item that meets the requirements of this specification. Specifically, in the formulated and frozen product:
 - 1. The color and character of the whole blueberries will be U.S. Grade B or better
 - 2. The color and character of the diced strawberries will be U.S. Grade A based on tolerances established in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Strawberries for sliced style with the following exception: A reasonable amount of discoloration of the strawberries is allowed due to the blueberry color migrating into the strawberry dices as long as the strawberry dices retain a fairly good pink to red color.
- 4. Proportion of ingredients: 50% Whole Blueberries and 50% Diced Strawberries (by weight) - Tolerance of proportions: (+ or –) 10%.
- 5. Individual Net Weight - 4.0 ounces per cup, 96 cups per case.
- 6. Size of Primary Container - Individual portion serving cups. Cups must be suitably code marked so that the product can be identified with related inspection
- 7. Pack Formula
 - a. The pack ratio must be 11.5+1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is sugar,

syrup, ascorbic acid, and citric acid.

or,

The packing media must be 5.5 + 1 fruit to sugar ratio where the packing media is 45 degrees Brix syrup and may also be composed of strawberry puree, sugar, ascorbic acid, and citric acid. Use of ascorbic or citric acid is optional.

8. No water may be added directly to the finished product.
9. There shall be NO cooked product of any kind used.
10. Identity coding must be on the cases and primary containers.
11. Product must meet FDA Defect Action Level.
12. USDA Inspection shall be made during on-line production or repacking of the product.
13. Drained Weight – Shall be a minimum of 60 percent of net weight.

INSPECTION, CERTIFICATION, AND CHECKLOADING

Requirements

Representatives of the AMS, Specialty Crops Program, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division (USDA Inspector) must perform the inspection. (see the Master Invitation for Bids). The cost of inspection, samples taken for inspection, mailing of review samples submitted for evaluation, and any chemical analysis required for testing shall be for the account of the Contractor.

Inspection of frozen products must not be performed more than 60 days prior to shipment. Whether each lot offered meets the product and container requirements of the purchase order must be determined on the basis of representative sample units. Representative sample units will be graded according to the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Frozen Fruits and Vegetables and Related Products (7 C.F.R. Part 52), and United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 C.F.R. Part 42.140), effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB.

Certification

Subject to (See the Master Invitation for Bids) the acceptability of the quality, weight, packaging, and **checkloading (if requested)** of the product must be evidenced by SCI Certificates of Quality and Condition issued by the USDA Inspector.

No product shall be shipped unless the USDA Inspector informs the Contractor that a designated lot is acceptable. Notice by the USDA Inspector that a designated lot scheduled for shipment does not meet requirements of the purchase order shall constitute rejection of

such lot.

Checkloading

As a result of the Mandatory Checkloading Phase Out Program, the requirements for checkloading frozen fruit by USDA inspectors, will be eliminated for contracts announced on or after October 1, 2020. Note: Checkloading may still be performed on all, or part of the deliveries at the request and expense of the contractor. Also, SCI may conduct periodic verifications of the vendors' commercial practices to ensure they meet the contractual requirements.

Procedures

The Contractor must give the USDA Inspector at least 7 days advance notice when scheduling inspection service. Prior to sampling, the Contractor must furnish the USDA Inspector with a list of codes and the approximate number of cases per code.

Contractors are encouraged to submit requests for inspection in writing with verifiable receipt notice, such as fax log, to alleviate possible miscommunication.

Laboratory Tests

The Contractor must allow 14 days after product sampling for laboratory tests (when required) to be completed and returned.

Failure to Meet Specifications

Any lot which fails applicable specifications prescribed herein will be rejected as not acceptable for delivery. If any lot of frozen fruit fails to meet the product or packaging requirement, the Contractor may request in writing that USDA accept delivery of the lot. USDA may, at its option, accept delivery, provided that the purchase price is the purchase order price less a discount, to be determined by the Contracting Officer.

Reference Links

The product must comply with the below references/requirements that are effective on the date of the Solicitation/IFB announcement (published separately).

AMS Master Invitation for Bids:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food/solicitations>

U.S. Grades and Standards:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards>

Commercial Item Descriptions:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/cids>

National Science Laboratory:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/lab-testing/nsi>

FDA Food Labeling Guide

<https://www.fda.gov/media/81606/download>

EXHIBITS**Exhibit 1 - Required Markings for Non-Commercial Shipping Containers****ALL PRINTING TO BE IN BLACK INK****BOTH SIDE PANELS****BOTH END PANELS**

PRODUCT NAME

PRODUCT NAME

1/

PURCHASE ORDER NO. 3/

2/

4/

USDA SYMBOL – Optional

5

/ KEEP FROZEN

Product name must be printed or stenciled on a separate line in letters at least three-fourths inch high, and all other information must be in letters less than three-fourths inch but at least three-eighths inch high. The USDA Food Symbol must be printed, stamped, or labeled and be of sufficient size to stand out prominently. Case markings must be limited to case codes and those contained in this Exhibit.

- 1/ Insert any additional product style, pack, packing media, or further definition as applicable; (i.e., IQF, Yellow, Cut, Chopped, etc.).
- 2/ Insert the size and number of packages per case, i.e., 30 pound, 6/5 pound bags, 20 pound
- 3/ Insert the last 5 digits of purchase order number.
- 4/ Insert name of Packer and Packer's Address - City, State, and Zip Code. This information can be placed on the end panels or the side panels.
- 5/ Insert Universal Product Code (see Exhibit “4”).

Recycle symbols and statements can be placed on bottom panels (Exhibit “5” and “6”)

Exhibit 2 - Alternative Label for Shipping Containers

(Includes all Required Information)



Product Name Style

Packing Media Size/Number per case

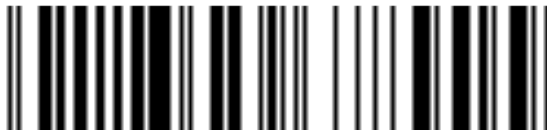
Purchase Order Number xxxxx

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999

KEEP FROZEN

USDA Symbol is optional



1234567891012345678910

Exhibit 3 - Alternative Label for Shipping Containers



USDA Symbol - Optional

**Frozen Peaches Sliced
20 pounds
Purchase Order Number xxxxx**

Packed by: ABC Growers

Any Town, CA 99999

KEEP FROZEN



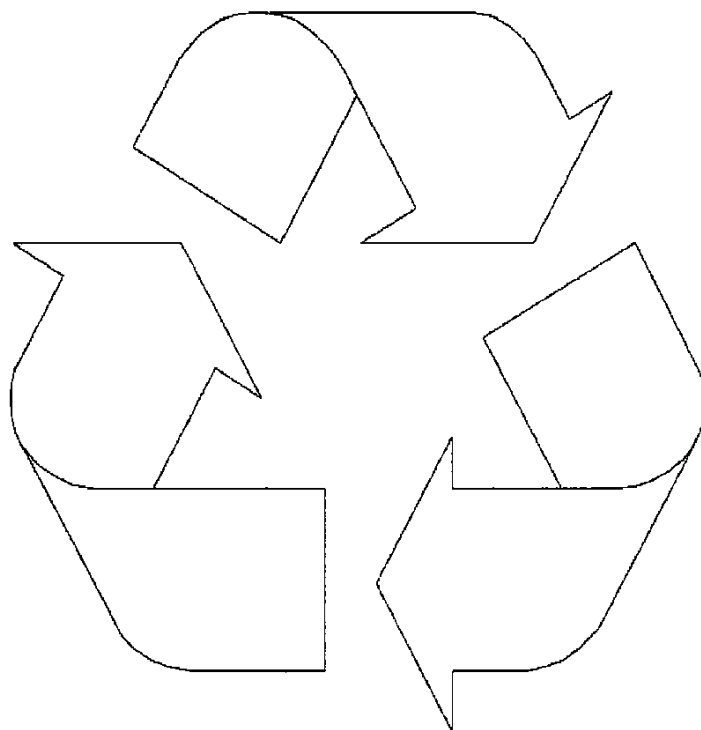
1234567891012345678910

Exhibit 4 - Universal Product Codes

Frozen Fruit	WBSCM Material	Primary container	Secondary Container
Apple Slices (30-lbs.)	100258	7 15001 00258 7	1 07 15001 00258 4
Apple Slices (12/2.5-lbs)	110470	7 15001 10470 0	1 07 15001 10470 7
Apricots (20-lb.)	100259	7 15001 00259 4	1 07 15001 00259 1
Apricots (96/4.5 oz. cups)	100261	7 15001 10026 1	1 07 15001 00261 1
Apricots, IQF (6/5 lb)	110862	7 15001 10862 3	1 07 15001 10862 0
Apricots, IQF (12/2 lb.)	111232	7 15001 11232 3	1 07 15001 11232 0
Blackberries (30-lb.)	100245	7 15001 00245 7	1 07 15001 00245 1
Highbush Blueberries (30-lb.)	110624	7 15001 10624 7	1 07 15001 10624 4
Highbush Blueberries (12/2.5 lb.)	110623	7 15001 10623 0	1 07 15001 10623 7
Native Blueberries (20/1 lb.)	111465	7 15001 11465 5	1 07 1500 11465 2
Native Blueberries (30-lb.)	100243	7 15001 00243 3	1 07 15001 00243 0
Native Blueberries (8/3 lb.)	100242	7 15001 00242 4	1 07 15001 00242 3
Evergreen Blackberry Puree (6/5-3/4)	100251	7 15001 00251 8	1 07 15001 00251 5
Marion Blackberry	100252	7 15001 00252 5	1 07 15001 00252 2
RTP Cherries, IQF (40-lb.)	100237	7 15001 00237 2	1 07 15001 00237 9
RTP Cherries, IQF (12/2.5lb.)	100236	7 15001 00236 5	1 07 15001 00236 2
Sweet Cherries, IQF (12/2.5 lb)	110872	7 15001 10872 2	1 07 15001 10872 9
Cranberries, Whole Frozen (40 lb.)	100262	7 15001 00262 4	1 07 15001 00262 1
Mixed Berry Cup (96/4.0 oz cup)	110859	7 15001 10859 3	1 07 15001 10859 0
Peaches. Freestone (2-lb)	100238	7 15001 00237 2	1 07 15001 00238 6
Peaches, Freestone (20-lb)	100239	7 15001 00239 6	1 07 15001 00239 3
Peaches, Freestone (96/4.4 oz. cups)	100241	7 15001 00241 1	1 07 15001 00241 6
K Peaches, Freestone (96/4.4 oz. cups) Kosher	110056	7 15001 10026 4	1 07 15001 00056 6
Red Raspberries (25-lb.)	100248	7 15001 00248 8	1 07 15001 00248 5
Red Raspberry Puree (6/5-¾ lb)	100250	7 15001 00250 1	1 07 15001 00250 8
Red Raspberry Puree (24/1 lb.)	110941	7 15001 10941 5	1 07 15001 10941 2
Strawberries (30-lb.)	100253	7 15001 00253 2	1 07 15001 00253 9
Strawberries (30-lb. plastic)	100254	7 15001 00254 9	1 07 15001 00254 4

Strawberries (96/4.5 oz. cups)	100256	7 15001 00256 3	1 07 015001 00256 0
Strawberries, Whole, IQF (6/5 lb)	110846	7 15001 10846 3	1 07 15001 10846 0
Strawberries, Whole, IQF (12/2.5 lb)	111120	7 15001 11120 3	1 07 15001 11120 0
Strawberries, Sliced, IQF (6/5 lb)	110860	7 15001 10860 9	1 07 15001 10860 6

Exhibit 5 - “Please Recycle” Symbol and Statement



PLEASE RECYCLE

Exhibit 6 - “Corrugated Recycles” Symbol and Statement



**Corrugated
Recycles**

Exhibit 7 - USDA Symbol

USDA Symbol - Optional

