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# **United States Standards for Grades of Tomato Juice**

**Effective June 12, 2026**

This issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Juice (91 FR 26985) supersedes the previous issue which had been in effect since July 22, 1985.

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

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**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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## United States Standards for Grades of Tomato Juice

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## Product Description and Definition of Terms

### §52.3621 Product description.

- (a) **Tomato juice** is the product as defined in the Standards of Identity for Tomato Juice (21 CFR §156.145), issued under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.
- (b) **Tomato juice from concentrate** is the product as defined in the Standards of Identity for Tomato Juice (21 CFR §156.145), issued under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

### §52.3622 Definitions of terms.

In these U.S. standards, unless otherwise required by the context, the following terms shall be construed, respectively, to mean:

- (a) **Color** means the amount of red in tomato juice and tomato juice from concentrate is determined by comparing the color of the product with the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products. The availability and procedure for using the color standards may be obtained by contacting the USDA.

Any method or device approved by the USDA (including electronic color meters) which gives equivalent results may be used.

- (1) **Good color** means a color that is bright and characteristic of tomato juice, made from mature red tomatoes, which is not affected by caramelization, oxidation or other similar causes. Such color contains as much red or more than the USDA Color Standard A2 for Tomato Products.
  - (2) **Reasonably good color** means a color that is typical of red tomato juice which may be slightly affected by caramelization, oxidation or other similar causes. Such color must contain more than the USDA Color Standard C1 and C2 for Tomato Products.
- (b) **Consistency** means the viscosity of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate including the degree of separation of the insoluble solids.
  - (1) **Good consistency** means that the juice flows readily; has a normal amount of insoluble tomato solids in suspension; and that there is little solids separation.
  - (2) **Reasonably good consistency** means that the juice flows readily; has a normal amount of insoluble tomato solids in suspension; and that there is not a marked degree of solids separation.

- (c) **Defects** means dark specks or scale-like particles, seeds, particles of seed, tomato peel, core material, or other similar substances.
- (1) **Practically free from defects** means that any defects present do not more than slightly affect the appearance or drinking quality of the product.
- (2) **Reasonably 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 drinking quality of the product.
- (d) **Flavor** is evaluated based upon characteristics normal to tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate.
- (1) **Good flavor** means a distinct tomato juice flavor and odor characteristic of good quality tomatoes which is not materially affected by stems, leaves, crushed seeds, cores, immature tomatoes, or the effects of improper trimming or processing.
- (2) **Reasonably good flavor** means a characteristic tomato juice flavor which may be materially, but not seriously, affected by stems, leaves, crushed seeds, cores, immature tomatoes, or the effects of improper trimming or processing.
- (e) **Tomato soluble solids (TSS)** means the sucrose value as determined by the method prescribed in 21 CFR §156.3.

### **Recommended Sample Sizes**

#### **§52.3623 Recommended sample unit sizes.**

The requirements for all factors of quality are based on the following:

- (a) The entire contents of a container;
- (b) A representative portion of the contents of a container;
- (c) A combination of the contents of two or more containers; or
- (d) A representative portion of processed product stored or held in bulk containers.

### **Grades**

#### **§52.3624 Grades.**

- (a) **U.S. Grade A** is the quality of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate that meets the applicable requirements of Tables I or II.

- (b) **U.S. Grade B** is the quality of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate that meets the applicable requirements of Tables I or II.
- (c) **Substandard (SStd)** is the quality of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate that fails to meet the requirements for “U.S. Grade B.”

### **Fill of Container**

#### **§52.3625 Recommended fill of container.**

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 tomato juice be filled as full as practicable without impairment of quality, and that the product occupies not less than 90 percent of the capacity of the container.

### **Factors of Quality**

#### **§52.3626 Factors of quality and analysis.**

- (a) The grade of a lot of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate is based on evaluation and analysis of the juice for the following quality and analytical factors:
  - (1) Color;
  - (2) Consistency;
  - (3) Defects;
  - (4) Flavor; and
  - (5) Tomato soluble solids (tomato juice from concentrate).
- (b) The relative importance of each quality factor is expressed numerically on the scale of 100. The maximum number of points that may be given each factor is:

| <b>Factors:</b>    | <b>Points</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|
| Color              | 30            |
| Consistency        | 15            |
| Defects            | 15            |
| Flavor             | 40            |
| <b>Total Score</b> | 100           |

- (c) The essential variations within each factor are so described that the value may be determined for each factor and expressed numerically. The numerical range for the rating of each factor is inclusive (for example, 13 to 15 points means 13, 14, or 15 points) and the score points shall be prorated relative to the degree of excellence for each factor.

## Grade Requirements

### §52.3627 Requirements for grades.

**Table I**  
**Tomato Juice**

| Quality Factors | Factor Description | Grade | Score Point Range                     |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| Color           | Good               | A     | 26-30                                 |
|                 | Reasonably good    | B     | 25 <sup>1</sup><br>23-24 <sup>2</sup> |
| Consistency     | Good               | A     | 13-15                                 |
|                 | Reasonably good    | B     | 10-12 <sup>3</sup>                    |
| Defects         | Practically free   | A     | 13-15                                 |
|                 | Reasonably free    | B     | 10-12 <sup>4</sup>                    |
| Flavor          | Good               | A     | 33-40                                 |
|                 | Reasonably good    | B     | 27-32 <sup>4</sup>                    |
| Minimum Score   |                    | A     | 85 points                             |
|                 |                    | B     | 70 points                             |

<sup>1</sup> Tomato juice assigned 25 points for the factor of color can be graded U.S. Grade A, provided all other requirements for U.S. Grade A are met and that the total score for the product is not less than 85 points (this is a partial limiting rule).

<sup>2</sup> Tomato juice assigned 23 or 24 points for the factor of color cannot be graded above U.S. Grade B regardless of the total score for the product (this is limiting rule).

<sup>3</sup> Tomato juice possessing only "reasonably good consistency" (10-12 points) can be graded U.S. Grade A, provided all other requirements for U.S. Grade A are met and that the total score for the product is not less than 85 points (this is a partial limiting rule).

<sup>4</sup> Cannot be graded above U.S. Grade B regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

**Table II**  
**Tomato Juice from Concentrate**

| Quality Factors                       | Factor Description | Grade                 | Score Point Range                     |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Color                                 | Good               | A                     | 26-30                                 |
|                                       | Reasonably good    | B                     | 25 <sup>1</sup><br>23-24 <sup>2</sup> |
| Consistency                           | Good               | A                     | 13-15                                 |
|                                       | Reasonably good    | B                     | 10-12 <sup>3</sup>                    |
| Defects                               | Practically free   | A                     | 13-15                                 |
|                                       | Reasonably free    | B                     | 10-12 <sup>4</sup>                    |
| Flavor                                | Good               | A                     | 33-40                                 |
|                                       | Reasonably good    | B                     | 27-32 <sup>4</sup>                    |
| Minimum Total Score                   |                    | A                     | 85 points                             |
|                                       |                    | B                     | 70 points                             |
| Tomato Soluble Solids (TSS) (Minimum) |                    | 5.0 percent by weight |                                       |

<sup>1</sup> Tomato juice from concentrate assigned 25 points for the factor of color can be graded U.S. Grade A, provided all other requirements for U.S. Grade A are met and that the total score for the product is not less than 85 points (this is a partial limiting rule).

<sup>2</sup> Tomato juice from concentrate assigned 23 or 24 points for the factor of color cannot be graded above U.S. Grade B regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

<sup>3</sup> Tomato juice from concentrate possessing only "reasonably good consistency" (10-12 points) can be graded U.S. Grade A, provided all other requirements for U.S. Grade A are met and that the total score for the product is not less than 85 points (this is a partial limiting rule).

<sup>4</sup> Cannot be graded above U.S. Grade B regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

### **Sample Size**

**§52.3628 Sample size.**

The sample size used to determine whether the requirements of these standards are met shall be as specified in the sampling plans and procedures 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) for lot grading and on-line grading, as applicable.

**Lot Quality Requirements****§52.3629 Lot quality requirements.**

A lot of tomato juice or tomato juice from concentrate is considered as meeting the requirements for quality if:

- (a) The requirements specified in Table I or II, as applicable, are met; and
- (b) The sampling plans and procedures in 7 CFR §§52.1 - 52.83 are met.