



Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-SC-24-0079]

Revision of Seven U.S. Grade Standards for Canned Tomato Products

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is revising seven U.S. grade standards for canned tomato products. AMS is updating the color sections in the grade standards, replacing the two-term grading system (dual-nomenclature) with a single term, and making editorial changes. AMS is also changing the spelling of “catsup” to the more commonly used term “ketchup.”

DATES: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dana N. White, by phone at (202) 720-5021; fax at (540) 361-1199; or email to Dana.White@usda.gov. Copies of the current U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Ketchup, U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Sauce, U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Juice, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Paste, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Puree, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomatoes, and U.S. Standards for Grades of Concentrated Tomato Juice are available on the Specialty Crops Inspection Division website at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/vegetables>.

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 U.S. Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables that no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations are maintained by AMS at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards>. AMS is revising certain parts of these U.S. Standards for Grades using the procedures that appear in part 36 of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36).

Background

AMS continually reviews all fruit and vegetable grade standards to ensure their usefulness to industry, modernize language, and remove duplicative terminology. AMS is revising seven grade standards: U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Catsup, U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Sauce, U.S. Standards for Grades of Tomato Juice, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Paste, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Puree, U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomatoes, and U.S. Standards for Grades of Concentrated Tomato Juice. The color section of these grade standards references Munsell color discs that are no longer used to determine color. The color sections will be updated to remove specific references to the Munsell color discs and to instead reference the USDA color chip information (A1, A2, C1, and C2) and use guidance. Color chip information is available on the Listing of Fresh and Processed Commodity Visual Aids on the AMS website at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/how-purchase-equipment-and-visual-aids>.

The color sections will note that the availability and procedure for using USDA color standards can be obtained by contacting USDA at the website above. AMS is also removing specific addresses for licensed suppliers of color standards. Contact information for current licensed suppliers is available in the Fresh and Processed Equipment Catalog at the website above.

More recently developed grade standards use a single term, such as “U.S. Grade A” or “U.S. Grade B,” to describe each level of quality within a grade standard. Older grade standards used dual nomenclature, such as “U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy,” “U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard,” and “U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard,” to describe the same level of quality. The terms “U.S. Fancy,” “U.S. Extra Standard,” and “U.S. Standard” will be removed and the terms “U.S. Grade A,” “U.S. Grade B,” and “U.S. Grade C” will be used exclusively.

AMS is adding a table to section 52.5170 of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomatoes named “Table II Low Individual Drained Weights for Canned Tomatoes and Stewed Tomatoes, All Grades, All Styles (ounces).” This table shows the individual drained weights allowed for each level of quality and container size.

Finally, AMS is making editorial changes, including inserting section headings and changing “catsup” to the more commonly used term “ketchup” to align with the Food and Drug Administration’s standard of identity and commercial practices.

The following table summarizes the revisions being made by AMS.

U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Tomato Products	Effective Date	Color Section Revisions	Other Revisions
Tomato Catsup	02/26/92	Remove text under section 52.2106, “Color,” pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs. Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.	Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed. Change “catsup” to “ketchup” throughout the standard.
Tomato Sauce	11/17/94	Remove text under section 52.2372, “Color,” pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.	Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed.

		<p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.</p>	<p>Revise section 52.2371, “Product description,” to highlight the refractive index criteria and include the low individual sample allowance.</p> <p>Revise table 1 of section 52.2375, column “U.S. Grade B” Reasonably Good Consistency to align with the definition, “3.0 to less than 4.0 or more than 12.0 but not more than 15.0.”</p>
Tomato Juice	07/22/85	<p>Remove text under section 52.3622, “Definitions of terms,” pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.</p> <p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.</p> <p>Remove Munsell address as a contact to order the tomato color standards.</p>	<p>Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed.</p>
Canned Tomato Paste	09/19/77	<p>Remove text under section 52.5048, “Color,” pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.</p> <p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.</p> <p>Remove Munsell address as a contact to order the tomato color standards.</p>	<p>Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed.</p> <p>Replace two-term grading language (dual nomenclature) with a single term to describe each quality level with the grade statements. For example, the term “U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy” would be revised to use the term “U.S. Grade A” under section 52.5044.</p>

Canned Tomato Puree (Tomato Pulp)	05/01/78	<p>Remove text under section 52.5088, "Color," pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.</p> <p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.</p> <p>Remove Munsell address as a contact to order the tomato color standards.</p>	<p>Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed.</p>
Canned Tomatoes	04/13/90	<p>Remove text under section 52.5164, "Definitions of terms," pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.</p> <p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Canned Tomatoes for determining color.</p>	<p>Add section headings from the previous version of the standard, which had been erroneously removed.</p> <p>Revise section 52.5166, including changing the title from "Minimum drained weight averages" to "Drained weight" and reorganizing content into a better order. Reorganize section 52.5166 for clarity, including moving sections.</p> <p>Add a new table in section 52.5170 to show the low individual drained weights and re-number all subsequent tables.</p>
Concentrated Tomato Juice	02/25/70	<p>Remove text under section 52.5205 pertaining to the use of the Munsell color discs.</p> <p>Add information about the USDA Color Standards for Tomato Products for determining color.</p>	<p>Add section headings from the previous version of the standards, which had been erroneously removed.</p> <p>Replace two-term grading language (dual nomenclature) with a single term to describe each quality level with the grade statements. For example, the term</p>

			“U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy” would be revised to use the term “U.S. Grade A” under section 52.5202.
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Comments

A 60-day period was provided for interested persons to submit comments on the proposed grade standards (90 FR 44360, September 15, 2025). In response to its request, AMS received two anonymous comments. All comments were posted on <http://www.regulations.gov>. One commenter offered support for changing the term “catsup” to “ketchup” as it “will allow the product to be more identifiable with the everyday consumer.” The other commenter offered their support for updating “catsup” to “ketchup” stating it “will improve consumer clarity.” This commenter also offered support for removing dual nomenclature stating it “strengthens consistency within the entire food industry that follows USDA guidelines.” While offering their support in the two aforementioned areas, the commenter questioned how these changes would: (1) “affect export or import requirements in terms of international standards already in place,” and (2) “affect small and midsize producers in terms of implementation costs.” In response to these questions: (1) This will not affect export or import requirements as U.S. standards are voluntary and are standalone from international standards. Buyers will need to declare which standard they wish to use when doing business. (2) This is not expected to affect implementation costs for small and midsize producers since the revised content in the standard was all identified as being no longer applicable to industry, with the exception of “Table II Low Individual Drained Weights for Canned Tomatoes and Stewed Tomatoes, All Grades, All Styles (ounces)” for which the information used to make the table was previously in the standard, but it’s now added in table form for easy referencing.

AMS is moving forward with the revisions as proposed and determined by AMS since these grade standards will provide a common language for trade and better reflect the current marketing of fruits and vegetables.

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

Erin Morris,

Administrator,

Agricultural Marketing Service.

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