



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**Agricultural  
Marketing  
Service**

**Fruit and  
Vegetable  
Division**

**Processed  
Products  
Branch**

# **United States Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes**

**Effective date May 12, 1976**

This is the first issue, as amended, of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes published in the **FEDERAL REGISTER** of April 9, 1976 (41 FR 15016) to become effective May 12, 1976.

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 processed fruits and vegetables, 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 standards also serve as a basis for the inspection and grading of commodities by the Federal inspection service, the only activity authorized to approve the designation of U.S. grades as referenced in the standards, as provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946. This service, available as on-line (in-plant) or lot inspection and grading of all processed fruit and vegetable products, is offered to interested parties, upon application, on a fee-for-service basis. The verification of some specific recommendations, requirements, or tolerances contained in the standards can be accomplished only by the use of on-line inspection procedures. In all instances, a grade can be assigned based on final product factors or characteristics.

In addition to the U.S. grade standards, grading manuals or instructions for inspection of several processed fruits and vegetables are available upon request for a nominal fee. These manuals or instructions contain detailed interpretations of the grade standards and provide step-by-step procedures for grading the product.

Grade standards are issued by the Department after careful consideration of all data and views submitted, and the Department welcomes suggestions which might aid in improving the standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of standards and grading manuals obtained from:

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## United States Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes

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<b>Section</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
52.5601	Product description. . . . . 5
52.5602	Types and varieties of canned dried prunes. . . . . 5
52.5603	Grades of canned dried prunes. . . . . 5
52.5604	Liquid media and brix measurements. . . . . 6
52.5605	Recommended fill of container. . . . . 6
52.5606	Recommended minimum drained weight. . . . . 6
52.5607	Count of prunes. . . . . 8
52.5608	Ascertaining the grade. . . . . 8
52.5609	Ascertaining the rating of each factor. . . . . 8
52.5610	Color. . . . . 8
52.5611	Uniformity of size. . . . . 9
52.5612	Absence of defects. . . . . 10
52.5613	Character of fruit. . . . . 12
52.5614	Explanation of terms. . . . . 12
52.5615	Ascertaining the grade of a lot. . . . . 12
52.5616	Score sheet for canned dried prunes. . . . . 13
Authority:	Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, Secs. 203, 205, 60 Stat. 1087, as amended, 1090, as amended; (7 U.S.C. 1622, 1624).

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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

**§52.5601 Product description.**

**Canned dried prunes** is the product represented as defined in the Standards of Identity for canned prunes (21 CFR 145.190) issued pursuant to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and are either pitted or unpitted.

**§52.5602 Types and varieties of canned dried prunes.**

- (a) Sweet types** includes such varieties as French, Imperials, Sugar, and Robe de Sergeant varieties.
- (b) Tart type** including the Italian variety.

**§52.5603 Grades of canned dried prunes.**

**(a) U. S. Grade A or U. S. Fancy** canned dried prunes are dried prunes of similar varietal characteristics; which possess a normal flavor and are of such quality with respect to color, uniformity of size, absence of defects, and character of fruit as to score not less than 90 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

**(b) U. S. Grade B or U. S. Choice** canned dried prunes are dried prunes of similar varietal characteristics which possess a reasonably uniform typical color; are reasonably free from defects; possess a reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture; possess a normal flavor; and are of quality with respect to uniformity of size as to score not less than 75 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

**(c) U. S. Grade C or U. S. Standard** canned dried prunes are dried prunes which possess a fairly uniform, fairly good typical color; are fairly free from defects; possess a fairly good texture; possess a normal flavor; and are of such quality with respect to uniformity of size as to score not less than 60 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

**(d) U.S. Grade D or Substandard** canned dried prunes are dried prunes that are wholesome and edible but fail to meet the requirements of U. S. Grade C or U. S. Standard.

**§52.5604 Liquid media and brix measurements.**

**Cut - out** requirements for liquid media in canned dried prunes are not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since sirup or any other liquid medium as such, is not a factor of quality for the purposes of these grades. The designations of liquid packing media and the Brix measurements, where applicable, are as follows:

Designations	Brix Measurements
<b>Extra heavy sirup; or Extra heavily sweetened fruit juice(s) and water or Extra heavily sweetened fruit juice(s).</b>	30° or more but not more than 45°
<b>Heavy sirup or Heavily sweetened fruit juices(s) and water; or Heavily sweetened fruit juice(s).</b>	24° or more but less than 30°
<b>Light sirup or Lightly sweetened fruit juice(s) and water; or Lightly sweetened fruit juice(s).</b>	20° or more but less than 24°
<b>Slightly sweetened water; or Extra light sirup; or Slightly sweetened fruit juice(s) and water; or Slightly sweetened fruit juice(s).</b>	Less than 20°
<b>In water</b>	Not applicable
<b>In fruit juice(s) and water</b>	Not applicable
<b>In fruit juice(s)</b>	Not applicable

**§52.5605 Recommended fill of container.**

The container shall be filled with dried prunes as full as practicable without impairment of quality. The product and packing medium occupies not less than 90 percent of the total volume capacity of the container.

**§52.5606 Recommended minimum drained weight.**

**(a) General.**

- (1)** The minimum drained weight recommendations for the various styles in Table II are not incorporated in the grades of the finished product since drained weight, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purposes of these grades.

(2) The recommended minimum drained weights are based on equalization of the product 30 days or more after the product has been canned.

(b) **Method for ascertaining drained weight.** The drained weight is determined by emptying the contents of the container upon a U. S. Standard No. 8 circular sieve of proper diameter containing 8 meshes to the inch ( $0.0937 \pm 3$  percent, square openings) so as to distribute the product evenly, inclining the sieve to a 17 to 20 degree angle to facilitate drainage, and allowing the product to drain for two minutes. The drained weight is the weight of the sieve and prunes less the weight of the dry sieve. A sieve 8 inches in diameter is used for No. 3 size cans (404 x 414) and smaller sizes, and a sieve 12 inches in diameter is used for containers larger than the No. 3 size can.

(c) **Compliance with recommended minimum drained weights.** A lot of canned prunes is considered as meeting the minimum drained weight recommendations if the following criteria are met:

(1) The average of the drained weights from all the sample units in the sample meet the recommended minimum drained weight specified in Table I; and

(2) Any sample unit(s) which fail to meet the recommended minimum drained weight is within the range of good commercial practice.

TABLE I			
CONTAINER SIZE OR NAME	Recommended drained weight		
	Metal containers		Glass containers
	Regular pack	Heavy pack	Regular pack
8 oz. ....	5 - 1/2 oz.	.....	.....
No. 1 Tall .....	10 - 3/4 oz.	.....	.....
No. 2 .....	13 oz.	.....	.....
No. 2 - 1/2 .....	19 oz.	29 oz.	18 oz.
No. 10 .....	70 oz.	110 oz.	.....

- (e) Canned dried prunes that meet recommended drained weight requirements for **Heavy Pack** will be certified as **Heavy Pack** in addition to the grade statement.

**§52.5607 Count of prunes.**

Federal inspection certification will indicate the count of prunes found upon examination.

**§52.5608 Ascertaining the grade.**

(a) The grade of canned dried prunes may be ascertained by considering, in addition to the foregoing requirements, the following factors: Color, uniformity of size, absence of defects, and character of fruit. The relative importance of each factor which is scored is expressed numerically on a scale of 100. The maximum number of points that may be given each factor is:

Factor:	Points
Color .....	20
Uniformity of size .....	15
Absence of defects .....	30
Character of fruit .....	<u>35</u>
Total score .....	100

**§52.5609 Ascertaining the rating of each factor.**

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

**§52.5610 Color.**

- (a) **"A"Classification.** Canned dried prunes that possess a practically uniform, typical color may be given a score of 18 to 20 points. **Practically uniform, typical color** means that the color of the skins of the prunes is typical and may be black, blue - black, or reddish brown; and that not more than 5 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to carmelization or fermentation.

- (b) **"B" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes possess a reasonably uniform, typical color a score of 15 to 17 points may be given. **Reasonably uniform, typical color** means that the color of the skins of the prunes is typical and may be black, blue - black, or reddish brown; and that not more than 10 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to caramelization or fermentation.
- (c) **"C" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes possess a fairly uniform, fairly good typical color, a score of 12 to 14 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall 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 uniform, fairly good typical color** means that the skins of the prunes may vary in shades of typical colors and that not more than 15 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to caramelization or fermentation.
- (d) **"D" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that are definitely off color for any reason or that otherwise fail to meet requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 11 points and shall not be graded above U. S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product (this is a limiting rule).

**§52.5611 Uniformity of size.**

- (a) **"A" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that are practically uniform in size may be given a score of 14 or 15 points. **Practically uniform in size** means that the weight of the largest prune may not exceed the weight of the smallest prune by more than 75 percent.
- (b) **"B" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes are reasonably uniform in size, a score of 12 or 13 points may be given. **Reasonably uniform in size** means that the weight of the largest prune may not be more than twice the weight of the smallest prune.
- (c) **"C" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that vary in size may be given a score of 10 or 11 points.



**§52.5612 Absence of defects.**

- (a) Definitions of defects.** The factor of absence of defects refers to the degree of freedom from the following:
- (1)** Prunes that possess growth cracks, splits, breaks in the skin, or skin damage of the following descriptions:
    - (i)** Calloused growth cracks aggregating more than 3/8 inch in length.
    - (ii)** Splits or breaks not having calloused edges when the flesh is mashed out beyond the protecting skin so as to affect materially the normal appearance of the prunes.
    - (iii)** Any cracks, splits, or breaks open to the pit.
    - (iv)** Skin damage caused by overdipping, rain, processing or other causes which materially affects the appearance of the prunes.
  - (2)** Prunes that possess area of scab of the following descriptions:
    - (i)** Tough or thick scab exceeding in the aggregate the area of a circle 3/8 inch in diameter.
    - (ii)** Scab of other character exceeding in the aggregate the area of a circle 3/4 inch in diameter
  - (3)** Prunes that are so affected by burning or scorching in the sun, or in dehydration, as to damage materially the skin or flesh.
  - (4)** Prunes that are damaged by insect injury or other similar defects.
  - (5)** **Tough or thick scab** means thick leathery area on the skin frequently formed as the result of thrip injury, mildew, leaf chafing, limb rubs, or other means. Such scab is to be distinguished from **scab of other character** which is more or less inconsequential and practically blends in color with the skin on the portion of the prune not affected.

- (6) **Damaged by insect injury** means healed or unhealed surface blemishes, and healed or unhealed blemishes in the flesh which materially affect the appearance, edibility, or keeping quality of the fruit but which do not possess evidence of insect infestation.
- (7) **Damaged by other similar defects** means any injury or defect or group of defects not mentioned herein which materially affect the appearance, edibility, or keeping quality of the fruit.
- (b) **"A" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that are practically free from defects may be given a score of 27 to 30 points. **Practically free from defects** means that there may be present not more than 5 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or any combination of defects mentioned in paragraph (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section. One prune that is defective is permitted if it exceeds 5 percent by count.
- (c) **"B" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes are reasonably free from defects, a score of 22 to 26 points may be given. **Reasonably free from defects** means that there may be present not more than 10 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or any combination of defects mentioned in paragraph (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section. One prune that is defective is permitted if it exceeds 10 percent by count.
- (d) **"C" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes are fairly free from defects, a score of 17 to 21 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U. S. Grade C or U. S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product. **Fairly free from defects** means that there may be present not more than 15 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or combination of defects mentioned in paragraph (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section.
- (e) **"D" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section, may be given a score of 0 to 16 points and shall not be graded above U. S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product.

**§52.5613 Character of fruit.**

- (a) **"A" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that possess a good, tender, fleshy texture may be given a score of 31 to 35 points. **Good tender, fleshy texture** means that the prunes are thick - fleshed; that not more than 5 percent by count of prunes have fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 10 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture. One prune that possesses a tough skin, is soft, or is hard, is permitted, if one prune exceeds 5 percent or 10 percent by count.
- (b) **"B" Classification.** If canned dried prunes possess a reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture, a score of 26 to 30 points may be given. **Reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture** means that the prunes are reasonably thick - fleshed; that not more than 10 percent by count of prunes may have fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 15 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture.
- (c) **"C" Classification.** If the canned dried prunes possess a fairly good texture, a score of 21 to 25 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U. S. Grade C or U. S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product. **Fairly good texture** means that the prunes may vary in thickness and texture of flesh or may possess fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 20 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture.
- (d) **"D" Classification.** Canned dried prunes that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of 0 to 20 points and shall not be graded above U. S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product.

**§52.5614 Explanation of terms.**

- (a) **24° Brix** means that the packing medium surrounding the fruit tests 24 degrees when tested with a Brix spindle, or hydrometer, or with refractometer, read at the proper temperature for the instrument used.
- (b) **Normal canned dried prune flavor** means that the product is free from objectionable odors or objectionable flavors of any kind.

**§52.5615 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.**

The grade of a lot of canned dried prunes 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).

**§52.5616 Score sheet for canned dried prunes.**

Number size and kind of container .....  
 Container mark or identification .....  
 Label .....  
 Net weight (ounces) .....  
 Vacuum (inches) .....  
 Drained weight (ounces) .....  
 Sirup (Degree Brix) .....  
 Type .....  
 Count .....

Factors	Score points		
			(A)
Color .....	20	(B)	15 - 17
		(C)	12 - 14 <u>1/</u>
		(D)	0 - 11
		(A)	14 - 15
Uniformity of size .....	15	(B)	12 - 13
		(C)	10 - 11
		(A)	27 - 30
Absence of defects .....	30	(B)	22 - 26
		(C)	17 - 21 <u>1/</u>
		(D)	0 - 16 <u>1/</u>
		(A)	31 - 35
Character .....	<u>35</u>	(B)	26 - 30
		(C)	21 - 25 <u>1/</u>
		(D)	0 - 20 <u>1/</u>
		(A)	18 - 20
Total score .....	100		

Grade .....  
 Flavor .....

1/ Indicates limiting rules within classification.

The U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes as herein amended, shall become effective May 12, 1976, and thereupon will supersede the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes which have been in effect since May 24, 1967.

Dated: April 6, 1976

/s/  
 Donald E> Wilkinson  
 Administrator  
 Agricultural Marketing Service