



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

**Agricultural  
Marketing  
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**Fruit and  
Vegetable  
Division**

**Fresh  
Products  
Branch**

# **United States Standards for Grades of Snap Beans**

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# United States Standards for Grades of Snap Beans<sup>1</sup>

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## **General**

### **§51.3829 General.**

These standards can be applied to all beans used in their entirety as opposed to shelled beans, and includes types such as snap, pole, and wax beans. These standards do not apply to types such as fava, Lima, pinto or calico beans.

## **Grades**

### **§51.3830 U.S. Fancy.**

"U.S. Fancy" consists of beans of similar varietal characteristics which are of reasonable and fairly uniform size, well formed, bright, clean, fresh, young and tender, firm, and which are free from soft rot and free from damage caused by leaves, leafstems, other foreign matter, hail, disease, insects or mechanical or other means. (See §51.3835.)

### **§51.3831 U.S. No. 1.**

"U.S. No. 1" consists of beans of similar varietal characteristics which are of reasonable size, fairly well formed, fairly bright, fresh, fairly young and tender, firm, and which are free from soft rot

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<sup>1</sup>Packing of the product in conformity with the requirements 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.

and free from damage caused by dirt, leaves, leafstems, other foreign matter, hail, disease, insects or mechanical or other means. (See §51.3835.)

**§51.3832 [Reserved]**

**§51.3833 U.S. No. 2.**

"U.S. No. 2" consists of beans of similar varietal characteristics which are fairly fresh, firm, not overmature, and which are free from soft rot and free from serious damage caused by dirt, leaves, leafstems, other foreign matter, hail, disease, insects or mechanical or other means. (See §51.3835.)

**§51.3834 [Reserved]**

**Tolerances**

**§51.3835 Tolerances.**

In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling in each of the foregoing grades, the following tolerances, by weight, are provided as specified:

- (a) U.S. Fancy. Ten percent for beans in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade, including not more than 3 percent damage by broken beans. Additionally, within the 10 percent tolerance, not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein, not more than 1 percent for beans affected by soft rot.
- (b) U.S. No. 1. Thirteen percent for beans in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade, including not more than 10 percent damage by grade defects other than damage by broken beans, including not more than 5 percent shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage, including therein, not more than 1 percent for beans affected by soft rot.
- (c) U.S. No. 2. Fifteen percent for beans in any lot which fail to meet the requirements of the grade, including not more than 10 percent serious damage by grade defects other than serious damage by broken beans, including therein, not more than 1 percent for beans affected by soft rot.

**Application of Tolerances**

**§51.3836 Application of tolerances.**

The contents of individual packages in the lot are subject to the following limitations:

- (a) For tolerances of 10 percent or more, individual packages may contain not more than one and one-half times the tolerances specified: **Provided**, That the average for the entire lot is within the tolerance specified for the grade.
- (b) For a tolerance of less than 10 percent, individual packages may contain not more than double the tolerance specified: **Provided**, That the average for the entire lot is within the tolerance specified for the grade.

**Definitions**

**§51.3837 Similar varietal characteristics.**

"Similar varietal characteristics" means that the beans are of the same color and general type. For example, wax and green beans, or Snap and Pole beans may not be mixed.

**§51.3838 Reasonable size.**

"Reasonable size" means that the pods are not spindly or excessively short for the variety and have not been prematurely picked.

**§51.3839 Well formed.**

"Well formed" means that the pods have the normal typical shape for the variety.

**§51.3840 Firm.**

"Firm" means that the pods are not wilted or flabby.

**§51.3841 Damage.**

(a) "Damage" means any defect, or any combination of defects, which materially detracts from the appearance, or the edible or marketing quality of the snap bean. Pods having spots due to Blight or Anthracnose, and similar spots caused by other diseases, shall be considered as damaged.

(b) Broken beans shall be considered as damage when:

- (1) There is one break present in the thick portion of the bean or one break at each end in the thin portion of the bean;
- (2) Any break that is materially affected by dirt or discoloration;
- (3) Any break that is ragged and materially detracts from the appearance; or
- (4) Unless otherwise specified, the remaining portion of the bean is less than 3-1/2 inches in length (5-1/2 inches for pole type beans).

**§51.3842 Fairly well formed.**

"Fairly well formed" means that the pods are not badly crooked, curled, twisted, or otherwise badly misshapen for the variety. Excessively tapered pods caused by unfavorable pollinating or growing conditions shall not be considered as fairly well formed.

**§51.3843 Overmature.**

"Overmature" means that the walls of the pods are distinctly woody or fibrous.

**§51.3844 Serious damage.**

(a) "Serious damage" means any defect, or any combination of defects, which seriously detracts from the appearance, or the edible or marketing quality of the snap bean.

(b) Broken beans shall be considered as serious damage when:

- (1) There is a break on each end in the thick portion of the bean;
- (2) Any break is seriously affected by dirt or discoloration;
- (3) Any break is ragged and seriously detracts from the appearance or exposes a seed; or
- (4) Unless otherwise specified, the remaining portion of the bean is less than 3 inches in length (5 inches for pole type beans).