

PUBLICATION 1500 REVISED 1975

JUN 09 1975



GUIDE TO

food grades

630.4
C212
P 1500
1975
c.3



Agriculture
Canada

Look for the Grade Mark Symbol of Quality

Inspection of graded foods is carefully carried out by inspectors of federal and provincial departments of agriculture. If a consumer buys food that appears to be below the grade designated, the product can be returned to the person from whom it was bought, or, in larger cities, the complaint can be reported to a Department of Agriculture inspector.

Many food products sold in Canadian retail stores are graded on the basis of quality according to standards established by federal and provincial legislation. The grade mark appears on the container or product. The word "CANADA" in a grade name means that the product has been graded according to federal standards which are enforced by Canada Department of Agriculture inspectors.

Grades apply to butter, cheddar cheese, skim milk powder, meat, poultry, eggs, fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, honey and maple syrup.

This booklet explains the meaning of federal grades and tells to what extent graded foods are available.

GUIDE TO food grades

- 
- 2 Dairy Products
 - 2 Butter
 - 2 Cheese
 - 3 Skim Milk Powder
 - 3 Beef, Veal, Lamb and Pork
 - 5 Poultry
 - 7 Eggs
 - 8 Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
 - 11 Processed Fruits and Vegetables
 - 12 Canned Fruits and Vegetables
 - 13 Fruit and Vegetable Juices
 - 14 Frozen Fruits and Vegetables
 - 14 Dehydrated and Dried Fruits and Vegetables
 - 14 Honey
 - 15 Maple Syrup

DAIRY PRODUCTS



Butter

Creamery butter sold in Canada in prints at the retail level must carry the grade mark on the main panel of the wrapper or carton in which the butter is sold. It must be sold in standard packages of $\frac{1}{4}$ pound, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound, 1 pound or multiples of 1 pound.

No fat other than milkfat may be used in the manufacture of butter. Butter must contain a minimum of 80% fat. Uniformity of color is maintained by the permitted use of an approved food color.

GRADES

Flavor, texture and color are the main characteristics used to determine the grade. Usually only Canada First Grade butter is available in retail stores.

CANADA FIRST GRADE — Highest quality. Excellent flavor, well made, waxy texture, uniform in color.

CANADA SECOND GRADE — Slightly lower in quality. Seldom found on the retail shelves, usually sold for processing or cooking purposes.

CANADA THIRD GRADE and BELOW CANADA THIRD GRADE — Rarely sold on the retail market, usually sold for use in processing.

Cheese

Although grade names for cheddar cheese are the same as for butter, it is not required that the grade name be stated on the package. Practically all cheddar cheese is of Canada First Grade quality

and is carefully selected for retail use.

According to flavor and texture developed by aging, prepackaged cheddar cheese at the retail level is usually marked "mild," "medium" or "old." Packages may be any weight but the net weight must be shown.

Skim Milk Powder

Skim milk powder sold at the retail level is Canada First Grade. The powder must meet definite standards of composition and quality.

Skim milk powder may be sold in packages of $\frac{1}{4}$ pound, $\frac{1}{2}$ pound, 1 pound or multiples of 1 pound. When reconstituted, 1 pound skim milk powder makes 4 quarts skim milk.

BEEF, VEAL, LAMB AND PORK



Before fresh meat is graded it must have passed health inspection. Health inspection is also mandatory for all meat for interprovincial, foreign or import trade, and for meat used in making sausages, wieners and other prepared or canned meats.

A round "Canada Approved" or "Canada" inspection stamp is applied to all carcasses after they have been health inspected by federal government veterinarians. This stamp — not to be mistaken for a grade mark — is the consumer's assurance that meat is wholesome and has been dressed under sanitary conditions. Edible dyes are used for stamps and grade marks.

Grades on fresh meats are not always evident to the consumer in retail stores.

Beef

Most beef from packing plants under federal health inspection is graded by a federal livestock grading inspector. After a beef carcass has been graded and stamped by the grader, the packer applies a ribbon brand indicating the grade and, for Canada A, the fat level. The ribbon brands are applied to all graded carcasses at the time of grading, at the point of slaughter and under the general supervision of the government grading inspector.

The ribbon brand indicates quality grade and fat level for Canada A in red ink; and quality grade only for Canada B in blue ink, Canada C in brown ink and Canada D in black ink. These national ribbon brands are applied in such a manner that they appear on each wholesale and most retail cuts.

GRADES

Canada A grade is from youthful animals. The lean has bright-red color, slight marbling and a texture that is firm and fine grained.

CANADA A is classified into four fat levels according to carcass weight by the government grading inspectors in the packing plant. These are determined by actual measurement of external fat at the rib eye between the 11th and 12th ribs. Canada A1 has the minimum level of fat and A4 has the highest.

CANADA B is from youthful animals. The lean ranges from bright red to medium-dark red. The texture of the flesh may be somewhat coarse with no minimum marbling standards. This grade is divided into four fat levels according to carcass weight.

CANADA C, CLASS 1 is from animals of youthful to intermediate age. The lean may range in color from bright red to medium-dark red. The fat may range from white to pale yellow.

CANADA C, CLASS 2 is from animals of youthful to intermediate age. The texture of the flesh may be coarse, the color from bright red to dark red. The fat may range from white to lemon yellow, and from firm to soft.

CANADA D is from mature cows and steers. Classes 1 to 4 are divided according to muscle development and quality, with D4 having the lowest proportion of lean meat to bone. D4 also includes excessively fat carcasses.

Veal, Lamb and Pork

Grade standards are established for veal and lamb, and the carcasses can be grade-stamped for consumer acceptance. Pork carcasses are graded for producer payment only.

POULTRY



Poultry must be graded for sale in retail stores in most major cities in Canada, as well as for inter-provincial and export trade. Imported dressed and eviscerated poultry must conform to Canadian grade standards although the word "Canada" does not appear in the grade mark.

GRADES

Grade names are the same for chickens, capons,

fowl, turkeys, ducks and geese. The grade mark is printed on a metal breast tag, transparent bag or label insert. A different color designates each grade. Turkeys, ducks and geese must also be marked as "young" or "mature."

CANADA GRADE A (RED) — The quality most commonly available on the retail market. Formed normally and well fattened and fleshed. May have a slightly crooked keel bone, minor discolorations, and a few pinfeathers and short tears in the skin. Chickens have fat showing over breast and thighs. Broiler turkeys, or young turkeys weighing less than 10 pounds (eviscerated weight), have a moderate covering of fat over breast, thighs and back; turkeys weighing more than this have breast and thighs reasonably well covered with fat and a moderate covering of fat over the back; less fat is required on birds over 16 pounds. Fowl, ducks and geese have breast, thighs and back reasonably well covered with fat.

CANADA GRADE B (BLUE) — Formed normally but may have a slightly crooked keel bone. Not as well fleshed and fattened as Canada Grade A birds. A few short skin tears, minor discolorations and pinfeathers that do not seriously detract from the appearance of the bird are allowed.

CANADA GRADE UTILITY (BLUE) — Must at least qualify for Canada Grade B, but one or more parts of the bird may be missing.

CANADA GRADE C (YELLOW) — Fairly well fleshed. May have large skin tears, pinfeathers and prominent discolorations.

HEALTH INSPECTION

A "Canada Approved" or "Canada" health inspection stamp appears only on poultry that is slaughtered and eviscerated in federally inspected plants. Inspection is compulsory only when poultry moves interprovincially or is imported or exported.

EGGS



Eggs are sold by grade in all provinces. The grade (including sizes for Canada A1 and A eggs) must be shown within the maple leaf on cartons and bulk displays in retail stores.

GRADES

All grades must be free from discolored yolks and blood spots. Canada A is the grade most usually available in retail stores.

CANADA A1 — Eggs are clean, normal in shape, with sound shells and finest interior quality. Yolks are round and compact, and surrounded by very thick dense albumen. Cold-storage eggs are not permitted in this grade.

CANADA A — Eggs are practically clean, practically normal in shape, with sound shells. Yolks are fairly well rounded and surrounded by thick albumen.

SIZES FOR CANADA A1 and A

Extra Large Size — Each egg weighs at least 2¼ ounces.

Large Size — Each egg weighs at least 2 ounces.

Medium Size — Each egg weighs at least 1¾ ounces

but less than 2 ounces.

Small Size — Each egg weighs at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces but less than $1\frac{3}{4}$ ounces.

Peewee Size (Canada A only) — Each egg weighs less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces.

CANADA B — Eggs are reasonably clean, slightly abnormal in shape, with sound shells. Yolks are moderately oblong, slightly flattened and enlarged, and surrounded by albumen less firm than in Canada A. Each egg weighs at least $1\frac{3}{4}$ ounces. (For poaching and frying, Canada A1 and A eggs are usually more satisfactory than Canada B.)

CANADA C — Processing grade for commercial frozen, liquid and dried egg products. Sizes are not specified. May include cracked eggs.

Grade Cracks — Provincial grade in some provinces. Sizes are not specified. Shell is cracked but contents are not leaking.

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Most fresh fruits and vegetables grown in commercial quantities in Canada are sold by grade and are marked with a "Canada" grade name. Those fruits and vegetables for which grades are established must meet Canadian import requirements before being imported into Canada. Certain fruits and vegetables intended for interprovincial or export trade must be inspected.

Not all provinces require grading of the same fruits and vegetables sold within a province, though all have regulations covering some. Provincial grades

are similar to federal grades.

Fruits and vegetables in packages bearing a "Canada" grade name must be in containers standardized as to size or weight. Besides a grade name, other information must be shown: name and address of packer, variety (apples and pears), number in box or carton (apples, peaches and pears), net weight, and size range in the case of certain vegetables.

Bulk displays of apples in retail stores must also indicate the variety when a grade is marked.

In general, fresh fruits and vegetables are graded according to uniformity of size and shape, color, maturity, cleanliness and freedom from disease and other injury.

GRADES (FRESH FRUITS)

APPLES

Canada Extra Fancy

Canada Fancy

Canada Commercial, Canada Cee or Canada "C"

Apples must have a minimum diameter of $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches to meet federal grade standards. In some provinces, apples in the size range of 2 to $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches may be sold if they have Extra Fancy color.

APRICOTS, CRABAPPLES, CRANBERRIES, GRAPES, PEACHES, PLUMS, PRUNES, RHUBARB

Canada No. 1

Canada Domestic

BLUEBERRIES, CANTALOUPE, STRAWBERRIES

Canada No. 1

CHERRIES

Canada No. 1

Canada Domestic

Canada Orchard Run

PEARS

Canada Extra Fancy

Canada Fancy or Canada No. 1

Canada Commercial, Canada Cee, Canada "C" or

Canada Domestic

GRADES (FRESH VEGETABLES)

ASPARAGUS, BEETS, BRUSSELS SPROUTS, CABBAGE, CAULIFLOWER, CUCUMBERS, HEAD LETTUCE, NEW POTATOES, TOMATOES

Canada No. 1

Canada No. 2

CARROTS, PARSNIPS

Canada No. 1, and Canada No. 1 Cut Crowns

Canada No. 2

CELERY

Canada No. 1, and Canada No. 1 Heart

Canada No. 2

ONIONS

Canada No. 1, and Canada No. 1 Pickling

Canada No. 2

POTATOES

Canada No. 1, and Canada No. 1 Large

Canada No. 2

Sizes of potatoes are specified as follows:

Grade

Diameter in inches

Canada No. 1

—round varieties

2¼ to 3½

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Diameter in inches</i>
—long varieties	2 to 3½
—new potatoes until Sept. 16 each year (both round and long varieties)	1⅞ to 3½
Canada No. 1 Large	3 to 4½
Canada No. 2 (75% must have at least 2-inch diameter)	1¾ to 4½

RUTABAGAS, SWEET CORN

Canada No. 1

PROCESSED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Most processed fruits and vegetables are sold by grade in Canada and about 95 percent are packed in plants registered by the federal government.

Imported canned, frozen or dehydrated fruits or vegetables must meet the federal grade standards if grades are established for the product. They are not permitted to carry the word "Canada" as part of their grade name when sold in original containers. The name of the country of origin must appear on labels.

Grade marks must be shown on the main part of labels. The volume of each can, in fluid ounces and/or millilitres, must also be shown.

Some canned vegetables such as peas or beans may be graded and marked with a size, or marked "Assorted Sizes" or "Mixed Sizes" if ungraded as to size.

The sugar added to canned or frozen fruit must be declared on the label as percentage of syrup or as dry sugar. When fruits or juices are packed without sugar, the words "No Sugar Added" or "Unsweetened" must appear on labels, except Apple Juice.

Jams, jellies, pickles and similar processed fruits and vegetable products are not graded but standards to specify what these may contain have been established by the federal Department of Agriculture.

Canned Fruits and Vegetables

Canned fruits and vegetables are packed in containers standardized to contain 10, 14, 19, 28, 48 and 100 fluid ounces. Special sizes are allowed for asparagus, whole-kernel and vacuum-packed corn, corn on the cob, fruit and vegetable juices, baby foods, tomato paste and sweet potatoes.

GRADES

CANADA FANCY — Highest grade, as nearly perfect as possible. Packed from sound, clean fruit or vegetables at perfect maturity. Free from blemishes, of good color and uniform in size. Clear liquid. Suitable for use where uniformity of size and color is important.

CANADA CHOICE — Slight variation in size, color and maturity allowed, but must be packed from fruit or vegetables which are sound, clean and almost free from blemishes and other defects. Fairly clear liquid. Suitable for use where flavor and tenderness are desired but perfect uniformity in size and color is not important.

CANADA STANDARD — Prepared from good, flavorful products not necessarily of uniform size. For use where appearance is not the most important consideration. Fruit of this grade is good for puddings, gelatin desserts or frozen dishes; vegetables are good for soups or scalloped dishes.

SUB-STANDARD — A low quality product packed from clean, sound fruit and vegetables which need not be uniform in maturity, color or size. This grade is not regularly found in retail stores.

Fruit and Vegetable Juices

Fruit or vegetable “juice” must consist of fruit or vegetable juice only. The addition of salt or sugar must be declared on the label.

GRADES FOR TOMATO JUICE

CANADA FANCY — Flavor of well-ripened tomatoes. Very good red color and optimum consistency. Virtually free from particles of skin, seeds and minute pieces of core.

CANADA CHOICE — Flavor of well-ripened tomatoes. Good color and good consistency. Almost free from particles of skin, seeds and minute pieces of core.

GRADES FOR APPLE JUICE

CANADA FANCY — Very good apple flavor and meets highest composition standards.

CANADA CHOICE — Good apple flavor and meets good composition standards.

When apple juice is vitaminized, it must contain not less than 35 mg ascorbic acid per 100 ml (about 3½ oz) of juice at any time within 12 months of being packed.

Frozen Fruits and Vegetables

GRADES

CANADA FANCY — Highest grade, optimum quality, as nearly perfect as possible.

CANADA CHOICE — Good flavor. Not as perfect in appearance as Canada Fancy product; color, size and maturity are less uniform.

Dehydrated and Dried Fruits and Vegetables

Standards are established for maximum allowable moisture and preservative content. Dried product is allowed to contain more moisture than dehydrated product.

Maximum bacterial levels are prescribed for dehydrated vegetables.

GRADES

Canada Fancy and Canada Choice grades are prescribed for dried and dehydrated apples, dried blueberries and dehydrated vegetables.

HONEY

Honey is sold in comb, granulated (or creamed) and liquid form. Comb honey is not graded. If honey that will remain liquid is desired, look for the word "Liquid" on the label or lid.

Honey in retail containers must be graded and classified as to color in most provinces and when shipped from one province to another.

Honey labeled "Pasteurized" keeps indefinitely as it has been heat-treated to destroy yeasts that cause fermentation. It is usually sold in the creamed form but some pasteurized liquid honey is available.

COLOR CLASSES

Color does not affect grade but is an indication of flavor; usually the darker the honey, the stronger the flavor. There are four classes: White, Golden, Amber and Dark.

GRADES

Usually the only graded honey available in retail stores is Canada No. 1.

CANADA NO. 1 — Good flavor. Free from foreign material. Has good keeping quality. Best grade for table use.

CANADA NO. 2 — Good flavor. May have traces of pollen or wax. Keeping quality not necessarily as good as for Canada No. 1.

CANADA NO. 3 — May not have as good flavor as higher grades and may not keep as well. May show some pollen or wax particles.

Honey that is wholesome but fails to meet Canada No. 3 requirements is marked "Sub Standard."

➔ MAPLE SYRUP

The sale of maple syrup by grade is not compulsory in Canada except in the province of Quebec. Federal government legislation prohibits adulteration of

maple products. The label must be marked "Maple Syrup" if it is a pure maple product, and must carry the name and address of the packer.* The container must be marked with the net weight. Maple syrup must weigh at least 13 lb 2 oz per gallon.

When pure maple syrup is sold by grade it must meet the requirements for composition and labeling and the grade mark must be shown on the label.

GRADES

CANADA FANCY — Very light amber. Delicate flavor. No trace of fermentation.

CANADA LIGHT — Light amber. Stronger flavor than Canada Fancy. No trace of fermentation.

CANADA MEDIUM — Dark amber. Stronger flavor than Canada Light. No trace of fermentation.

CANADA DARK — Dark. May have a trace of fermentation.

Quebec has an additional grade, "Amber C," between Canada Medium and Canada Dark.

*The label on artificial maple products must be marked "artificially maple flavored," and must name the ingredients, the manufacturer, and his address.

METRIC EQUIVALENTS FOR COMMON CANADIAN HOUSEHOLD MEASURES

VOLUME

1 quart (40 fluid ounces)	1137	millilitres	1.14 litre
1 pint (20 fluid ounces)	568	millilitres	
1 cup (8 U.S. fluid ounces) *	237	millilitres	
1 tablespoon	15	millilitres	
1 teaspoon	5	millilitres	
1 fluid ounce	28.4	millilitres	

WEIGHT

1 pound	454	grams
1 ounce	28.3	grams

LENGTH

12 inches	30.5	centimetres
1 inch	2.54	centimetres

TEMPERATURE

°F	°C	°F	°C	°F	°C	°F	°C
0	-18	130	54	170	77	300	149
32	0	135	57	175	80	325	163
40	4	140	60	180	82	350	177
50	10	145	63	185	85	375	191
70	21	150	65	190	88	400	204
80	27	155	68	212	100	425	218
120	49	160	71	250	121	450	232
125	52	165	74	275	135	475	246

* Most measuring cups are in U.S. fluid ounces.

Copies of this publication may be obtained from
INFORMATION DIVISION
CANADA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OTTAWA
K1A 0C7

© INFORMATION CANADA, OTTAWA, 1975

Printed 1972

Revised 1975

This publication replaces Publication
1305, *Buy by Grade*

50M-38017-5:75
Cat. No. A73-1500



