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# BUY BY GRADE

*Consumer's Guide to Buying Graded Foods*

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# Buy by Grade

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

This booklet explains the meaning of these grades, tells to what extent graded foods are available and gives suggestions for using the various qualities.

## Beef

Beef is the only meat which as yet may be generally purchased by grade. Most beef of choice and good quality is graded and ribbon branded. Grading is not compulsory except in B.C. in the greater Vancouver area. All beef graded in Canada must first be health inspected.

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**Look for the Grade Mark**  
**Symbol of Quality.**

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The grade name is included in the ribbon brand in red for Canada Choice, blue for Canada Good and brown for Canada Standard. The wording within the brand may vary between different establishments but the color always indicates the quality. The ribbon brand runs the full length of the side so that a section of the grade mark should appear on each retail cut.

## Grades

**CANADA CHOICE** (Red Brand)—comes from choice quality beef with a high proportion of meat to bone; it has a good covering of fat and the lean is well marbled.

**CANADA GOOD** (Blue Brand)—comes from good quality beef; it has a slightly lower proportion of meat to bone and less fat than Canada Choice beef.

**CANADA STANDARD** (Brown Brand)—has a lower proportion of fat to lean meat than Canada Good.

**CANADA COMMERCIAL**—has a lower proportion of meat to bone than Canada Standard and the proportion of fat may vary.

Most of the Choice and Good grades and a small percentage of Standard and Commercial grades are branded.

## Look for the Health Inspection Stamp

The round, brown, Canada Approved Stamp appears on all carcasses of meat which have been government inspected. This stamp—not to be



mistaken for a grade mark—is the consumer's assurance that the meat is wholesome and has been dressed under sanitary conditions. Edible dyes are used for grade marks and stamps. All beef for interprovincial, foreign or import trade must be health inspected.

## Butter

### Look for the Grade Mark

All creamery butter sold in Canada is graded.

The grade mark must be shown on the main panel of the wrapper and carton in which the butter is sold.

All creamery butter cut and wrapped must be sold in weights of  $\frac{1}{4}$  pound,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound, one pound or multiples of one pound.

### Grades

**CANADA FIRST GRADE**—highest quality, excellent flavor, well made, smooth, waxy texture, uniform in color.

**CANADA SECOND GRADE**—usually imperfect in flavor; may be defective in texture or uneven in color.

**CANADA THIRD GRADE**—inferior to Second Grade in flavor, texture, or color.

**BELOW CANADA THIRD GRADE**—lowest quality.

# **Cheese**

Cheese is not sold by grade in retail stores. However, practically all Cheddar cheese is graded at cheese warehouses and most of this is Canada First Grade. Only Cheddar cheese over 20 pounds in weight shipped interprovincially or for export trade must be graded. Inspectors of the Canada Department of Agriculture continually check the composition of all cheese wherever it is sold.

In retail stores, Cheddar cheese is sold according to age as "mild", "medium" or "old".

## **Skim Milk Powder**

All instant skim milk powder packaged and sold in retail stores in Canada is graded and marked Canada First Grade. It is sold in one, three, five, ten, twelve and twenty pound packages.

## **Eggs**

### **Look for the Grade Mark**

Egg grading is in effect in every province in Canada.

Containers of shell eggs for sale to consumers must be marked with the grade name. With split-type cartons the grade must be marked on each half-dozen section.

## Grades

**CANADA GRADE A1**—clean, normal in shape, sound shell and of the finest interior quality.

—yolk is round and compact, surrounded by very thick dense albumen.

—not always available in retail outlets.

**CANADA GRADE A**—practically clean, practically normal in shape, sound shell which may show rough areas and be slightly ridged.

—yolk is fairly well rounded, surrounded by thick albumen.

—suitable for poaching, cooking in the shell, frying, scrambling and omelets.

### Sizes for Grades A and A1

**Extra Large size**—27 ounces per dozen or over (each egg shall weigh  $2\frac{1}{4}$  ounces or over).

**Large size**—24 ounces per dozen or over (each egg shall weigh 2 ounces or over).

**Medium size**—21 ounces per dozen up to but not including 24 ounces per dozen (each egg shall weigh  $1\frac{3}{4}$  up to 2 ounces but not including 2 ounces).

**Small size**—18 ounces per dozen up to but not including 21 ounces per dozen (each egg shall weigh  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  ounces but not including  $1\frac{3}{4}$  ounces).

**Peewee size**—less than 18 ounces per dozen (each egg shall weigh less than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounces). *Note: This size applies to Canada Grade A only.*

**CANADA GRADE B**—reasonably clean, slightly abnormal in shape, sound shell which may show rough areas and definite ridges.

—yolk is moderately oblong, slightly flattened and enlarged, surrounded by albumen which is less firm than in Canada Grade A.

—may be used for baking and other cooking purposes.

—Canada Grade B shall weigh at the rate of 21 ounces per dozen or over (each egg shall weigh  $1\frac{3}{4}$  ounces or over).

**CANADA GRADE C**—unbroken shell, may be dirty or stained.

—shell surface and shape may be irregular.

—yolk is oblong, enlarged or flattened, surrounded by weak watery albumen.

—mainly used for commercial frozen egg products.

—no minimum or maximum weight required.

## Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Most fruits and vegetables, when shipped to another province, are subject to Canada Department of Agriculture grading, packaging, marking and inspection regulations. Those grown in commercial volume and sold within the province are subject to provincial regulations. Provincial regulations do not cover the grading



of all fruits and vegetables in every province but regulations that are established are in general similar to federal regulations.

The grade must be marked on all closed packages of fruits and vegetables and open packages of apples, celery, cantaloupes and tomatoes. Packages or containers used for fresh fruits and vegetables must meet standardized dimensions.

Potatoes, and to a lesser extent, onions and carrots, are the vegetables which the consumer most often buys by grade. Most vegetables bought by the retailer according to grade are usually sold in bulk to the consumer, without reference to grade.

## **Look for the Grade Mark**

The grade mark on fruit packages and containers must be shown on one end, on the lid or on the handle.

In the case of fresh vegetables, the grade mark must be shown on a suitable tag or on the handle, sides or ends of baskets or other containers in which they are packed.

## **Grades (Fresh Fruits)**

**APPLES:** packed in any type of container, the grades in order of quality are:

CANADA EXTRA FANCY

CANADA FANCY

CANADA COMMERCIAL or "C"

**APRICOTS:** packed in any type of container,  
the grades in order of quality are:

CANADA NO. 1

CANADA NO. 2

CANADA NO. 3

**GRAPES:** packed in any type of container, the  
grades in order of quality are:

CANADA NO. 1

CANADA NO. 2\*

**PEACHES, FRESH PRUNES, CHERRIES,  
PLUMS:** packed in any type of container, the  
grades in order of quality are:

CANADA SELECT

CANADA NO. 1

CANADA NO. 2\*

**PEARS:** packed in boxes, the grades in order of  
quality are:

CANADA EXTRA FANCY

CANADA FANCY

CANADA COMMERCIAL or "C"

When packed in other containers, such as  
baskets, etc. the grades in order of quality  
are:

CANADA NO. 1

CANADA DOMESTIC

CANADA NO. 3

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\* When packed in baskets and hampers CANADA NO. 2  
grapes and cherries may be marked CANADA DOMESTIC.

## **Grades (Fresh Vegetables)**

Generally speaking there are two grades for vegetables—CANADA No. 1 and CANADA No. 2, with an additional grade, CANADA No. 3 for onions and one grade only, CANADA No. 1, for waxed or unwaxed table turnips.

In the case of potatoes, there are CANADA FANCY, CANADA No. 1, CANADA No. 1 LARGE and CANADA No. 2. CANADA FANCY is not widely sold. Canada No. 1 is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches minimum diameter and 4 inches maximum diameter except that long shaped varieties have a minimum diameter of 2 inches. Canada No. 1 Large is similar in quality to Canada No. 1 but with a minimum diameter of  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches. Canada No. 2 has a minimum diameter of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

## **Processed Fruits and Vegetables**

Plants under registration with the Canada Department of Agriculture account for practically all fruits and vegetables processed in Canada. All products canned, frozen or dehydrated in these plants must be graded according to quality and labelled as such. The plants are inspected by Canada Department of Agriculture inspectors for sanitary conditions and the products are examined for quality. Samples of the processed food are checked by Departmental inspectors before and after the label with the grade mark is put on the can or package. When canned, frozen or dehydrated fruits and vegetables are imported they must comply with Canadian grading regulations, but do not have to carry the word "CANADA".

# Canned Fruits and Vegetables

## Standard Sizes of Cans

10 fluid oz. ....	1¼ cups*
15 fluid oz. ....	1⅞ cups
20 fluid oz. ....	2½ cups
28 fluid oz. ....	3½ cups
48 fluid oz. ....	6 cups
105 fluid oz. ....	13 cups

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\* Standard measuring cup.

Special sizes are allowed for asparagus, whole kernel, vacuum-packed corn, fruit and vegetable juices, baby foods and tomato paste.

## Look for the Grade Mark

The grade mark must be shown on the main part of the label.

The volume of the can, in fluid ounces, must be shown.

If fruit is packed in syrup or fruit juice is sweetened, the percentage of sugar used must be shown; if packed without sugar, the words, "Without Sugar" or "Unsweetened" must appear.

## Grades

**CANADA FANCY**—highest grade, as nearly perfect as possible; packed from sound, clean fruits or vegetables at perfect maturity, free from blemishes, of good color and uniform in size; liquid clear; 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 fruits or vegetables which are sound, clean and free from blemishes; liquid fairly clear; suitable for use where flavor and tenderness are desired but perfect uniformity in size and color is not important.

**CANADA STANDARD**—prepared from products of good quality but which are not necessarily of the uniform size required in higher grades; for use where appearance is not a consideration and where the higher grade would be extravagant. 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 fruits and vegetables which need not be uniform in maturity, color or size. It is not regularly found in retail stores.

Peas and beans may, in addition, be graded as to size . . . the size increasing as the number . . . 1 to 6. The size of peas does not necessarily indicate quality. If the peas and beans are not graded as to size, the label must be marked “ungraded as to size”, “assorted sizes” or “mixed sizes”.

## Fruit and Vegetable Juices

Fruit and vegetable juices cannot be sold as “juice” if water is added but must be sold by some trade or descriptive name giving the list of ingredients on the label.



## Grades for Tomato Juice

**CANADA FANCY**—has flavor of well-ripened tomatoes, good color and consistency and free from particles of skin, seeds and minute pieces of core.

**CANADA CHOICE**—has flavor of well ripened tomatoes, somewhat lighter in color, of fairly good consistency and reasonably free from particles of skin, seeds and minute pieces of core.

## Grades for Apple Juice

**CANADA FANCY**—has good flavor and characteristic color.

**CANADA CHOICE**—flavor, color reasonably good.

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

## Frozen Fruits and Vegetables

### Look for the Grade Mark

The grade mark must be shown on the main part of the label.

### Grades

**CANADA FANCY**—highest grade, as nearly perfect as possible.

**CANADA CHOICE**—not so perfect in appearance as Fancy quality but of good flavor; color, size and maturity not as uniform.

# Dehydrated Fruits and Vegetables

## Grades for Apples

CANADA FANCY  
CANADA CHOICE  
CANADA STANDARD

## Grades for Blueberries and Vegetables

CANADA FANCY  
CANADA CHOICE

## Honey

All Canadian honey shipped from one province to another is required to be graded according to federal government regulations. All honey produced in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, except honey sold at the apiary direct to the consumer, is required to be classified, graded and marked in accordance with legislation in the above mentioned provinces. These regulations are identical to those of the Canadian government.

The color classes for honey are: White, Golden, Amber and Dark.

The grades are Nos. 1, 2, 3 and Sub-Standard.

Color does not affect the grade but is an indication of flavor, for, as a general rule, the darker the honey the stronger the flavor. The grade is an indication of quality within the color classes.

Honey is sold in both granulated and liquid form. If honey that will remain liquid is desired, look for the declaration "LIQUID" on the label or lid.

## Look for the Grade Mark

When honey is graded, the grade mark along with the color classification must be shown on the container.

## Grades

**No. 1**—good flavor, free from foreign material and has good keeping qualities.  
—best grade for table use.

**No. 2**—may have traces of pollen or wax.  
—the keeping quality is not necessarily as good as No. 1 but the honey is of good flavor.

**No. 3**—may not be of such good flavor and may show some pollen or wax particles.  
—may have poorer keeping qualities than higher grades.

*SUB-STANDARD*—shall be wholesome and fit for food but may show excess pollen and wax particles on the surface. It may be off-flavor to some extent or may be more or less seriously damaged from the standpoint of appearance or shipping quality.

"Pasteurized" honey has been treated by the controlled application of heat to a point where all yeasts responsible for fermentation are destroyed. For this reason, it will keep indefinitely. It is packed in plants registered with

and operating under the supervision of the Canada Department of Agriculture. Unless declared "LIQUID", pasteurized honey will be crystallized and of a uniform, fine texture. Pasteurized honey is labelled as such.

## Jam and Jellies

The contents of the jam or jelly must be shown on the label. If coloring, pectin, corn syrup or a permitted preservative is added, it must be declared on the label.

When jams and jellies are sold in glass, tin or waxed paper containers, the contents in fluid ounces must be marked in the glass or on the label of the tin or waxed paper container.

### Standard Sizes of Containers

2½ fluid oz. ....	3 oz. net weight
6 fluid oz. ....	½ lb. net weight
9 fluid oz. ....	¾ lb. net weight
12 fluid oz. ....	1 lb. net weight
24 fluid oz. ....	2 lb. net weight
48 fluid oz. ....	4 lb. net weight

**PURE JAM**—contains sugar and a specified amount of named fruit. A very small amount of acid or pectin may be added to make up any deficiency of natural acid or pectin in some fruits.

**JAM WITH ADDED PECTIN**—contains sugar, a specified amount of named fruit and a considerable amount of pectin. Coloring or a permitted preservative may be added but must be declared on the label.

**APPLE AND . . . . JAM**—contains sugar and a specified amount of the other fruit and apple

pulp. Pectin, glucose, corn syrup, coloring or permitted preservative may be added but must be declared on the label.

**PURE JELLY**—contains a named fruit juice plus sugar.

**JELLY WITH ADDED PECTIN**—must contain not less than 32% of named fruit juice. Pectin, coloring and a permitted preservative may be added but must be declared on the label.

## 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 and forbids the use of “maple” in the description of a syrup, sugar, butter, cream or taffy which is not a pure maple product.

The container must be marked with the net weight. Maple syrup must weigh at least 13 lb. 2 oz. per gallon.

### Look for the Grade Mark

If sold by grade, the grade mark must be shown on the label.

### Grades

**CANADA FANCY**—

very light amber ..... delicate flavor.

**CANADA LIGHT**—

light amber ..... stronger flavor.

**CANADA MEDIUM**—

dark amber ..... stronger flavor.

**CANADA DARK**—

dark ..... may have a trace of fermentation.



# Poultry

The sale of poultry by grade is compulsory in Victoria, Vancouver, New Westminster, Duncan, Nanaimo; Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge; Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yorkton, North Battleford, Swift Current, Weyburn; Winnipeg; Toronto, Ottawa; Montreal, Quebec; Halifax, Dartmouth; Charlottetown, Summerside. In addition, poultry is sold by grade in most other cities and larger towns.

## Look for the Grade Mark

The grade mark appears on the breast of the bird and is placed either on a metal tag, insert or on a transparent lithographed bag.

A different color is used to designate each grade.

In grading dressed and eviscerated poultry, the following factors are considered—conformation, fleshing, fat and dressing.

## Grades for Chickens, Chicken Capons, Fowl, Turkeys, Ducks, Geese

**CANADA GRADE SPECIAL** (Purple)—top quality, normally formed, very well fleshed; chicken has fat showing generally over breast, thighs and back; young turkeys weighing 8 pounds or less, eviscerated, have breast, thighs and back reasonably well covered with fat; turkeys weigh-

ing more than 8 pounds, eviscerated, and other poultry, have the breast, thighs and back well covered with fat; relatively free from discoloration, tears and pinfeathers. This grade is not always available in retail outlets.

**CANADA GRADE A (Red)**—normally formed and well fleshed; a slightly curved keel bone is permitted; chicken has fat showing over breast and thighs; young turkeys weighing 8 pounds or less, eviscerated, have fat showing over breast, thighs and back; turkeys weighing more than 8 pounds, eviscerated, have the breast and thighs reasonably well covered with fat and moderate covering of fat over the back; other poultry reasonably well covered with fat. A few small tears, minor discoloration and a small number of pinfeathers are allowed.

**CANADA GRADE B (Blue)**—normally formed but may have a slightly crooked keel bone; not as well fleshed and fattened as Canada Grade A birds. Moderate sized tears, relatively minor discoloration 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 tears, pinfeathers, and prominent discoloration.

The Canada Approved health inspection stamp appears only on poultry which is slaughtered and eviscerated in federally inspected

plants. Inspection is compulsory only when poultry moves interprovincially or is imported or exported.

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*Inspection of graded foods is carefully carried out by inspectors of federal and provincial departments of agriculture. However, the consumer may on occasion buy foods that are believed to be below the grade designated. In such cases the product should be returned to the person from whom it was bought, or in the larger cities the matter should be reported to a Department of Agriculture inspector.*

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