

February 27, 2015

NOTICE OF ISSUANCE
PURSUANT TO SECTION 59174 OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL CODE

2015 Seasonal Regulation
Regarding Grade and Inspection Requirements
For the Marketing Order for Processing Strawberries

To The California Strawberry Processor Addressed:

Upon the request of the Processing Strawberry Advisory Board (PSAB), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has issued and made effective a seasonal regulation regarding grade and inspection requirements for the Marketing Order for Processing Strawberries. This regulation is attached as Exhibit "A". It will go into effect on March 2, 2015 and will remain in effect through December 31, 2015.

The regulation defines three grades of strawberries for processing and indicates how each grade may be utilized. Additionally, the regulation requires that each processor obtain inspection and certification for all strawberries to be utilized for strawberry products whenever it receives in excess of 1,000 crates of strawberries for processing in any calendar day at an individual receiving station or processing plant. Processors shall request inspections by notifying the Manager of the Processor Strawberry Advisory Board. Requests for inspections shall be made no less than 24 hours in advance of the time the inspection is to be performed.

Please note that the regulation contains provisions for Grade No. 1, Grade No 1WC ('with calyx) and Grade No. 2. The provisions for Grade No. 1 and Grade No. 2 remain unchanged. However, the provisions for Grade No. 1WC, which was first implemented last year, has been modified so as to eliminate the 1,000,000 pound per processor usage limitation that was in effect in 2014. Processors now have unlimited access to Grade No. 1 WC.

If you have any questions about this processing strawberry seasonal regulation or the other activities of the PSAB, please call the PSAB Manager, Gabe Moreno, at 831-724-5454. You may also call Dennis Manderfield of this office at 916-900-5018.

Sincerely,



Robert Maxie, Chief
Marketing Branch

Enclosure

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**MARKETING ORDER FOR PROCESSING STRAWBERRIES, AS AMENDED
REGULATION WITH RESPECT TO GRADE AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE 2015 MARKETING SEASON**

I. MANDATORY INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION

Each processor shall obtain inspection and certification for all strawberries to be utilized for strawberry products whenever it receives in excess of one thousand (1,000) crates of strawberries for processing in any calendar day at an individual receiving station or processing plant. Processors shall request inspections by notifying the Manager of the Processing Strawberry Advisory Board. Requests for inspection shall be made no less than twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the time the inspection is to be performed. No processor shall process strawberries unless the strawberries are first inspected and certified by an authorized inspector.

When inspected, strawberries for processing shall be graded according to the three grades defined below.

II. GRADE NO.1

- A. DEFINITION: Fresh strawberries consist of berries which have been harvested in a recognized safe manner, and are of similar varietal characteristics which are firm and meet the color and other requirements specified below, and are free from defects as defined, within the specified tolerances.

Color: Berries must have not less than eighty percent (80%) red color characteristic of the variety.

Berries having more than twenty percent (20%) green color are considered immature and are classified as culls.

Berries having a dull or lifeless appearance or which are grayish or brownish in color are considered overripe.

Defects: Defective strawberries mean those berries which are damaged by various causes and are unacceptable for processing.

1. The following are considered damage:

- a. Dryness - when damaged by seeds which are prominent or excessive and the berry is materially dehydrated, tough, or leathery.
- b. Discernible insect or worm injury or worm holes, bird pecks, or slug damage.
- c. Sunburn.
- d. Water-soaked or water-logged berries.

- e. Cat faces or undeveloped berries - berries with clusters of seeds or a seedy seam or having a hardened seedy or fibrous area in the flesh.
 - f. Stems and caps - all stems, bracts, or sepals must be entirely removed. Berries shall be considered defective if they have whole or partial caps, stems, or sepals present.
 - g. Soft - a soft berry is one that will not hold its form, consistency, or shape, or a berry that has lost its firm texture, or will "rag" in the washing.
 - h. Dirt means that the berry shows dirt which will not wash off in the ordinary process of washing.
 - i. Mashed or crushed berries.
- 2. Free from decay, mold, or fungus growth or any type of rot.
 - 3. Berries under five-eighths inch (5/8") in diameter when measured at right angles to a straight line running from the stem to the apex.

Defects, including defects of color, damage, decay, or undersized berries, described above, may not average more than five percent (5%) by weight of the strawberries in any lot.

- B. UTILIZATION: No processor shall utilize strawberries in excess of one hundred percent (100%) by weight of such portion of any lot of strawberries he or she receives which meet the standards of Grade No. 1 (as specified in Article III of the Marketing Order) for processing into whole or sliced frozen strawberries which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B", or strawberry preserves which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B". Nor shall any processor utilize in excess of an additional five percent (5%) by weight of his total receipts of strawberries for strawberry products other than whole or sliced frozen strawberries which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B", or strawberry preserves which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B". In no event shall any processor utilize for strawberry products strawberries in excess of one hundred percent (100%) by weight of such portion of any lot of strawberries which meet the standards of Grade No. 1, plus an additional tolerance of five percent (5%) by weight of his or her total receipts of strawberries for processing. Compliance with the aforesaid utilization shall be determined on a weekly basis to coincide with the weekly reporting of acquisitions and use provided for in the Rules and Regulations.

III. GRADE NO.1WC

- A. DEFINITION: Fresh strawberries with calyxes not intentionally removed, but are free of fruit clusters as well as long pedicles. These berries have been harvested in a recognized safe manner and are of similar varietal characteristics which are firm and meet the color and other requirements specified below, and are free from defects as defined, within the specified tolerances.

Color: Berries must have not less than eighty percent (80%) red color characteristic of the variety. The white area covered by the calyx shall be disregarded.

Berries having more than twenty percent (20%) green color are considered immature and are classified as culls.

Berries having a dull or lifeless appearance or which are grayish or brownish in color are considered overripe.

Defects: Defective strawberries mean those berries which are damaged by various causes and are unacceptable for processing.

1. The following are considered damage:

- a. Dryness - when damaged by seeds which are prominent or excessive and the berry is materially dehydrated, tough, or leathery.
- b. Discernible insect or worm injury or worm holes, bird pecks, or slug damage.
- c. Sunburn.
- d. Water-soaked or water-logged berries.
- e. Cat faces or undeveloped berries - berries with clusters of seeds or a seedy seam or having a hardened seedy or fibrous area in the flesh.
- f. Soft - a soft berry is one that will not hold its form, consistency, or shape, or a berry that has lost its firm texture, or will "rag" in the washing.
- g. Dirt means that the berry shows dirt which will not wash off in the ordinary process of washing.
- h. Mashed or crushed berries.

2. Free from decay, mold, or fungus growth or any type of rot.

3. Berries under five-eighths inch (5/8") in diameter when measured at right angles to a straight line running from the stem to the apex.

Defects, including defects of color, damage, decay, or undersized berries, described above, may not average more than five percent (5%) by weight of the strawberries in any lot. Defects of five percent (5%) or less will be accepted without dockage, but when all defects exceed five percent (5%), the total defect percentage will be claimed as dockage.

Lots exceeding twenty percent (20%) defects will be regraded and the two grades averaged. If the average exceeds twenty percent (20%) defects, it will be downgraded to Juice Grade and assigned a defect percentage based on Juice Grade Standards.

B. UTILIZATION: No processor shall utilize strawberries in excess of one hundred percent (100%) by weight of such portion of any lot of strawberries he or she receives which meet the standards of Grade No. 1WC (as specified in Article III of the Marketing Order) for processing into whole or sliced frozen strawberries which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B", or strawberry preserves which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B". Nor shall any processor utilize in excess of an additional five percent (5%) by weight of his total receipts of strawberries for strawberry products other than whole or sliced frozen strawberries which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B",

or strawberry preserves which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B". In no event shall any processor utilize for strawberry products strawberries in excess of one hundred percent (100%) by weight of such portion of any lot of strawberries which meet the standards of Grade No. 1WC, plus an additional tolerance of five percent (5%) by weight of his or her total receipts of strawberries for processing. Compliance with the aforesaid utilization shall be determined on a weekly basis to coincide with the weekly reporting of acquisitions and use provided for in the Rules and Regulations.

IV. GRADE NO. 2 - "JUICE STRAWBERRIES"

- A. DEFINITION: Fresh strawberries, with stems not intentionally removed, which contain some defects but, (a) which are not water-soaked or water logged, moldy, rotten, affected by fungus growth or any type of rot, and (b) which do not have more than fifty percent (50%) green color.

Prohibited defects may not average more than five percent (5%) by weight of the strawberries in any lot as described above.

- B. UTILIZATION: No processor shall utilize strawberries in excess of one hundred percent (100%) by weight of such portion of any lot of strawberries which meets the standards of juice strawberries. Strawberries received as juice strawberries shall not be used for processing into whole or sliced frozen strawberries which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B", or strawberry preserves which, when processed, meet the requirements of USDA Grade "A" or "B".

Please Note: The Administrative Rules and Regulations, as amended, for the Marketing Order for Processing Strawberries include additional inspection guidelines not included in this Seasonal Regulation. Please refer to the Administrative Rules and Regulations for details.