



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Agricultural
Marketing
Service**

**Dairy
Division**

United States Standards for Grades of Cheddar Cheese

Effective May 1, 1956

United States Standards for Cheddar Cheese¹

§ 58.2501 *Cheddar cheese.*

“Cheddar cheese” is cheese made by the cheddaring process or by another procedure which produces a finished cheese having the same physical and chemical properties as the cheese produced by the cheddar process and is made from cow's milk with or without the addition of coloring matter and with common salt, contains not more than 39 percent of moisture, and in the water-free substance, contains not less than 50 percent of milkfat and conforms to the provisions of §19.500, “Definitions and Standards of Identity for Cheese and Cheese Products.” Food and Drug Administration (21 CFR 19.500).

§ 58.2502 *Types of packaging.*

The following are the types of packaging for cheddar cheese:

(a) *Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.* The cheese is bandaged and dipped in a refined paraffin, amorphous wax, microcrystalline wax or any combination of such or any other suitable substance. Such coating is a continuous, unbroken and uniform film adhering tightly to the entire surface of the cheese.

(b) *Rindless.* The cheese is properly wrapped in a wrapper or covering, or by any other means of handling, which will not impart any color or objectionable odor or flavor to the cheese. The wrapper or covering is sealed with a sufficient overlap or satisfactory closure to prevent air leakage. The wrapper or covering is of sufficiently low permeability to water vapor and air so as to prevent the formation of rind and prevent the entrance of air during the curing and holding periods.

§ 58.2503 *Nomenclature of U.S. Grades.*

The nomenclature of U.S. grades is as follows:

- (a) U.S. Grade AA
- (b) U.S. Grade A
- (c) U.S. Grade B
- (d) U.S. Grade C.

¹Compliance with the provisions of these standards shall not excuse failure to comply with the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act.

§ 58.2504 *Basis for determination of U.S. Grades.*

The determination of U.S. Grades of cheddar cheese, according to the degree of curing, shall be on the basis of rating (a) flavor, (b) body and texture, (c) color, (d) finish and appearance. The rating of each quality factor shall be established on the basis of characteristics present in any vat of cheese. The final U.S. Grade shall be established on the basis of the lowest rating of any one of the quality characteristics.

§ 58.2505 *Specifications for U.S. Grades of cheddar cheese.*

The general specifications for the U.S. Grades of cheddar cheese, according to the degree of curing, are as follows:

(a) *U.S. Grade AA.* U.S. Grade AA cheddar cheese shall conform to the following requirements and specifications:

(1) *Flavor.* Fine and highly pleasing, free from undesirable flavors and odors. May possess very slight feed flavors. For detailed specifications and classification of flavor characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables I and V.

(2) *Body and texture.* A plug drawn from the cheese shall be firm and appear solid, smooth, compact, close and should be translucent, although it may have a few small mechanical openings. May possess limited sweet holes in accordance with the degree of curing but free from other gas holes. For detailed specifications and classification of body and texture characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables I and VI.

(3) *Color.* May be colored or uncolored but if colored, it should be a medium yellow-orange. May possess numerous tiny white specks associated with aged cheese. Very slight seaminess is permitted. For detailed specifications and classification of color characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables I and VII.

(4) *Finish and appearance--(i) Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.* The rind shall be sound, firm and smooth providing a good protection to the cheese. The bandage shall be evenly placed on the end of the cheese and free from unnecessary overlapping and wrinkles and not burst or torn. The surface shall be smooth, bright, and have a good coating of paraffin or wax that adheres firmly to all surfaces of the cheese but may have mold under the bandage and paraffin within certain limited tolerances for the degree of curing. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. Shall be free from high edges, huffing and lopsidedness. For detailed specifications and classifications of finish and appearance characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables I and VIII.

(ii) *Rindless.* The wrapper or covering shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be neat, unbroken and fully protect the surface but may be slightly wrinkled. The cheese shall be free from huffing and lopsidedness and may have very slight mold under the wrapper or covering in medium and cured classifications. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. For detailed specifications and classifications of finish and appearance characteristics of rindless according to the degree of curing see Tables I and VIII.

(b) *U.S. Grade A.* U.S. Grade A cheddar cheese shall conform to the following requirements and specifications:

(1) *Flavor.* Pleasing and free from undesirable flavors and odors. May possess feed, acid and bitter flavors within limited tolerances as the cheese ages. For detailed specifications and classification of flavor characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables II and V.

(2) *Body and texture.* A plug drawn from the cheese shall appear reasonably solid, compact, close and should be translucent although it may have a few mechanical openings but may not be large and connecting. May not have more than two sweet holes on a plug but free from other gas holes. For detailed specifications and classification of body and texture characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables II and VI.

(3) *Color.* May be colored or uncolored but if colored it should be a medium yellow-orange. May possess numerous tiny white specks, associated with aged cheese. May possess seaminess and waviness to a limited degree. For detailed specifications and classification of color characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables II and VII.

(4) *Finish and appearance--(i) Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.* The rind shall be sound, firm and smooth, providing a good protection to the cheese. The bandage may be slightly uneven, overlapped or wrinkled, but not burst or torn. The surface shall be practically smooth, bright and have a good coating of paraffin or wax that adheres firmly to all surfaces of the cheese, with certain allowable tolerances for mold and other defects according to the degree of curing. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. Shall be free from huffing, but may have slightly high edges and be slightly lopsided. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables II and VIII.

(ii) *Rindless.* The wrapper or covering shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be neat, unbroken and fully protect the surface but may be slightly wrinkled. The cheese shall be free from huffing but may be slightly lopsided and may have very slight mold under the wrapper or covering in medium and cured classifications. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics of rindless according to the degree of curing see Tables II and VIII.

Table I--Detailed Specifications for U.S. Grade AA

Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
<p>(a) <i>Flavor:</i> Fine and highly pleasing. May be lacking in flavor development or may possess slight characteristic cheddar cheese flavor. May possess a very slight feed flavor, but shall be free from any undesirable flavors and odors.</p> <p>(b) <i>Body and texture:</i> A plug drawn from the cheese shall be firm, appear smooth, compact, close and should be slightly translucent, but may have a few small mechanical openings. The texture may be definitely curdy or may be partially broken down if more than 3 weeks old. Shall be free from sweet holes, yeast holes and gas holes of any kind.</p> <p>(c) <i>Color:</i> Shall have a uniform, bright attractive appearance; practically free from white lines or seams. May be colored or uncolored but if colored it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p>(d) <i>Finish and appearance:</i> <i>Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with a smooth bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly but may possess soiled surface to a very slight degree. The cheese shall be even and uniform in shape. <i>Rindless.</i> The wrapper or covering shall be practically smooth, properly sealed with adequate overlapping at the seams or by any other satisfactory type of closure. The wrapper or covering shall be neat and adequately and securely envelop the cheese. May be slightly wrinkled but shall be of such character as to fully protect the surface of the cheese and not detract from its initial quality. Shall be free from mold under wrapper or covering and shall not be huffed or lopsided.</p>	<p>Fine and highly pleasing. Possesses a moderate degree of characteristic cheddar cheese flavor. May possess a very slight feed flavor but shall be free from any undesirable flavors and odors.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese shall be firm, appear smooth, waxy, compact, close, flexible and translucent, but may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting. May be slightly or not entirely broken down. May possess not more than one sweet hole per plug but shall be free from other gas holes.</p> <p>Shall have a uniform, bright attractive appearance; practically free from white lines or seams. May be colored or uncolored, but if colored it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with a smooth bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly but may possess very slight mold under bandage and paraffin, and the following other characteristics to a slight degree; soiled surface and surface mold. The cheese shall be even and uniform in shape. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for current, except very slight mold under wrapper or covering permitted .</p>	<p>Fine and highly pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor showing moderate to well-developed degrees of flavor or sharpness. May possess a very slight feed flavor but shall be free from any undesirable flavors and odors.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese shall be firm, appear smooth, waxy, compact, close and translucent but may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting. Should be free from curdiness and possess a cohesive velvet-like texture. May possess not more than one sweet hole per plug but shall be free from other gas holes.</p> <p>Shall have a uniform, bright attractive appearance; practically free from white lines or seams. May show numerous tiny white specks. May be colored or uncolored, but if colored it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with a smooth bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly but may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree; soiled surface and mold under bandage and paraffin; and surface mold to a definite degree. The cheese shall be even and uniform in shape. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for medium.</p>

Table II--Detailed Specifications for U.S. Grade A

Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
<p>(a) <i>Flavor:</i> Shall possess a pleasing flavor. May be lacking in flavor development or may possess slight characteristic cheddar cheese flavor. May possess very slight acid, slight feed but shall not possess any undesirable flavors and odors.</p> <p>(b) <i>Body and texture:</i> A plug drawn from the cheese shall be firm, appear smooth, compact, close and should be slightly translucent but may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting. May possess not more than two sweet holes per plug but shall be free from other gas holes. May be definitely curdy or partially broken down if more than 3 weeks old.</p> <p>(c) <i>Color:</i> Shall have a fairly uniform, bright attractive appearance. May have slight white lines or seams or be very slightly wavy. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p>(d) <i>Finish and appearance:</i> <i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with the bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly, but may possess the following characteristics to a very slight degree; soiled surface and surface mold; and to a slight degree; rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> The wrapper or covering shall be practically smooth, properly sealed with adequate overlapping at the seams or by any other satisfactory type of closure. The wrapper or covering shall be neat and adequately and securely envelop the cheese. May be slightly wrinkled but shall be of such character as to fully protect the surface of the cheese and not detract from its initial quality. Shall be free from mold under the wrapper or covering and shall not be huffed but may be slightly lopsided.</p>	<p>Shall possess a pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor and aroma. May possess a very slight bitter flavor and the following flavors to a slight degree; feed and acid.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese shall be reasonably firm, appear reasonably smooth, waxy, fairly close and translucent but may have a few mechanical openings if not large and connecting. May be slightly curdy or not entirely broken down. May possess not more than two sweet holes per plug but shall be free from other gas holes. May possess the following other characteristics to a slight degree; mealy, short and weak.</p> <p>Shall have a uniform, bright attractive appearance. May have slight white lines or seams. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with the bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly but may possess very slight mold under bandage and paraffin and the following other characteristics to a slight degree; soiled surface, surface mold, rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for current, except very slight mold under wrapper or covering permitted.</p>	<p>Shall possess a pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor and aroma with moderate to well developed degrees of flavor or sharpness. May possess the following flavors to a slight degree; bitter, feed and acid.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese should be fairly firm, appear smooth, waxy, fairly close and translucent but may have a few mechanical openings. Should be free from curdiness. May possess not more than two sweet holes per plug but shall be free from other gas holes. May possess the following other characteristics to a slight degree; crumbly, mealy, short, weak and pasty.</p> <p>Shall have a uniform, bright attractive appearance. May have slight white lines or seams and numerous tiny white specks. May be colored or uncolored, but if colored, it should be a medium yellow-orange.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a sound, firm rind with the bandage and paraffin coating adhering tightly but may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree; soiled surface, rough surface, mold under bandage and paraffin, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges; and surface mold to a definite degree. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for medium.</p>

Table III--Detailed Specifications for U.S. Grade B

Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
<p>(a) <i>Flavor:</i> Should possess a fairly pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor, but may possess very slight onion and the following flavors to a slight degree: Acid, flat, bitter, fruity, utensil, whey-taint, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny and lipase; feed flavor to a definite degree.</p> <p>(b) <i>Body and texture:</i> A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Coarse, short, mealy, weak, pasty, crumbly, gassy, slitty and corky; the following to a definite degree: Curdy open, and sweet holes.</p> <p>(c) <i>Color:</i> May possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Wavy, acid-cut, mottled, salt spots, dull or faded; and definitely seamy. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, may be slightly unnatural.</p> <p>(d) <i>Finish and appearance:</i> <i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a reasonably firm sound rind, but may possess very slight mold under bandage and paraffin. The following characteristics to a slight degree: Soiled surface, surface mold, defective coating, checked rind, huffed, weak rind, and sour rind; and to a definite degree: Rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> The wrapper or covering shall be fairly smooth and properly sealed with adequate overlapping at the seams or by other satisfactory type of closure. The wrapper or covering shall be fairly neat and adequately and securely envelop the cheese. May be definitely wrinkled but shall be of such character as to protect the surface of the cheese and not detract from its initial quality. Shall be free from mold under wrapper or covering but may be slightly huffed and slightly lopsided.</p>	<p>Should possess a fairly pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor and aroma. May possess very slight onion and the following flavors to a slight degree; flat, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny and lipase; the following to a definite degree; feed, acid, bitter, fruity, utensil, and whey-taint.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Curdy, coarse, gassy, slitty, and corky; the following to a definite degree: Open, short, mealy, weak, pasty, crumbly, and sweet holes.</p> <p>May possess a very slight bleached surface; and the following characteristics to a slight degree: Wavy, acid-cut, mottled, salt spots, dull or faded; and definitely seamy. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, may be slightly unnatural.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a reasonably firm sound rind, but may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree; surface mold, mold under bandage and paraffin, checked rind, huffed, weak rind, and sour rind; the following to a definite degree: Soiled surface, rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided, high edges and defective coating. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for current, except slight mold underwrapper or covering permitted.</p>	<p>Should possess a fairly pleasing characteristic cheddar cheese flavor and aroma, with moderate to well developed degrees of flavor or sharpness. May possess very slight onion and the following flavors to a slight degree; flat, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny, lipase and sulfide; the following to a definite degree: Feed, acid, bitter, fruity, utensil, and whey-taint.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree; gassy and slitty; the following to a definite degree: Open, sweet holes, short, mealy, weak, pasty and crumbly.</p> <p>May possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Wavy, acid-cut, mottled, salt spots, dull or faded and bleached surface; and definitely seamy. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, may be slightly unnatural.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> Shall possess a reasonably firm sound rind, but may possess the following characteristics to a slight degree; checked rind, huffed, weak rind, and sour rind; the following to a definite degree: Soiled surface, surface mold, mold under bandage and paraffin, rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided, high edges and defective coating. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for medium.</p>

Table IV--Detailed Specifications for U.S. Grade C

Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
<p>(a) <i>Flavor:</i> May possess the following flavors to a slight degree: Sour, metallic, onion; and to a definite degree: Acid, flat, bitter, fruity, utensil, whey-taint, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny, and lipase; feed flavor to a pronounced degree.</p> <p>(b) <i>Body and texture:</i> A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a definite degree: Curdy, coarse, corky, crumbly, mealy, short, weak, pasty, gassy, slitty, pinny; and to a pronounced degree; open and sweet holes. The cheese shall be sufficiently compact to permit the drawing of a plug.</p> <p>(c) <i>Color:</i> May have a slight bleached surface and possess the following other characteristics to a definite degree: Wavy, acid-cut, mottled, salt spots, dull or faded; and seamy to a pronounced degree. May be colored or uncolored but if colored, may be definitely unnatural. The color shall not be particularly unattractive.</p> <p>(d) <i>Finish and appearance:</i> <i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> May possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Cracks in rind, soft spots and wet rind; and mold under bandage and paraffin; and to a definite degree: Soiled surface, surface mold, defective coating, checked rind, weak rind, sour rind, and huffed; and to a pronounced degree: Rough surface, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> The wrapper or covering shall be fairly smooth and properly sealed with adequate overlapping at the seams or by other satisfactory type of closure. The wrapper or covering shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese. May be definitely soiled and wrinkled but shall be of such character as to protect the surface of the cheese and not detract from its initial quality. May have slight mold under the wrapper or covering and may be definitely huffed and lopsided.</p> <p>a May possess the following flavors to a slight degree: Onion, and sulfide; and to a definite degree: Flat, sour, metallic, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny and lipase; and to a pronounced degree; feed,</p>	<p>May possess the following flavors to a slight degree: Onion and sulfide; and to a definite degree: Flat, sour, metallic, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny and lipase; and to a pronounced degree; feed, acid, bitter, fruity, utensil, and whey-taint.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese may be slightly curdy and may possess the following other characteristics to a definite degree: Coarse, corky, gassy, slitty and pinny; and to a pronounced degree: Open, sweet holes, short, weak, pasty, crumbly and mealy. The cheese shall be sufficiently compact to permit the drawing of a plug.</p> <p>May possess the following characteristics to a definite degree: Wavy, acid-cut, mottled, salt spots, bleached surface, dull or faded; and seamy to a pronounced degree. May be colored or uncolored but if colored may be definitely unnatural. The color shall not be particularly unattractive.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> May possess very slight rind rot and the following other characteristics to a slight degree: Cracks in rind; soft spots and wet rind; and to a definite degree: Surface mold, mold under bandage and paraffin, checked rind, weak rind, sour rind and huffed; and to a pronounced degree: Soiled surface, rough surface, defective coating, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for current, except definite mold under the wrapper or covering permitted.</p>	<p>May possess slight onion and the following flavors to a definite degree: flat, sour, metallic, yeasty, malty, old milk, weedy, barny, lipase and sulfide; and to a pronounced degree: Feed, acid, bitter, fruity, utensil and whey-taint.</p> <p>A plug drawn from the cheese may possess the following characteristics to a definite degree: Gassy, slitty, pinny; and to a pronounced degree; open, sweet holes, short, weak, pasty, crumbly and mealy. The cheese shall be sufficiently compact to permit the drawing of a plug.</p> <p>Same as for medium.</p> <p><i>Bandaged and paraffin dipped.</i> May possess the following characteristics to a slight degree: Rind rot, cracks in rind; and to a definite degree; checked rind, weak rind, sour rind, wet rind, soft spots and huffed; and to a pronounced degree: Rough surface, soiled surface, surface mold, mold under bandage and paraffin, defective coating, irregular bandaging, lopsided and high edges. <i>Rindless.</i> Same as for medium.</p>

Table V--Classification of Flavor According to Degree of Curing

Identification of flavor characteristics	AA			A			B			C		
	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
Feed	VS	VS	VS	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Acid	--	--	--	VS	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Flat	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Bitter	--	--	--	--	VS	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Fruity	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D	D	P	P
Utensil	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D	D	P	P
Metallic	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D
Sour	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D
Whey-Taint	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D	D	P	P
Yeasty	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Malty	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Old Milk	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Weedy	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Onion	--	--	--	--	--	--	VS	VS	VS	S	S	S
Barny	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Lipase	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Sulfide	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	--	S	D

VS--Very Slight. S--Slight. D--Definite. P--Pronounced.

Table VI--Classification of Body and Texture According to Degree of Curing

Identification of body and texture characteristics	AA			A			B			C		
	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
Curdy	D	S	--	D	S	--	D	S	--	D	S	
Coarse	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--	D	D	
Open	VS	S	S	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Sweet holes	--	VS	VS	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Short	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Mealy	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Weak	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Pasty	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Crumbly	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Gassy	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Slitty	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Corky	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	--	D	D	
Pinny	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	D	D	D

VS--Very Slight. S--Slight. D--Definite. P--Pronounced.

Table VII--Classification of Color According to Degree of Curing

Identification of color characteristics	AA			A			B			C		
	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
Seamy	VS	VS	VS	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Wavy	--	--	--	VS	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Acid-cut	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Unnatural	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Mottled	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Salt spots	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Dull or faded	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Bleached surfaced (rindless)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	VS	S	S	D	D

VS--Very Slight. S--Slight. D--Definite. P--Pronounced.

Table VIII--Classification of Finish and Appearance According to Degree of Curing

Identification of finish and appearance characteristics	AA			A			B			C		
	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
Soiled surface	VS	S	S	VS	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P
Surface mold	--	S	D	VS	S	D	S	S	D	D	D	P
Mold under bandage and paraffin	--	VS	S	--	VS	S	VS	S	D	S	D	P
Mold under wrapper or covering (rindless)	--	VS	VS	--	VS	VS	--	S	S	S	D	D
Rough surface	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Irregular bandaging (uneven, wrinkled and overlapping)	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Lopsided	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Lopsided (rindless)	--	--	--	S	S	S	S	S	S	D	D	D
High edges	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D	P	P	P
Huffed	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Defective coating (scaly, blistered and checked)	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	D	D	D	P	P
Cracks in rind	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S
Checked rind	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D

VS--Very Slight. S--Slight. D--Definite. P--Pronounced.

**Table VIII--Classification of Finish and Appearance
According to Degree of Curing (Continued)**

Identification of finish and appearance characteristics	AA			A			B			C		
	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged	Fresh or current	Medium cured	Cured or aged
Soft spots	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	D
Weak rind	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Sour rind	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	S	D	D	D
Wet rind	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	S	S	D
Rind rot	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	VS	S

VS--Very Slight. S--Slight. D--Definite. P--Pronounced.

(c) *U.S. Grade B.* U.S. Grade B cheddar cheese shall conform to the following requirements and specifications:

(1) *Flavor.* May possess certain undesirable flavors to a limited degree in accordance with the aging of the cheese. For detailed specifications and classification of flavor characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables III and V.

(2) *Body and texture.* A plug drawn from the cheese may be loose and open and may have numerous sweet holes, scattered yeast holes and other scattered gas holes; and may possess various body characteristics in accordance with degree of curing but pinny gas holes are not permitted. For detailed specifications and classification of body and texture characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables III and VI.

(3) *Color.* May be colored or uncolored and possess various characteristics. For detailed specifications and classification of color characteristics according to the degree of during see Tables III and VII.

(4) *Finish and appearance--(i) Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.* The rind shall be sound, may be slightly weak, but free from soft spots, rind rot, cracks and openings of any kind. The bandage may be uneven and wrinkled but not burst or torn. The surface may be rough and unattractive but shall possess a fairly good coating of paraffin or wax. The paraffin may be scaly or blistered with mold and certain other characteristics permitted in accordance with the degree of curing but there shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. May be huffed, lopsided and have high edges. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables III and VIII.

(ii) *Rindless.* The covering or wrapper shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be fairly neat, unbroken and protect the surface but may be wrinkled. The cheese may be huffed, lopsided and have slight mold under the wrapper or covering in medium and cured classifications. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics of rindless according to the degree of curing see Tables III and VIII.

(d) *U.S. Grade C.* U.S. Grade C cheddar cheese shall conform to the following requirements and specifications:

(1) *Flavor.* May possess somewhat objectionable flavors and odors with certain increased tolerances in accordance with the degree of curing. For detailed specifications and classification of flavor characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables IV and V.

(2) *Body and texture.* May be loose with large and connecting mechanical openings; possess various gas holes and body characteristics, with certain limitations and varying with the degree of curing. The cheese, however, shall be sufficiently compact to permit the drawing of a plug. For detailed specifications and classification of body and texture characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables IV and VI.

(3) *Color.* May be colored or uncolored and possess various characteristics but not to the extent that the color is particularly unattractive. For detailed specifications and classification of color characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables IV and VII.

(4) *Finish and appearance--(i) Bandaged and paraffin-dipped.* The rind may be weak and possess characteristics such as soft spots, rind rot, cracks, and openings, with certain limitations and varying with the degree of curing. The bandage may be uneven and wrinkled but not burst or torn. May have a very rough, unattractive appearance and the paraffin may be scaly and blistered, with mold and other characteristics permitted, varying with the degree of curing, but there shall be no evidence that mold has entered the cheese. May be huffed and lopsided and have high edges to

a degree not permitted in the higher grades. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics according to the degree of curing see Tables IV and VIII.

(ii) *Rindless*. The wrapper or covering shall adequately and securely envelop the cheese, be unbroken and protect the surface but may be wrinkled and soiled. The cheese may be huffed, lopsided and have mold under the wrapper or covering in accordance with the degree of curing. There shall be no indication that mold has entered the cheese. For detailed specifications and classification of finish and appearance characteristics of rindless according to the degree of curing see Tables IV and VIII.

§ 58.2506 *Explanation of terms.*

(a) *With respect to packaging--*(1) *Paraffin*. Refined paraffin, amorphous wax, microcrystalline wax or any combination of such or any other suitable substance.

(2) *Rindless*. Cheese which has not formed a rind due to the impervious type of wrapper, covering, or container, enclosing the cheese, or by any other means of handling.

(b) *With respect to flavor--*(1) *Very slight*. Detected only upon very critical examination.

(2) *Slight*. Detected only upon critical examination.

(3) *Definite*. Not intense but detectable.

(4) *Pronounced*. So intense as to be easily identified.

(5) *Lacking in flavor development*. No undesirable and very little, if any, cheddar cheese flavor development.

(6) *Feed*. Feed flavors (such as alfalfa, sweet clover, silage, or similar feed) in milk carried through into the cheese.

(7) *Acid*. Sharp and puckery to the taste, characteristic of lactic acid.

(8) *Flat*. Insipid, practically devoid of any characteristic cheddar cheese flavor.

(9) *Bitter*. Distasteful, similar to taste of quinine. Most frequently found in aged cheese.

(10) *Fruity*. A sweet fruit-like flavor resembling apples; generally increasing in intensity as the cheese ages.

(11) *Utensil*. A flavor that is suggestive of improper or inadequate washing and sterilization of milking machines, utensils or factory equipment.

(12) *Metallic*. A flavor having qualities suggestive of metal, imparting a puckery sensation.

(13) *Sour*. An acidly pungent flavor resembling vinegar.

(14) *Whey-taint*. A slightly acid flavor and odor characteristic of fermented whey caused by too slow expulsion of whey from the curd.

(15) *Yeasty*. A flavor indicating yeasty fermentation.

(16) *Malty*. A distinctive, harsh flavor suggestive of malt.

(17) *Old Milk*. Lacks freshness.

(18) *Weedy*. A flavor due to the use of milk which possesses a common weedy flavor. Present in cheese when cows have eaten weedy hay or grazed on common weed-infested pastures.

(19) *Onion*. This flavor is recognized by the peculiar taste and aroma suggestive of its name. Present in milk or cheese when the cows have eaten onions, garlic or leeks.

(20) *Barny*. A flavor characteristic of the odor of a cow stable.

(21) *Lipase*. A flavor suggestive of rancidity or butyric acid, sometimes associated with a bitterness.

(22) *Sulfide*. An objectionable flavor of hydrogen sulfide similar to the flavor of water with a high sulfur content.

(c) *With respect to body and texture*--(1) *Broken down*. Changed from a firm, smooth, or coarse, curdy or rubbery condition to a waxy condition similar to that of cold butter or to a mealy, or pasty condition.

(2) *Smooth*. Feels silky; not dry and coarse or rough.

(3) *Solid, compact and close*. Practically free from openings of any kind.

(4) *Firm*. Feels solid, not soft or weak.

(5) *Reasonably firm*. Somewhat less firm but not to the extent of materially injuring the keeping quality of the cheese.

(6) *Waxy*. When worked between the fingers, molds well like wax or cold butter.

(7) *Translucent*. The appearance of being partially transparent.

(8) *Curdy*. Smooth but firm; when worked between the fingers is rubbery and not waxy.

(9) *Coarse*. Feels rough, dry and sandy.

(10) *Open*. Mechanical openings that are irregular in shape and are caused by workmanship and not gas fermentation.

(11) *Sweet holes*. Spherical gas holes, glossy in appearance; usually about the size of BB shots; also referred to as shot or Swiss holes.

(12) *Short*. No elasticity to the plug and when rubbed between the thumb and fingers it tends toward mealiness.

(13) *Mealy*. Short body, does not mold well and looks and feels like corn meal when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(14) *Weak*. Requires little pressure to crush, is soft but is not necessarily sticky like a pasty cheese.

(15) *Pasty*. Usually weak body and when the cheese is rubbed between the thumb and fingers it becomes sticky and smeary.

(16) *Crumbly*. Loosely knit and tends to fall apart when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(17) *Gassy*. Gas holes of various sizes and may be scattered.

(18) *Slitty*. Narrow elongated slits generally associated with a cheese that is gassy or yeasty. Sometimes referred to as "fish-eyes."

(19) *Corky*. Hard, tough, over-firm cheese which does not readily break down when rubbed between the thumb and fingers.

(20) *Pinny*. Numerous very small gas holes.

(d) *With respect to color*--(1) *Uncolored*. Absence of artificial coloring.

(2) *Seamy*. White thread-like lines that form if the pieces of curd are not properly joined together.

(3) *Wavy*. Unevenness of color which appears as layers or waves.

(4) *Acid-cut*. Bleached or faded appearance which sometimes varies throughout the cheese, appearing most often around mechanical openings.

(5) *Unnatural*. Deep orange or reddish color.

(6) *Mottled*. Irregular shaped spots or blotches in which portions are light colored and others are higher colored. Also an unevenness of color due to combining the curd from two different vats, sometimes referred to as "mixed curd."

(7) *Salt spots*. Large light colored spots or areas.

(8) *Dull or faded*. A color condition lacking in lustre or translucency.

(9) *Bleached surface*. A faded color beginning at the surface and progressing inward.

(10) *Tiny white specks*. Specks resembling grains of salt scattered throughout the cheese. They are generally associated with aged cheese.

(11) *Unattractive*. Abnormal or unappetizing appearance.

(e) *With respect to finish and appearance--*(1) *Wax or paraffin that adheres firmly to the surface of the cheese*. Thin or thick coating with no indication of cracking, breaking, or loosening.

(2) *Rind*. Hard coating caused by the desiccation of the surface of the cheese.

(3) *Firm sound rind*. Possessing a firmness and thickness (not easily dented or damaged) consistent with the size of the cheese and which is dry, smooth, and closely knit, sufficient to protect the interior quality from external defects; free from checks, cracks, breaks or soft spots.

(4) *Burst or torn bandage*. A severance of the bandage usually occurring at the side seam or is otherwise snagged or broken.

(5) *Wrapper or covering*. Transparent or opaque material (plastic film type or foil) next to the surface of the cheese, used as an enclosure or covering of the cheese.

(6) *Adequately and securely envelop*. Wrapper or covering properly sealed, and entirely enclosing the cheese, with sufficient adherence for ample protection and prevention of mold.

(7) *Smooth bright surface*. Clean, glossy surface.

(8) *Smooth surface*. Not rough or uneven.

(9) *Soiled surface*. Milkstone, rust spots or other discoloration on the surface of the cheese.

(10) *Surface mold*. Mold on the paraffin or the exterior of the cheese.

(11) *Mold under bandage and paraffin*. Mold spots or areas that have formed under the paraffin or mold that has penetrated from the surface and continued to develop.

(12) *Mold under wrapper or covering*. Mold spots or areas that have formed under the wrapper or on the cheese.

(13) *Rough surface*. Lacks smoothness.

(14) *Bandage evenly placed*. Overlapping the edges evenly about one inch.

(15) *Irregular bandaging*. Bandage improperly placed in the hoop resulting in too much bandage on one end and insufficient on the other causing overlapping; wrinkled and loose fitting.

(16) *Lopsided*. One side of the cheese is higher than the other side.

(17) *High edge*. A rim or ridge on the follower side of the cheese, which is raised in varying degrees. In extreme cases it may bend over.

(18) *Defective coating*. Brittle coating of paraffin that breaks and peels off in the form of scales or flakes; flat or raised blisters or bubbles under the surface of the paraffin; checked paraffin, including cracks, breaks or hairline checks in the paraffin or coating of the cheese.

(19) *Cracks in the rind*. Openings or breaks in the rind.

(20) *Checked rind*. Numerous small cracks or breaks in the rind, sometimes following the outline of curd particles, sometimes referred to as "curd openings."

(21) *Soft spots*. Soft to the touch and the spots are usually faded and moist.

(22) *Huffed*. Swollen because of gas fermentation. The cheese becomes rounded or oval in shape instead of being flat.

(23) *Weak rind*. Thin and possessing little or no resistance to pressure.

(24) *Sour rind*. A fermented rind condition, usually confined to the faces of the cheese.

(25) *Wet rind*. A wet rind is one in which the moisture adheres to the surface of the rind and which may or may not soften the rind or cause discoloration.

(26) *Rind rot*. Soft spots on the rind that have become discolored and have decayed or decomposed.