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Jimmie Turner (202) 720-6179

jimmie.turner@usda.gov

Billy Cox (202) 720-8998

billy.cox@usda.gov

USDA PUBLISHES STANDARDS FOR GRADES OF CULTIVATED GINSENG

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18, 2006 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is establishing voluntary U.S. Standards for Grades of Cultivated Ginseng.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service created the standards at the request of industry and published a previous notice in the *Federal Register* requesting comments on the proposed Standards for Grades of Cultivated Ginseng. The new standards, which become effective Jan. 18, 2007, will provide a common language for trade facilitation.

The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture "to develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices."

AMS works with industry representatives and others to establish or revise U.S. standards for nearly 240 agricultural products. Industry uses the standards in the marketplace to specify acceptable quality and/or condition of commodities.

The notice of the new standards will be published in the Dec. 19, 2006, *Federal Register*; the notice and the new standards can also be viewed at www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbdoctlist.htm. Questions can be mailed to Cheri Emery, Standardization Section, AMS Fruit & Vegetable Programs, Room 1661 – South, USDA Stop 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington D.C. 20250, or emailed to Cheri.Emery@usda.gov. In addition, copies of the notice and the standards are available from the same address.

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