Fresh Products Branch Bulletin

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APPLICATION OF TOLERANCES FOR IMPORT REQUIREMENTS AND MARKETING ORDER REGULATIONS

I. PURPOSE

This bulletin is to clarify the Branch's Policy on standards and regulations (e.g., Import Regulations and Marketing Orders Requirements) which establish lot tolerances for special requirements, size and or defects but do not specify exceptions or additional tolerances for individual packages.
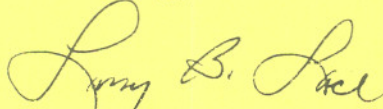
II. BACKGROUND

We have learned recently of instances of inspectors applying a sample or container tolerance to an individual package when there is no such tolerance provided when inspecting for Import Regulations and/or Marketing Orders Requirements. For those regulations which do not contain such provisions, there is no limitation on the percentages of defects or off-size or other factors for an individual package.

Paragraph 474 of the General Market Inspection Instructions states; **Some of the early U.S. Standards do not include provisions as to how the tolerances shall be applied to individual packages (Application of Tolerances). For those standards which do not contain such a provision, there is no limitation of percentages of defects or off-size for individual packages. If the average for the lot or a particular tolerance is not exceeded the lot will meet the grade or specification regardless of the percentage of defects or off-size in any container.**

III: POLICY

It is not permissible to fail a commodity for exceeding a container or sample tolerance when no tolerance exists. There are no general rules of one and a half times the tolerance and double the tolerance when no application of tolerances is specified. **Therefore, always refer to the particular standard, regulation, or requirement for the correct application of the tolerance.**

Larry B. Lace
Branch Chief

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