

METRIC

A-A-20193C
September 30, 2010
SUPERSEDING
A-A-20193B
April 21, 2008

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

ONIONS, BULB, READY-TO-USE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description (CID).

1. SCOPE. This CID covers ready-to-use bulb onions (onions) packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by the Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties.

2. PURCHASER NOTES.

2.1 Purchasers *shall specify* the following:

- Type(s), color(s), style(s), and agricultural practice(s) required of onions (Sec. 3).
- When microbiological requirements are different than specified (Sec. 6.1).
- When microbiological requirements need to be verified (Sec. 6.4).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 9.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 9.5).

2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:

- Good Agricultural Practices and/or Good Handling Practices (GAP&GHP) Audit (Sec. 9.1).
- Food Defense System Survey (Sec. 9.2 with 9.3.1) or (Sec. 9.2 with 9.3.2).
- Manufacturer's quality assurance (Sec. 9.3 with 9.3.1) or (Sec. 9.3 with 9.3.2) or (Sec. 9.3 with 9.3.3).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 10).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The onions shall conform to the following list as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

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Types, colors, styles, and agricultural practices.

Type I - Fresh (Spring/Summer) *includes but not limited to: Bermuda, Granex, and Grano varieties* 1/

Color A - Yellow

Color B - White

Color C - Red

Type II - Fresh (Fall/Winter) *includes but not limited to Globe and Spanish varieties* 1/

Color A - Yellow

Color B - White

Color C - Red

Type III - Creole

Color A - Yellow

Color B - White

Color C - Red

Type IV - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

1/ Not all onion types are available year round

Style 1 - Whole

Style 2 - Peeled

Style 3 - Diced

Style 4 - Sliced

Style 5 - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Agricultural practice a - Conventional

Agricultural practice b - Organic

4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products shall meet the requirements of the:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 6).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 7).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 8).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 9).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).

5. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

5.1 Definitions.

5.1.1 Whole. Onions are mature, firm, single bulb, fairly well-shaped and free from splits.

5.1.2 Peeled. The onions outer tough thin layer of skin is removed.

5.1.3 Diced. Onions are cut into small cubes varying in sizes from 0.64 to 2.54 cm (1/4 to 1 in) *(unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order).*

5.1.4 Sliced. Onions may be sliced perpendicular to the longitudinal axis varying in thickness from 0.32 to 1.9 cm (1/8 to 3/4 in) *(unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order).*

5.2 Raw materials.

5.2.1 Onions. The onions shall be a U.S. No. 2 or better Grade of U. S. Standards for Grades of Bermuda-Granex-Grano Type Onions, U.S Standards for Grade of Creole Onions or U.S. Standards for Grade of Onions (Other Than Bermuda-Granex-Grano and Creole types).

5.2.2 Organic onions. When organic onions are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the onions shall be grown following organic agricultural practices and processed in accordance with the requirements of the National Organic Program (7 CFR Part 205). A Certificate of Organic Operation shall be provided to verify that the product was processed in accordance with the National Organic Program requirements. Non-synthetic and synthetic substances allowed in organic handling are listed in 7 CFR § 205.605, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances.

5.3 Processing. The onions shall be harvested and handled in accordance with the Federal Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlanProducts/ucm064574.htm>), Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), the Good Handling Practices (GHP). The onions should be processed in accordance with current Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) (21 CFR Part 110) and FDA's Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlanProducts/ucm064458.htm>). The onions shall be transported to warehouse, graded, bagged or boxed and shipped in accordance with FDA's Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive

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Measures Guidance

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/FoodDefenseandEmergencyResponse/ucm083075.htm>.

5.4 Finished Product.

5.4.1 Flavor and odor. The onions of any style shall possess characteristic flavor and odor of its onion type.

5.4.2 Color/appearance. The onions shall possess good exterior characteristic yellow, red or white color. The onions shall be free from green, white, and brown spots and other foreign material that affect the appearance of the products.

5.4.3 Texture. The onions shall be crisp and fairly firm, but not tough, fibrous, or mushy. The onions shall possess a practically uniform texture.

5.4.4 Temperature. During transportation onions shall be kept under refrigeration to maintain quality. Unless otherwise recommended the onions shall be delivered at temperatures greater than 0°C (32°F) but not more than 4.4°C (40°F).

5.4.5 Shelf life. Whole onions in a controlled atmosphere shall have a shelf life typically of 30 days. Peeled onions shall have a shelf life typically of 10 to 14 days refrigerated. Diced and sliced onions shall have a shelf life typically of 7 to 10 days refrigerated.

5.4.6 Defects. The onions shall be free from defects which materially affects their appearance or edibility. Presence of any decay, off-color, off-odor, wet sunscald (soft, mushy, sticky, or wet), double and bottle necks and foreign material including but not limited to (metal, glass, stone, paint, or insect parts) shall be cause for rejection of the lot. The onions shall be free from damage caused by seedstems which are tough or woody, or which are more than 0.635 cm (1/4 in) in diameter. Whole onions shall be free from splits, stains, sprouts, moldy patches, and broken fleshy scales.

6. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

6.1 Microbiological requirements. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, microbiological requirements for onions shall be as follows:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
<i>Salmonella</i>	Shall be negative

<u>Test</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
<i>E. coli</i>	Less than 3 per gram using MPN technique (Most Probable Number) or less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram. <u>1/</u>
Non-O157:H7 STEC <u>2/</u>	Less than 3 per gram using MPN technique or less than 10 CFU per gram. <u>1/</u>
Coagulase positive <i>Staph. aureus</i>	Less than 3 per gram using MPN technique or less than 10 CFU per gram. <u>1/</u>
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Shall be negative

1/ Findings indicate zero colonies (CFU) per plate or zero tubes producing gas for MPN.

2/ Shiga-toxin *Escherichia coli* (STEC).

6.2 Product verification. When USDA verification of microbiological requirements is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the following procedures will be followed. Microbiological testing shall be performed on a composite sample. The composite sample shall be 227 g (8 oz) prepared from randomly selected subsamples. Subsamples shall be a minimum of one bag of onions and shall contain the appropriate number of onions necessary to yield a 227 g (8 oz) sample when composited.

6.3 Test portion size. The test portions shall be derived from the composite sample specified in Sec. 6.2. The test portion size for testing *Salmonella* and coagulase positive *Staph. aureus* shall be 25 g (0.88 oz). The test portion size for testing *E.coli*, non-O157:H7 STEC, and *Listeria monocytogenes* shall be 50 g (1.76 oz).

6.4 Microbiological testing. When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analyses shall be made in accordance with the following methods from the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International or as specified below.

<u>Test</u>	<u>Method</u>
<i>Salmonella</i>	2003.09, 2004.03, 996.08, 967.25, 967.27 or Section C-7, Ch 5 <u>3/</u>
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	996.09, 996.10, 997.11, 2000.14 or Sections K through R, Ch 4a and Appendix 1 <u>3/</u>

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<u>Test</u>	<u>Method</u>
Non-O157:H7 STEC	Ch 4a Diarrheagenic <i>E.coli</i> <u>3/</u> or U.S. Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) SOP No: FERN-MIC.0003.00a-d <u>4/</u>
Coagulase positive <i>Staph. aureus</i>	2003.07, 975.55, 987.09 or Direct Plate Count, Ch 12, <u>3/</u>
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	999.06, 995.22, 997.03 or Sections C, D, E, Ch 10 <u>3/</u>

3/ 8th Edition, FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) or the FDA BAM Online.

4/ SOP No: FERN-MIC.0003.00a-d, “Procedures for the Detection of Shiga-toxin *Escherichia coli* (STEC), serotype O157 and non-O157 in Food” is available for FERN Laboratories online through <http://fernlab.org/>.

6.5 Test results. The test results for *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes* shall be reported as positive or negative. The test results for *E.coli* and Non-O157:H7 STEC shall be reported to the nearest MPN or to the nearest CFU per gram. The test result for coagulase positive *Staph. aureus* shall be reported as the number of coagulase positive *Staph. aureus* per gram. Any results not conforming to the microbiological requirements shall be cause for rejection of the lot.

7. MANUFACTURER’S/DISTRIBUTOR’S PRODUCT ASSURANCE. The manufacturer/distributor shall certify that the onions provided shall meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same onions offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

8. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered onions shall comply with all applicable Federal and State mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the onions in the commercial marketplace. Delivered onions shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act; the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act; and regulations promulgated thereunder.

9. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser shall specify 9.4 or 9.5; purchaser may specify 9.1, 9.2 with 9.3.1, or 9.2 with 9.3.2, or 9.3 with 9.3.1, or 9.3 with 9.3.2, or 9.3 with 9.3.3.*

9.1 Good Agricultural Practices and/or Good Handling Practices (GAP&GHP) Audit Verification Program. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a GAP and/or GHP Audit shall be conducted by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). The audit program consists of one initial audit, and at least one unannounced audit depending on how long the facility is in operation during a growing season. *(The purpose of the GAP and/or GHP Audit*

Program is to demonstrate that the participating company is adhering to generally recognized GAP and/or GHP principles. This is a voluntary program established to verify a participant's adherence to the FDA's "Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables" and does not guarantee a safe product). For further information, see section 12.1 and 12.2.2.

9.2 Food Defense System Survey (FDSS). When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS shall be conducted by USDA, AMS personnel. The FDSS verifies measures that operators of food establishments take to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. *(An AMS FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to the FDA's "Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance.") For further information, see section 12.1 and 12.2.2.*

9.3 Manufacturer's quality assurance. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer shall be required to provide evidence, by certificate, that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid, or no later than 10 business days from the date of awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

9.3.1 Plant systems audit. A plant systems audit (PSA) conducted by USDA, AMS or other audit performed by a third party auditing service, and is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food, and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program.)*

9.3.2 Plant survey. A plant survey shall be conducted by USDA, AMS, or other survey performed by a third party auditing service and is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. *(An AMS plant survey audit verifies that at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food.)*

9.3.3 Qualified Through Verification (QTV) Audit. A QTV audit conducted by USDA, AMS, or other Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan verification audit performed by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of awarding of the contract. *(An AMS QTV audit verifies that at the time of the audit, the manufacturer produces products in a clean sanitary environment in accordance with Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 110 - Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding of Human Food.)*

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9.4 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished onions distributed meets or exceed the requirements of this CID.

9.5 USDA certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality, acceptability or both be determined, the Fresh Products Branch (FPB), Fruit and Vegetable Programs (FV), AMS, USDA, shall be the certifying program. FPB inspectors shall certify the quality and acceptability of the onions in accordance with FPB procedures which include: selecting random samples of the onions, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official FPB score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, FPB inspectors will examine the onions for conformance to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation.

10. PACKAGING. Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking shall be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

11. USDA INSPECTION NOTES. When Section 9.5 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification shall include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of onions, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Salient characteristics (Sec. 5).
- Microbiological requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 6.1). When USDA microbiological testing is specified, FPB inspection personnel shall select samples and submit them to the USDA, Science and Technology Programs (S&TP) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 10 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

12. REFERENCE NOTES.

12.1 USDA contacts.

12.1.1 USDA certification and GAP&GHP audit contact. For USDA certification and/or GAP&GHP audit, contact the **Branch Chief, FPB, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, telephone (202) 720-5870, Fax (202) 720-0393, or via E-mail: FVInfo@ams.usda.gov.**

12.1.2 FDSS and QTV audit contact. For a FDSS and/or QTV audit, contact the **Branch Chief, Processed Products Branch, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247 telephone (202) 720-4693, Fax (202) 690-1527, or via E-mail: terry.bane@ams.usda.gov.**

12.1.3 Analytical testing and technical information contact. For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Branch Chief, Technical Service Branch, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-0621 or via E-mail Shirleyj.wright@ams.usda.gov.**

12.2 Sources of documents.

12.2.1 Sources of information for nongovernmental document are as follows:

Copies of the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877, telephone (301) 924-7077 or on the Internet at: <http://www.aoac.org>.**

Copies of the Standard Operating Procedure No: FERN-MIC.0003.00a-d, “Procedures for the Detection of Shiga-toxin *Escherichia coli* (STEC), serotype O157 and non-O157 in Food” is available for FERN Laboratories online from **U.S. Food Emergency Response Network Elexnet website at <https://www.elexnet.com/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=201&PageID=0&cached=true&mode=2&userID=615>.**

12.2.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:

Applicable provisions of the National Organic Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 205, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503, and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954. Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover/NOVUS, and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents on (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800 or on the Internet at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.**

Copies of Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables are available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlanProducts/ucm064574.htm>.**

Copies of Guidance for Industry - Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables are available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlanProducts/ucm064458.htm>.**

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Copies of Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance are available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at:**

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/FoodDefenseandEmergencyResponse/ucm083075.htm>.

Copies of US Standards and Inspection Instructions for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Other Special Products may be obtained from: **USDA, AMS, FV, FPB, Standardization Section, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240 or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/standards>.**

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) are available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition on the Internet at: <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~ebam/bam-toc.html>.**

Copies of this CID and the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers, and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from and/or provided to: **Branch Chief, PPB, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-9939, Fax (202) 690-0102, via E-mail: FQASStaff@usda.gov or on the Internet at: www.ams.usda.gov/FQAS.**

Military activities should submit requests for copies of this CID to: **Standardization Documents Order Desk, Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Document Services, 700 Robbins Avenue, Building 4D, Philadelphia, PA 19111-5094 or on the Internet at: <https://assist.daps.dla.mil> or <https://assist.daps.dla.mil/quicksearch/>.**

MILITARY INTERESTS:

CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:

Military Coordinating Activity

Army - GL

DOJ - BOP
HHS - NIH, IHS, FDA
USDA - FV
VA - OSS

Custodians

Army - GL
Navy - SA
Air Force - 35

PREPARING ACTIVITY:

USDA - FV

Review Activities

Army - MD, QM
Navy - MC
DLA - SS

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