

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** Canada Consults on Modernizing Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grade Standards

**Country:** Canada

**Post:** Ottawa

**Report Category:** Agricultural Situation, Fresh Fruit, Vegetables

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**Report Highlights:**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has opened a consultation as part of their modernization of Canadian food quality standards. The consultation on grades and standards for fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV) will run from July 22 to October 20, 2024. CFIA is seeking stakeholder feedback to better understand how FFV grades are used in the marketplace, identify opportunities to reduce burdens on industry and support industry competitiveness, and to understand how altering and/or maintaining grades standards may affect stakeholders. CFIA is asking stakeholders to weigh in on three options for modernization: 1) an industry body will take over governance of FFV grades standards, 2) expand the mandate of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Dispute Resolution Council to develop and maintain FFV grades standards, or 3) CFIA maintains FFV grades standards but pivots to focus on an outcome-based approach.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will [consult](#) on modernization of fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV) grades standards until October 20, 2024. CFIA is seeking input from stakeholders including consumers, industry, and international trade partners on the role of FFV grades standards in the marketplace, potential implications for amendments, as well as their three proposed options for modernization. Those interested in commenting should consult the CFIA's [discussion paper](#) and complete the [online questionnaire](#) and/or provide feedback via email: [StandardsGradesModernization-Normesclassment.acia@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:StandardsGradesModernization-Normesclassment.acia@inspection.gc.ca)

CFIA currently maintains grades for 13 fresh fruits and 18 fresh vegetables in the [Canadian Grade Compendium: Volume 2- Fresh Fruit or Vegetables](#) which is incorporated by reference into the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations. Also incorporated by reference are the [Canadian Grade Compendium: Volume 9- Import Grade Requirements](#) and [Grade Standards Requirements for Fresh Fruits or Vegetables Imported from the United States](#). The grades set forth in these requirements apply to both locally produced and imported FFV. Canada is the largest destination for U.S. exports of FFV with roughly 45 percent of market share, valued at nearly \$4 billion dollars in 2023.

CFIA has observed, as part of their analysis, that most FFV do not have prescribed Canadian grades and that grades are not playing a role in food safety nor are they relevant to nutritional value, however, they are used to differentiate quality parameters. CFIA notes that the current prescriptive grades may be stifling product innovation or conflict with evolving consumer preferences and add additional cost burdens to industry that are not beneficial to food safety.

CFIA is proposing three options for modernization:

- 1) FFV grades will be retained in the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) but ownership of the document on FFV grades incorporated by reference will be given to an industry body.
  - a. This would mean a third party will maintain the FFV grades document and be responsible for developing new standards. This model is already employed for beef, veal, and bison grades and for organic standards.
- 2) Expand the mandate of the Fruit and Vegetable Dispute Resolution Council (DRC) to cover the development and maintenance of FFV grades.
  - a. The SFCR already requires those trading FFV to be member of the DRC. This would remove FFV grades from the SFCR, however, apples, onions, and potatoes could not be included due to other regulations within the SFCR.
- 3) CFIA continues to maintain FFV grades in the SFCR while utilizing a risk-based approach to establish outcome-based grades.
  - a. CFIA notes that this would be time intensive and require a significant investment of resources to accomplish.

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.