

1. Onions shall be obtained from Varieties (cultivars) *Allium Cepa* L.

2. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS-

(i) Onion shall be

(a) intact,

(b) sound, produce affected by rotting or deterioration such as to make it unfit for consumption is excluded,

(c) clean, free from any visible foreign matter,

(d) free from damage caused by frost;

(e) sufficiently dry for the intended use (in the case of onions for storing, at least the two first outer skins and the stem must be fully dried)

(f) without hollow or tough stems;

(g) practically free from pests;

(h) practically free from damage caused by pests;

(i) free of all abnormal external moisture;

(j) free of any foreign smell and/or taste.

The stems must be twisted or clean cut and must not exceed 6 cm in length (except for stringed onions).

(ii) They shall comply with the residue level of heavy metals, pesticides and other food safety parameters as laid down by the Codex Alimentarius Commission for exports.

3. CRITERIA FOR GRADE DESIGNATION:

Grade designation	Grade Requirements	Grade tolerances
1	2	4
Extra class	Onion shall be of superior quality. They shall be characteristic of the variety and /or commercial type. The bulbs shall be : - firm and compact; - unsprouted (free from externally	5% by number or weight of onion not satisfying the requirements of the grade, but meeting those of Class I grade or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that grade.

	visible shoots); - properly cleaned; - free from swelling caused by abnormal development; - free of root tufts, however, onions harvested before complete maturity, root tufts are allowed. They shall be free of defects, with the exception of very slight superficial blemishes, provided these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package.	
Class I	Onion shall be of good quality. They shall be characteristics of the variety and/or commercial type. The bulbs shall be : - firm and compact; - unsprouted (free from externally visible shoots); - free from swelling caused by abnormal development; - free of root tufts, however, onions harvested before complete maturity, root tufts are allowed. The following slight defects, however, may be allowed provided, these do not affect the general appearance of the produce, the	10% by number or weight of onion not satisfying the requirements of the grade, but meeting those of Class II grade or, exceptionally, coming within the tolerances of that grade.

	quality, the keeping quality and presentation in the package. - a slight defect in shape; - a slight defect in colouring; - light staining which does not affect the last dried skin protecting the flesh, provided it does not cover more than one-fifth of the bulb's surface. - Superficial cracks in and absence of part of the outer skins, provided the flesh is protected.	
Class II	Onion which do not qualify for inclusion in the higher grade, but satisfy the minimum requirements. They shall be reasonably firm. The following defects may be allowed, provided the onion retain their essential characteristics as regards the quality, the keeping quality and presentation. - defects in shape; - defects in colouring; - early signs of shoot growth visible from outside (not more than 10% by number or weight per unit of presentation); - traces of rubbing; - slight marking caused by parasites or disease; - small healed cracks; - slight bruising, healed, unlikely	10% by number or weight of onion not satisfying the requirements for the grade but meeting the minimum requirements.

	to impair keeping qualities; - root tufts; - stains which do not affect the last dried skin protecting the flesh provided they do not cover more than half the bulb's surface; - cracks in the outer skins and the absence of a part of the outerskins from not more than half of the bulbs's surface; - cracks in the outer skins and the absence of a part of the outerskins from not more than one-third of the bulb's surface, provided the flesh is not damaged.	
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4. OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

(I) The development and condition of the onion must be such as to enable them to:

- withstand transport and handling, and
- arrive in satisfactory condition at the place of destination.

(II) Onions must be presented as follows:

- arranged in layers;

- loose in the package (including in bulk bins);
- in strings:

either of a certain number of bulbs, in which case the strings must contain at least six onions(with fully dried stems); or of a certain net weight.

For stringed onions, the characteristics of the strings in any one package(number of bulbs or net weight) must be uniform.

5. PROVISIONS CONCERNING SIZING:

(I) Size is determined by the maximum diameter of the equatorial section in accordance with the following table.

	Size code	Diameter (in mm.)	Difference between the diameter of the smallest and largest onion in the same package (in mm.)
5	A		10-20
15	B		21-40

20	C	41-70
30	D	71 and above

The minimum diameter is 10mm.

(II) **Size tolerances:** For all grades, 10% by weight of onions not satisfying the size identified, but with a diameter of no more than 20% below or above it.

(P.K.AGARWAL)

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File No.:
18011/2/2003-M.II

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