

**CHAPTER 87. STANDARDS FOR GRADING AND
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Authority

The provisions of this Chapter 87 issued under act of April 4, 1929 (P. L. 144, No. 148) (3 P. S. §§ 21—33); and section 1704 of The Administrative Code of 1929 (71 P. S. § 444), unless otherwise noted.

Source

The provisions of this Chapter 87 adopted August 18, 1964, unless otherwise noted.

Cross References

This chapter cited in 7 Pa. Code § 85.2 (relating to Department responsibilities); and 7 Pa. Code § 85.3 (relating to personnel responsibilities).

PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS**§ 87.1. Definitions.**

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Case—The standard 30, 24 or 15-dozen egg case as used in commercial practice in this Commonwealth.

Department—The Department of Agriculture of the Commonwealth.

Egg—The product of the domesticated fowl enclosed in a shell.

Grade—Any lot or lots of two or more eggs.

Lot—A quantity of 30-dozen eggs or more.

Quality—The quality of an individual egg.

Weight—The weight of individual eggs, dozens or cases.

STANDARDS FOR QUALITY OF INDIVIDUAL SHELL EGGS**§ 87.11. Individual eggs with clean unbroken shells.**

(a) *AA quality*. The shell shall be clean, unbroken and practically normal. The air cell shall not exceed 1/8 inch in depth, may show unlimited movement, and may be free or bubbly. The white shall be clear and firm so that the yolk outline is only slightly defined when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk shall be practically free from apparent defects.

(b) *A quality*. The shell shall be clean, unbroken and practically normal. The air cell shall not exceed 3/16 of an inch in depth, may show unlimited movement and may be free or bubbly. The white shall be clear and at least reasonably firm so that the yolk outline is only fairly well defined when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk shall be practically free from apparent defects.

(c) *B quality*. The shell shall be unbroken, may be abnormal, and may have slightly stained areas. Moderately stained areas are permitted if they do not cover more than 1/32 of the shell surface if localized or 1/16 of the shell surface if scattered. Eggs having shells with prominent stains or adhering dirt are not per-

mitted. The air cell may exceed 3/16 of an inch in depth, may show unlimited movement, and may be free or bubbly. The white may be weak and watery so that the yolk outline is plainly visible when the egg is twirled before the candling light. The yolk may appear dark, enlarged, and flattened and may show clearly visible germ development but no blood due to such development it may show other serious defects that do not render the egg inedible.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.11 adopted August 18, 1964; amended June 16, 1972, effective June 17, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042; amended April 5, 1974, effective April 6, 1974, 4 Pa.B. 660; amended January 31, 1975, effective February 1, 1975, 5 Pa.B. 184; amended January 29, 1982 effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (19520) and (19521).

§ 87.12. Individual eggs with stained or dirty, unbroken shells.

(a) *B quality*. The shell shall be unbroken, may be abnormal and may have slightly stained areas. Moderately stained areas are permitted if they do not cover more than 1/32 of the shell surface if localized or 1/16 of the shell surface if scattered. Eggs having shells with prominent stains or adhering dirt are not permitted.

(b) *Dirty*. The shell shall be unbroken with adhering dirt or foreign material, prominent stains, or moderate stains covering more than 1/32 of the shell surface if localized or 1/16 of the shell surface if scattered.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.12 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (19521) and (19522).

§ 87.13. Individual eggs with checked, cracked or broken shells.

(a) *Check individual eggs*. The egg may have a crack in the shell but the shell membranes shall be intact.

(b) *Leaker individual eggs*. The shell may have a broken shell or a crack in the shell membranes with the contents exuding or free to exude through the shell.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.13 adopted August 18, 1964; amended March 23, 1973, effective March 24, 1973, 3 Pa.B. 532. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (4060).

DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

§ 87.21. Terms descriptive of the egg shell.

The following terms shall be used in describing egg shells:

(1) *Clean*. Free from foreign material and from stains or discolorations that are readily visible. Eggs with only very small specks, cage marks or stains may be considered clean if such specks, cage marks, or stains are not of sufficient

number or intensity to detract from the generally clean appearance of the egg. Eggs that show traces of processing oil on the shell shall be considered clean unless otherwise soiled.

(2) *Dirty*. Unbroken, has dirt or foreign material adhering to the surface, and has prominent stains or moderate stains covering more than 1/32 of the shell surface if localized or 1/16 of the shell surface if scattered.

(3) *Practically normal (AA or A quality)*. Approximates the usual shape and is sound and is free from thin spots. Ridges and rough areas that do not materially affect the shape and strength of the shell are permitted.

(4) *Abnormal (B quality)*. A shell that may be somewhat unusual or decidedly misshapen or faulty in soundness or strength or may show pronounced ridges or thin spots.

(5) *Unbroken*. Free from checks or breaks.

(6) *Checked and cracked*. Has an actual break but the shell membranes shall be intact.

(7) *Leaker*. May have a break or crack in the shell and shell membrane, with the contents exuding or free to exude through the shell.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.21 adopted August 18, 1964; amended June 16, 1972, effective June 17, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042; amended January 29, 1982 effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (19522) and (4061).

§ 87.22. Terms descriptive of the air cell of an egg.

The following terms shall be used in describing the air cell of eggs:

(1) *Air cell*. The air space between shell membranes normally located in the large end of the egg.

(2) *Depth*. Distance from the top of the air cell to the bottom when the egg is held air cell up.

(3) *Practically regular*. Maintains a practically fixed position in the egg and shows a fairly even outline with no more than 3/16 of an inch movement in any direction as the egg is rotated.

(4) *Free air cell*. Moves freely toward uppermost point in the egg as the egg is rotated slowly.

(5) *Bubbly air cell*. Ruptured, resulting in one or more small air bubbles usually floating beneath the main air cell.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.22 adopted August 18, 1964; amended June 16, 1972, effective June 17, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042; amended April 5, 1974, effective April 6, 1974, 4 Pa.B. 660; amended June 16, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (1712).

§ 87.23. Terms descriptive of the egg white.

The following terms shall be used in describing the egg white of eggs:

(1) *Clear*. Free from discoloration or from any foreign bodies floating in it. Prominent chalazas shall not be confused with foreign bodies such as spots or blood clots.

(2) *Firm. (AA quality)*. Sufficiently thick or viscous to prevent the yolk outline from being more than slightly defined or indistinctly indicated when the egg is twirled. With respect to a broken-out egg, a firm white has a Haugh unit value above 72 when measured at a temperature from 45°F to 60°F.

(3) *Reasonably firm (A quality)*. Somewhat less thick or viscous than a firm white. Permits the yolk to approach the shell more closely which results in a fairly well defined yolk outline when the egg is twirled. With respect to a broken-out egg, a reasonably firm white has a Haugh unit value of 60 to 72 when measured at a temperature from 45°F to 60°F.

(4) *Weak and watery (B quality)*. Weak, thin, and generally lacking in viscosity. Permits the yolk to approach the shell closely, thus causing the yolk outline to appear plainly visible and dark when the egg is twirled. With respect to a broken-out egg, a weak and watery white has a Haugh unit value below 60 when measured at a temperature from 45°F to 60°F.

(5) *Blood spots or meat spots*. Small blood spots or meat spots aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter, may be classed as B quality. If they are larger or showing diffusion of blood into the white surrounding the blood spots, the egg shall be classified as loss. Blood spots shall not be due to germ development; they may be on the yolk or in the white. Meat spots may be blood spots which have lost their characteristic red color or tissue from the reproductive organs.

(6) *Bloody white*. Eggs with bloody whites or blood diffused through the white shall be classed as loss.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.23 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (4061) and (12229).

§ 87.24. Terms descriptive of the egg yolk.

The following terms shall be used in describing egg yolks:

(1) *Outline slightly defined (AA quality)*. Yolk outline is indistinctly indicated and appears to blend into the surrounding white as the egg is twirled.

(2) *Outline fairly well defined (A quality)*. Yolk outline is discernible but not clearly outlined as the egg is twirled.

(3) *Outline plainly visible (B quality)*. Yolk outline is clearly visible as a dark shadow when the egg is twirled.

(4) *Enlarged and flattened (B quality)*. Yolk membranes and tissues have weakened or moisture has been absorbed from the white to such an extent that the yolk appears definitely enlarged and flat. development or other defects.

(5) *Practically free from defects (AA or A quality)*. Yolk shows no germ development but may show other very slight defects on its surface.

(6) *Serious defects (B quality)*. Yolk shows well developed spots or areas and other serious defects such as olive yolks which do not render the egg inedible.

(7) *Clearly visible germ development (B quality)*. A development of the germ spot on the yolk of a fertile egg has progressed to a point at which the germ is plainly visible as a definite circular area or spot with no blood in evidence.

(8) *Blood due to germ development*. Blood caused by development of the germ in a fertile egg to the point where it is visible as definite lines or blood ring. Such eggs shall be classified as inedible.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.24 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (12229) and (4063).

§ 87.25. General terms.

The following terms shall be used in describing eggs:

(1) *Loss*. Eggs that are inedible, smashed, or broken so that contents are leaking; cooked; frozen; contaminated; or containing bloody whites, large blood spots, large unsightly meat spots, or other foreign material.

(2) *Inedible eggs*. Eggs following descriptions: black rots, yellow rots, white rots, mixed rots (addled eggs), sour eggs, eggs with green whites, eggs with stuck yolks, moldy eggs, musty eggs, eggs showing blood rings, eggs containing embryo chicks at or beyond the blood ring state, and any eggs that are adulterated as such term is defined in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (21 U.S.C.A. §§ 301—392).

Source

The provisions of this § 87.25 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (4063).

STANDARDS AND WEIGHT CLASSES FOR WHOLESALE GRADES OF SHELL EGGS

§ 87.31. Standards.

The following standards shall be used to classify wholesale grades of shell eggs:

<i>Wholesale grade description</i>	<i>Maximum percentage of eggs of specific qualities required</i>			<i>Maximum tolerance permitted (lot average)</i>		
	<i>AA quality</i>	<i>A quality or better</i>	<i>B quality or better</i>	<i>B quality dirties and checks (percent)</i>	<i>Dirties and checks (percent)</i>	<i>Loss (percent)</i>
U. S. specials—percent AA quality (The actual total percentage must be stated in the grade name)	20	Balance	None except for tolerance	7.5		2
U. S. extras—percent A quality (The actual total percentage must be stated in the grade name)		20	Balance		11.7	3
U. S. standards—percent B quality (The actual total percentage must be stated in the grade name)			84.3		11.7	4

¹Substitution of eggs possessing higher qualities for those possessing lower specified qualities shall be permitted.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.31 adopted August 18, 1964; amended June 16, 1972, effective June 17, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042; amended April 5, 1974, effective April 6, 1974, 4 Pa.B. 660; amended through January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (4063), (12230) and (12232).

§ 87.32. Weights.

The following weight classes shall apply to wholesale grades of shell eggs:

<i>Weight Classes</i>	<i>PER 30 DOZEN EGGS</i>			<i>WEIGHTS FOR INDIVIDUAL EGGS AT RATE PER DOZEN</i>	
	<i>Average Net Weight on a Lot 1 Basis At Least</i>	<i>Minimum Net Weight Individual Case 2 Basis</i>	<i>Minimum Weight</i>	<i>Weight Variation Tolerance For Not More Than 10% By Count, Of Individual Eggs</i>	<i>(ounces)</i>
Extra Large	(pounds) 50.5	(pounds) 50	(ounces) 26	under 26 but not under 24	
Large	(pounds) 45	(pounds) 44	(ounces) 23	under 23 but not under 21	

	PER 30 DOZEN EGGS		WEIGHTS FOR INDIVIDUAL EGGS AT RATE PER DOZEN	
	Medium	39.5	39	20
Small	34	None	None	None

¹Lot shall mean any quantity of 30 dozen or more eggs.

²Case means standard 30 dozen egg case as used in commercial practice in the United States.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.32 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (12232).

STANDARDS AND WEIGHT CLASSES FOR CONSUMER GRADES OF SHELL EGGS

§ 87.41. Standards

(a) The following standards shall be used to classify consumer grades of shell eggs:

(1) *Grade AA.* The following are standards for Grade AA shell eggs:

(i) *Grade AA (at origin)* shall consist of eggs which are at least 87% AA quality. The maximum tolerance of 13% which may be below AA quality, may consist of A or B quality in any combination, except that within the tolerance for B quality not more than 1.0% may be B quality due to air cells over 3/8 inch, blood spots—aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter—or serious yolk defects. Not more than 5.0%—7.0% for Jumbo size checks are permitted, and not more than 0.5% leakers, dirties or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(ii) *Grade AA (destination)* shall consist of eggs which are at least 72% AA quality. The remaining tolerance of 28% shall consist of at least 10% A quality and the remainder shall be B quality, except that within the tolerance for B quality not more than 1.0% may be B quality due to air cells over 3/8 inch, blood spots—aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter—or serious yolk defects. Not more than 7.0%—9.0% for Jumbo size checks are permitted, and not more than 1.0% leakers, dirties, or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(2) The following are standards for Grade A shell eggs:

(i) *Grade A (at origin)* shall consist of eggs which are at least 87% A quality or better. Within the maximum tolerance of 13% which may be below A quality, not more than 1.0% may be B quality due to air cells over 3/8 inch, blood spots—aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter—or serious yolk defects. Not more than 5.0%—7.0% for Jumbo size checks are per-

mitted, and not more than 0.5 leakers, dirties or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(ii) Grade A (destination) shall consist of eggs which are at least 82% A quality or better. Within the maximum tolerance of 18% which may be below A quality, not more than 1.0% may be B quality due to air cells over 3/8 inch, blood spots—aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter—or serious yolk defects. Not more than 7.0%—9.0% for Jumbo size checks are permitted, and not more than 1.0% leakers, dirties or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(3) *Grade B.* The following are standards for Grade B shell eggs:

(i) Grade B (at origin) shall consist of eggs which are at least 90% B quality or better. Not more than 10% may be checks and not more than 0.5% leakers, dirties, or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(ii) Grade B (destination) shall consist of eggs which are at least 90% B quality or better. Not more than 10% may be checks and not more than 1.0% leakers, dirties, or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination, except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(4) *Additional tolerance.* The following are additional tolerances:

(i) In lots of two or more cases:

(A) For Grade AA—no individual case may exceed 10% less AA quality eggs than the minimum permitted for the lot average.

(B) For Grade A—no individual case may exceed 10% less A quality eggs than the minimum permitted for the lot average.

(C) For Grade B—no individual case may exceed 10% less B quality eggs than the minimum permitted for the lot average.

(ii) For grades AA, A, and B—no lot shall be rejected or downgraded due to the quality of a single egg except for loss other than blood or meat spots.

(5) *Application.* Such grades are applicable to any quantity of two or more eggs but not individual eggs.

(6) *Substitution.* Substitution of eggs possessing higher qualities for those possessing lower qualities shall be permitted.

(7) *Consumer grades.* Pennsylvania consumer grades for shell eggs shall be as follows:

(i) The quality required for specified grades at origin shall conform with the following table:

TABLE I

<i>Pa. consumer grade (origin)</i>	<i>Quality required</i>	<i>Tolerance permitted</i>	
		<i>Percent</i>	<i>Quality</i>
Grade AA	87% AA	Up to 13 Not over 5 Checks	A or B
Grade A	87% A or better	Up to 13 Not over 5 Checks	B
Grade B	90% B or better	Not over 10 Checks	

(ii) The quality required for specified grades at destination shall conform with the following table:

TABLE II

<i>Pa. consumer grade (destination)</i>	<i>Quality required</i>	<i>Tolerance permitted</i>	
		<i>Percent</i>	<i>Quality</i>
Grade AA	72% AA	Up to 28 Not over 7 Checks	A or B
Grade A	82% A or better	Up to 18 Not over 7 Checks	B
Grade B	90% B or better	Not over 10 Checks	

(iii) Directions for use of tables:

(A) In lots of two more cases, see Table II for tolerances for an individual case within a lot.

(B) For the United States Consumer grades (at origin), a tolerance of 0.5% leakers, dirties, or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination is permitted except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(C) For the United States Consumer grades (destination), a tolerance of 1.0% leakers, dirties, or loss—due to meat or blood spots—in any combination is permitted; except that such loss may not exceed 0.3%. Other types of loss are not permitted.

(D) For United States Grade AA at destination, at least 10% must be A quality or better.

(E) For United States Grade AA and A at origin and destination within the tolerances permitted for B quality, not more than 1.0% may be B quality due to air cells over 3/8 inch, blood spots—aggregating not more than 1/8 inch in diameter—or serious yolk defects.

(F) For United States Grades AA and A Jumbo size eggs, the tolerance for Checks at origin and destination is 7.0% and 9.0% respectively.

(iv) Tolerances permitted for an individual case within a lot shall conform with the following table:

<i>Pa. Consumer grade</i>	<i>Case quality</i>	<i>Origin (Percent)</i>	<i>Destination (Percent)</i>
Grade AA	AA(min.)	77	62
	A or B	13	28
	Check(max.)	10	10
Grade A	A(min.)	77	72
	B	13	18
	Check(max.)	10	10
Grade B	B(min.)	80	80
	Check(max.)	20	20

Source

The provisions of this § 87.41 adopted August 18, 1964; amended November 3, 1972, effective November 4, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 2125; amended January 31, 1975, effective February 1, 1975, 5 Pa.B. 184; amended January 29, 1982, effective April 30, 1982, 12 Pa.B. 468. Immediately preceding text appears at serial pages (19523) to (19526).

§ 87.42. Weight classes.

(a) The following weight classes shall apply to consumer grades of shell eggs:

<i>Size or Weight, Classes</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight (Ounces Per Dozen)</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight (Pounds per 30 Dozen)</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight For Individual Eggs At Rate Per/B Tolerance/c</i>
Jumbo	30	56	29
Extra Large	27	50.5	26
Large	24	45	23
Medium	21	39.5	20
Small	18	34	17
Peewee	15	28	—

<i>Size or Weight, Classes</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight (Ounces Per Dozen)</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight (Pounds per 30 Dozen)</i>	<i>Min. Net Weight For Individual Eggs At Rate Per/B Tolerance/c</i>
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(b) Minimum weights shall be permitted in various size classes only to the extent that they shall not reduce the net weight per dozen below the required minimum, giving thorough consideration to variable weight of individual eggs and variable efficiency of graders and scales which shall be maintained on a uniform and accurate basis.

(c) A lot average tolerance of 3.3% for individual eggs in the next lower weight class is permitted as long as no individual case within the lot exceeds 5.0%.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.42 adopted August 18, 1964; amended January 31, 1975, effective February 1, 1975, 5 Pa.B. 184; amended through January 31, 1975, 5 Pa.B. 184. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (4071).

Cross References

This section cited in 7 Pa. Code § 87.52 (relating to marking).

MARKING OF CONSUMER RECEPTACLES OF SHELL EGGS

§ 87.51. Receptacles.

Marketing of eggs in consumer receptacles shall be permitted only if the receptacle is properly labeled or marked. Consumer receptacles shall include but not be limited to the following:

- (1) Paper bags.
- (2) Cardboard boxes.
- (3) Shoe boxes.
- (4) Consumer egg cartons.
- (5) Multiple unit egg cartons.
- (6) Eggs over-wrapped with paper or other material, and other such containers when used in offering eggs for sale to consumers.

Source

The provisions of this § 87.51 adopted August 18, 1964.

§ 87.52. Marking.

(a) All consumer receptacles shall be marked in a plain and conspicuous manner on the principal display panel (top) with:

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- (1) statement of identity (eggs) in size lettering reasonably related to the most prominent printed material on the principal display panel; and
 - (2) net contents in lettering at least 3/16 inches in height.
- (b) The following information shall be shown on the principal display panel or a side panel in a plain and conspicuous manner:
- (1) Consumer grade.
 - (2) Weight class.
 - (3) Name and address, including ZIP code, of the producer, packer, or distributor.
- (c) In lieu of the consumer grade, eggs may be marked in a conspicuous manner on the front or top panel with a statement of "Not Classified," "Unclassified," or other terminology acceptable to the Department. "Not Classified," "Unclassified," or other acceptable terminology shall indicate eggs of edible quality which are not segregated according to official Pennsylvania grades and weight classes, but not to include dirties, leakers, and loss.
- (d) Consumer grades which may be used in the marking of consumer receptacles are those defined in § 87.41 (relating to standards).
- (e) Weight classes which may be used in the marking of consumer receptacles are those defined in § 87.42 (relating to weight classes).

Source

The provisions of this § 87.52 adopted August 18, 1964; amended June 16, 1972, 2 Pa.B. 1042; amended April 5, 1974, effective April 6, 1974, 4 Pa.B. 660. Immediately preceding text appears at serial page (1719).

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