

Idaho State Department of Agriculture

02.02.05 Prune Standards

July 24, 2019

Laura Thomas, Facilitator

Present: Miguel Luna, Boy Scout; Cindy Stark, ISDA; Pamela Juker, ISDA; Laura Thomas, ISDA; Katy DeVries, Office of Attorney General – ISDA; Janis Perry, ISDA.

AGENDA ITEMS

WELCOME

Laura Thomas convened the meeting at 10:05 am. Miguel Luna explained that he was present as a public meeting requirement for his Communications merit badge for Boy Scouts. Laura and Cindy Stark explained the role of the Ag Inspections Division in inspecting produce.

Laura Thomas stated that the changes to this rule involve references to outdated USDA standards for plums and prunes. In section 050, the grading of Processing Grade, prunes or plums will be based on the current (now March 29, 2004) U.S. Standards for Fresh Plums and Prunes. The minimum size, sugar content, and tolerance has not changed in this grade.

In section 100, the standard for Idaho No. 1 Italian prunes is based on the March 29, 2004 U.S. Standards for Fresh Plums and Prunes No. 1 Standards. The color reference has not changed, but the size is changed to 1-1/4 inches in diameter.

Laura stated that the inspection program is not mandatory; that growers may choose to use the Idaho standard, but a shipper or packer can call for a market inspection if this label is used. Also, a packer does not have a put a grade on a product. This is enforced under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA).

In response to a question by Miguel Luna, Laura remarked that this rule is not heavily used and it is voluntary. She describe the inspection process. If the fruit was packed in a thirty pound box, the inspection might be based on a sample of fifty fruits. And if a semi-truck were full of boxes, the inspection might involve ten samples. She indicated that “all prunes are plums, but not all plums are prunes. Color is important in prunes as a sign of maturity. Pluots, a plum/apricot hybrid are also considered in the same standards as plums and prunes. Apriums, an apricot/plum hybrid have apricot parentage and characteristics therefore an Apricot Standard would be applied if graded.

Laura Thomas adjourned the meeting at 10:20 am.

Respectfully submitted by Janis Perry.