

Almond Shrivel: Understanding the Range of Defects



Following the USDA Standards and Grades, a standardized system of almond grading helps ensure confidence in the quality and consistency of almonds purchased for various uses. Tolerances, or limits, for each parameter are set for the seven grades and summarized in the USDA grade chart.

USDA GRADES

	Whole Kernels	Minimum Diameter (In Inches)	Dissimilar	Doubles	Chip & Scratch	Foreign Material	Particles & Dust	Split & Broken	Other Defects	Serious Defects	Under Size
U.S. Fancy	—	—	5%	3%	5%	0.05%	0.1%	1%	2%	1%	—
U.S. Extra No. 1	—	—	5%	5%	5%	0.05%	0.1%	1%	4%	1.5%	—
U.S. No. 1 (Supreme)*	—	—	5%	15%	10%	0.05%	0.1%	1%	5%	1.5%	—
U.S. Select Sheller Run (SSR)	—	—	5%	15%	20%	0.1%	0.1%	5%	3%	2%	—
U.S. Standard Sheller Run (STD)	—	—	5%	25%	35%	0.2%	0.1%	15%	3%	2%	—
U.S. No. 1 Whole & Broken	30%	20/64 UOS**	5%	35%	x	0.2%	0.1%	x	5%	3%	5%
U.S. No. 1 Pieces	x	8/64	x	x	x	0.2%	1%	x	5%	3%	5%

x No limit established Also included in "Other Defects" Includes max. 2% under 20/64 inch Includes max. 5% under 20/64 inch % also included in "Chip & Scratch"

* U.S. No. 1 is commonly referred to by industry as Supreme. However, Supreme is not a USDA grade. ** UOS = Unless Otherwise Specified (Effective 3/24/1997)

It's important to note that parameter tolerances for all grades are meant to be applied to the entire lot, and a composite sample shall be taken to determine the grade.

Almond Shrivel is defined as shriveled, wrinkled-appearance kernels: when the kernel is excessively thin for its size, or when materially withered, shrunken, leathery, tough or only partially developed if not more than three-fourth of the pellicle is filled with meat. Kernels that meet this description will be graded and considered as fall within the "Other Defects" grading parameter of the USDA Grade Chart.

All U.S. almond grades require the kernels to be well dried. Kernels that are distinctly pliable or leathery shall be reported as "not well dried" and scored against the tolerance for "Other Defects."



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For more information on USDA Standards and Grades, visit Almonds.com/StandardsandGrades

