



A Guide to Buying Canned Fruits and Vegetables

Agriculture Extension Service
The Ohio State University

A Guide to Buying Canned Fruits and Vegetables

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"A Guide to Buying Canned Fruits and Vegetables" is the second in a series of food buying leaflets published by the Consumer Food Marketing Information Program of the Agricultural Extension Service. The leaflets in this series contain information on container sizes, quality guides, and quantity to purchase to serve 100. They provide information to help you get the most eating satisfaction from the money you spend for processed food.

Canned fruits and vegetables permit you to enjoy a wide variety of short season fruits and vegetables all year. The same food is often packed in different forms, grades, and can or jar sizes.

To shop wisely, you should know the types or styles of packs, grades, container sizes and the approximate number of servings you can expect from each can.

SHOPPING GUIDES

Research shows that price is not always a good indicator of quality. Buying canned fruits and vegetables by specifications prepared to meet your specific need is probably your best buying guide. However, where this is not practical, you will find the label, federal grades and/or the brand name useful as shopping guides.

The Label

The label is the "window" through which you may see the contents in the can. All information on the label must be truthful and not misleading. The law requires that all canned food shipped in interstate commerce be labeled with the following information:

The legal name of the product, such as peas, corn and peaches.

The net contents in weight or fluid measure.

The name and address of the packer or distributor.

All ingredients in the container.

For some products, the law requires that labels give style of pack (whole, halves, sliced, diced), variety (cling or freestone peaches), and the sweetness of the sirup used with fruits (light, heavy, extra heavy).

Many packers include more information on the label than that required by law. They often add such helpful information as the grade, the brand name, the number of servings, the contents of the container in terms of cups or number of pieces, the maturity of the product, the variety, the size of the pieces, the seasonings, recipes for using the product and a picture of the product.

Federal Grades

United States grade standards for canned fruits and vegetables are issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Grades are based on factors which reflect

the quality of the finished product. Color, size, excellence of workmanship, succulency in vegetables, ripeness and shape in fruit and flavor are some of the factors considered in grading canned fruits and vegetables.

The grade names in the standards may vary among products, but the most common ones are:

Grade A or Fancy

Grade B or Choice (for fruits), Extra Standard (for vegetables)

Grade C or Standard

Quality names for foods which are lower than Grade "C" may vary. Different segments of the processing industry commonly use various terms.

All grades are wholesome, nutritious foods. They may differ in texture, in color, in size or irregularity of pieces, in maturity of product, in clearness of liquid, or in type of sirup used. Letter grades are a guide in making purchases of canned fruits and vegetables. They can help you select a product of known quality and one that suits the purpose for which you plan to use it.

Any canner or distributor can use the terms "Grade A," "Grade B" or "Grade C" on labels to designate the grade of the fruit or vegetable. Products that are labeled in this way must meet the specifications of the U. S. standards for the grade claimed. If the letters U. S. precede the grade, the foods must have been processed under continuous inspection by the U.S.D.A. and must meet the federal standards for quality.

Purchasing agents for food service institutions may find the U. S. standards valuable when drafting product specifications to meet their particular needs.

Brand Name

Packers attempt to maintain a uniform quality. Since not all canned fruits and vegetables are graded, the wise shopper compares different brands at least once a year, preferably near the end of the canning season, and buys the brand or brands that best suit her needs.

Buy for Intended Use

Canned fruits and vegetables are packed in a variety of forms. For example, green beans are packed whole, cut, or French-cut. Beets are packed whole, cut and quartered, sliced, diced or French-cut. Peaches are

packed whole, halved or quartered, sliced or diced. Some fruits are packed in water for special diet needs, others in light, heavy, or extra heavy sirup. Vegetables may be packed with or without salt.

Canned fruits and vegetables that are cut up or packed in irregular or assorted size pieces usually cost less per serving than the whole product. Where appearance is important as in special dishes, fancy desserts or fruit salads, the whole or half pieces may be preferred. For other purposes such as casseroles, fruit cobblers, or puddings, the cut-up forms may serve just as well.

DETERMINE YOUR NEEDS

The following tables will serve as a guide to the size of can and the number of cans to meet your needs. It is advisable to figure costs per serving from each can size to determine the more economical buy at the time of purchase. Usually, the larger the can size, the lower the cost per serving, providing, of course, that you have adequate storage facilities and use for any leftovers from the larger size can.

For example, suppose you are planning to serve 100 persons green snap beans. You have decided that you

will purchase five No. 10 cans of the quality and style that meet your needs. You have been quoted a price of \$9 a dozen. Divide:

$$\frac{\$.75 \text{ per can}}{12} = \$ 9.00 = \text{price per dozen}$$

To calculate price per serving, divide:

$$\frac{\text{No. of Servings} - 21}{\text{per can}} \frac{3.57 \text{ cents per serving}}{\$.75 = \text{price per can}}$$

Table I — CANNED FRUITS

Fruit	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Size of Serving	Approx. No. Servings per Can	Approx. No. Cans to Serve 100
Apples Sliced	303	1 lb.		Determined by Use	
	2	1 lb. 2 oz.		Determined by Use	
	2½	1 lb. 10 oz.		Determined by Use	
	10	5 lb. 15 oz.		Determined by Use	
Apple Butter	303	1 lb. 2 oz.	1 Tablespoon	18	6
	2	1 lb. 6 oz.	1 Tablespoon	22	5
	2½	2 lb. 1 oz.	1 Tablespoon	33	3
	10	7 lb. 8 oz.	1 Tablespoon	120	1
Apple Sauce	303	1 lb.	½ Cup	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 13 oz.	½ Cup	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	½ Cup	27	4
Apricots	303	1 lb.	4 Med. Halves	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	4 Med. Halves	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	4 Med. Halves	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	4 Med. Halves	25	4
Berries ¹	303	1 lb.	½ Cup	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	½ Cup	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	½ Cup	26	4
Cherries	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	½ Cup	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	½ Cup	25	4

Table I—CANNED FRUITS (Continued)

Fruit	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Size of Serving	Approx. No. Servings per Can	Approx. No. Cans to Serve 100
Cranberry Sauce Whole Strained	2	1 lb. 6 oz.	1 Tablespoon	22	5
	10	7 lb. 5 oz.	1 Tablespoon	117	1
Currants	10	6 lb. 10 oz.		Determined by Use	
Figs	303	1 lb. 1 oz.	3 Med.	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	3 Med.	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	3 Med.	7	14
	10	7 lb.	3 Med.	25	4
Fruit Cocktail or fruit for salads	303	1 lb.	½ Cup	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	½ Cup	7	14
	10	6 lb. 14 oz.	½ Cup	27	4
Grapefruit	303	1 lb.	½ Cup	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	3 Cyl.	3 lb. 2 oz.	½ Cup	12	8
Grapefruit and Orange Segments			Same as Grapefruit		
Grapes	303	1 lb.	½ Cup	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	½ Cup	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	½ Cup	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	½ Cup	27	4
Oranges			Same as Grapefruit		
Peaches	303	1 lb.	2 Med. Halves	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	2 Med. Halves	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	2 Med. Halves	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	2 Med. Halves	25	4
Pears	303	1 lb.	2 Med. Halves	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	2 Med. Halves	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 13 oz.	2 Med. Halves	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	2 Med. Halves	25	4
Pineapple	8 Z	8 oz.	Determined by Use		
	1 Flat	9 oz.	Determined by Use		
	211 Cyl.	14 oz.	Determined by Use		
	1¼ (Sliced)	15 oz.	1 Large Slice	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	Determined by Use		
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	Determined by Use		
10	6 lb. 12 oz.	Determined by Use			
Plums	303	1 lb. 1 oz.	3 Med.	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	3 Med.	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	3 Med.	7	14
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	3 Med.	25	4
Prunes	303	1 lb. 1 oz.	3 Med.	4	25
	2	1 lb. 5 oz.	3 Med.	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 14 oz.	3 Med.	7	14
	10	6 lb. 14 oz.	3 Med.	25	4

¹Includes blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, gooseberries, huckleberries and loganberries.

Table II — CANNED FRUIT JUICES

Fruit Juice	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Approx. No. ½ Cup Servings per Can	Approx. No. Cans to Serve 100
Apple	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	Gallon jug	8 lb.	32	3
Boysenberry	12 oz.	12 oz.	3	33
Cranberry	1 pt. glass	16 oz.	4	25
	Gallon	8 lb.	32	3
Grapefruit	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	Sweetened 2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	Unsweetened 3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	10	6 lb. 10 oz.	30	3
Grape	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	211 Cyl.	12 oz.	3	33
Grape (Concentrate)	6 Z	6 oz.	6	17
Lemon or Lime (Concentrate)	6 Z	6 oz.	Determined by Use	
Orange	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	Sweetened 2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	Unsweetened 3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	10	6 lb. 10 oz.	30	3
Orange (Concentrate)	6 Z	6 oz.	6	17
Orange and Grapefruit Blend	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
Pineapple	8 Z	8 oz.	2	50
	2 T	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	10	6 lb. 10 oz.	30	3
Prune	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	211 Cyl.	12 oz.	3	33
Tangerine Sweetened	2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9

Table III — CANNED VEGETABLES

Canned Vegetables: Selected Can Name, Approximate Weight Per Can, Approximate Number of Servings Per Can, and Approximate Number of Cans to Serve 100.

Vegetable and Style	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Approx. No. ½ Cup Servings per Can	Approx. No. cans to Serve 100
Asparagus Cuts	2 T	1 lb. 3 oz.	5	20
	10	6 lb. 7 oz.	21	5
Cut Spears				
Spears				

Table III — CANNED VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable and Style	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Approx. No. $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Servings per Can	Approx. No. Cans to Serve 100
Beans Kidney	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	3 ¹	33
	2½ Cyl.	1 lb. 14 oz.	5 ¹	20
	3 Cyl.	3 lb. 4 oz.	8 ¹	12
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	18 ¹	6
Beans, Lima Green Green & White	303	1 lb.	3-4	28
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	4-5	22
	10	6 lb. 9 oz.	24	4
Beans, Navy and Pork & Beans	2 Cyl.	1 lb. 4 oz.	3 ¹	33
	2½	1 lb. 15 oz.	5 ¹	20
	5	3 lb. 3 oz.	8 ¹	12
	10	6 lb. 14 oz.	18 ¹	6
Beans, Snap (Green & Wax) Cut French-cut Whole	303	15½ oz.	4	25
	2	1 lb. 3 oz.	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	7	14
	10	6 lb. 5 oz.	21	5
Beets	303	1 lb.	4	25
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	7	15
	10	6 lb. 8 oz.	23	4
Carrots	303	1 lb.	4	25
	10	6 lb. 8 oz.	23	4
Corn	303	1 lb.	3-4	33
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	3-4	30
	10	6 lb. 10 oz.	18	5½
Greens Kale Mustard Turnip Spinach	303	1 lb.	3-4	28
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	6	16
	10	6 lb. 2 oz.	20	5
Mushrooms Pieces & Stems Sliced Whole	6 oz.	5½ oz.	Determined by Use	
	8 Z	12¼ oz.	Determined by Use	
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	Determined by Use	
	10	6 lb. 7 oz.	Determined by Use	
Okra	303	1 lb.	Determined by Use	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	Determined by Use	
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	Determined by Use	
	10	6 lb. 3 oz.	Determined by Use	
Onions ³ Stewed Boiled	303	15 oz.	2	50
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	3	33
	10	6 lb. 5 oz.	15	7
Parsnips	303	1 lb.	4	25
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	6	16
	10	6 lb. 8 oz.	24	4

Table III – CANNED VEGETABLES (Continued)

Vegetable and Style	Can Name (Number)	Approx. Weight per Can	Approx. No. ½ Cup Servings per Can	Approx. No. Cans to Serve 100	
Peas, Green Sweets Early June	303	1 lb.	4	25	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	10	6 lb. 9 oz.	28	4	
Peas & Carrots	303	1 lb.	4	25	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	10	6 lb. 9 oz.	28	4	
Peppers (Green)	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	Determined by Use		
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	Determined by Use		
	10	6 lb. 6 oz.	Determined by Use		
Pimiento	4 Z	4 oz.	Determined by Use		
	7 Z	7 oz.	Determined by Use		
	300	14 oz.	Determined by Use		
Potatoes	303	1 lb.	3-4	29	
		French-cut Sliced	4-5	22	
		Whole	25	4	
		Diced			
Sauerkraut	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	2½	1 lb. 18 oz.	8	13	
	10	6 lb. 3 oz.	26	4	
Pumpkin or Squash	300	15 oz.	Determined by Use		
	303	1 lb.	Determined by Use		
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	Determined by Use		
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	Determined by Use		
	10	6 lb. 10 oz.	Determined by Use		
Succotash	303	1 lb.	4	25	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	24	4	
Sweet Potatoes	Dry Pack	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20
		2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	7	14
		10	6 lb. 6 oz.	25	4
	Sirup Pack	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	3-4	29
		2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	5	21
	Vacuum Pack	10	6 lb. 6 oz.	19	5
		3 Vacuum	1 lb. 2 oz.	4-5	22
Tomatoes	303	1 lb.	4	25	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	2½	1 lb. 12 oz.	7	14	
	10	6 lb. 6 oz.	25	4	
Vegetables Mixed	303	1 lb.	4	25	
	2	1 lb. 4 oz.	5	20	
	10	6 lb. 8 oz.	24	4	

¹Approximately ⅔ cup servings.

²A No. 303 can of cream style corn will yield 4 servings; a No. 2 can, 5 servings; a No. 10 can, 26 servings.

³French-fried onions are also available.

Table IV – CANNED VEGETABLE JUICES

Vegetable Juice	Can Name (Number)	Weight per Purchase Unit Approximate	Approx No. ½ Cup Servings per Purchase Unit	Approx. No. Purchase Units to Serve 100
Sauerkraut	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4	25
	2½	1 lb. 10 oz.	7	15
	10	6 lb.	24	4
Tomato Single strength	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	2 Cyl.	1 lb. 7 oz.	6	17
	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	10	6 lb. or 3 qt.	24	4
Tomato Concentrate	6 Z	6 oz.	6	17
	2½	1 lb. 13 oz.	29	3½
Vegetable	6 Z	6 oz.	1	100
	2	1 lb. 2 oz.	4½	22
	3 Cyl.	2 lb. 14 oz.	11	9
	10	6 lb. 12 oz.	24	4

Table V – NUMBER OF CANS BY CAN SIZE IN A CASE OF CANNED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Can Size	Number in Case
6 Z	48
8 Z	48
1 Flat	48
300	48
303	24
2	24
211 Cyl.	24
2½	24
1¼	24
3 Cyl.	12
10	6

STORE PROPERLY

Unopened canned fruits and vegetables should be stored in a moderately cool place away from steam pipes, radiators, furnaces, or ranges. High humidity causes cans to sweat and rust. Rust is not harmful unless it perforates the can. High temperatures may affect the color and flavor of some products, but not the food's wholesomeness.

Unused portions may be left in the opened can if the can is kept covered and refrigerated.

PREPARE CAREFULLY

Canned foods are cooked foods. They don't need to be boiled, but should be heated thoroughly if you are serving them hot. Handle carefully while heating and serving. Overheating or rough handling may result in a mushy, unattractive product as well as loss of nutritive value.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Agricultural Extension Service at Ohio State University has published this bulletin.

Its Consumer Food Marketing Information Program is one of numerous projects in which the United States Department of Agriculture, land grant colleges and universities cooperate to interpret latest research as practical information for the Nation's farmers, marketers, and consumers.

County offices of the Agricultural Extension Service are listed in the telephone directory. Contact them for latest tips on food buying. Many county and state extension personnel offer consumer information in the local newspaper or on the local radio or television station.

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