



FRESH BLUEBERRIES INGREDIENT SPECIFICATION

Overview: Maximize the value of crop by processing blueberries diverted from fresh market.

Species & Variety:

Species: Rabbit Eye or Highbush (supplier must specify the species delivered)

Variety: Supplier must specify the variety delivered

Color & Character

Color:

- o Ideal: bright dark blue to purple color
- o Mix with reds and greens is accepted but yield will decrease with color sorting process

Character:

- o Ideal: reasonably sound, wholesome
- o Soft or damaged fruit is accepted but yield and product grade will be lower. Soft fruit promotes the growth of yeast that limits customer acceptance of product.

Natural Contamination

Leaves and stems from mechanical harvest are accepted but yield will decrease during cleaning, sorting

Insects & Pests:

- o Zero tolerance for Spotted Wing Drosophila SWD larvae.
- o Fruit testing positive for presence of SWD will be rejected
- o Evidence other insects & pests will be evaluated on a case by case basis

Pesticides

Growers must manage pesticides under guidelines of GAP certification or follow protocols in their Food Safety Plan (required by FDA's Produce Safety Law).

Berries supplied must comply with US regulations regarding pesticide tolerance levels.

Cardinal conducts random screening of fruit for pesticide residues.

Packaging and Labeling

Berries are packed in plastic lugs filled to 30-33 lbs.

Lugs are provided by Cardinal Foods; customer lugs of similar size are accepted

Every pallet is labeled with a grower pallet ID tag (provided by Cardinal Foods) to capture grower name/number, harvest date, variety/species and number of lugs.

Storage and Handling

Storage: < 50°F storage as soon as possible to maximize berry freshness

Handling:

Field Pick: Delivered to Cardinal within two days after harvest to minimize yield loss from soft, spoiled berries

Color/Soft Sorted: strongly recommend sorting within one day of harvest and delivered to Cardinal within one day after sorting. Soft fruit is accepted but yield and finished product grade will be lower.