



United States
Department of
Agriculture

ALL ABOUT BUTTER

A guide to understanding USDA butter grading, types & baking uses



USDA GRADE AA butter is most often available to consumers. Made from sweet cream with excellent flavor, texture & color, it meets or exceeds the highest quality standards.



LOOK FOR THE SHIELD

The butter grading process is a quality verification that the butter truly meets the grade declared on the label & national uniform quality standards.

~ 85% OF BUTTER
SOLD TO CONSUMERS
IN THE U.S. IS
OFFICIALLY
GRADED

Over **30 FEDERAL BUTTER GRADERS** work across the United States, evaluating butter samples for flavor, body & texture, color & salt.

They may taste as many as **200 SAMPLES** weekly.



BUTTER IS MADE by churning milk or cream until it is semi-solid & separated from buttermilk. It must be at least 80% butterfat.

TYPES OF BUTTER

SALTED

Contains less than 2% salt. Good for baking & general use.

UNSALTED

Good for baking & cooking if you want to control the amount of salt.

WHIPPED

Butter with air whipped in for greater volume & better spreadability.

CLARIFIED

Butter with milk solids & water removed. Can be heated to higher temperatures, good for sautéing.

STORING BUTTER

USE FRESH BUTTER for best results. Check the 'best if used by' or 'use by' date on the carton.

STORE @ 40°F or LOWER in the coldest area of the fridge.

USE A RESEALABLE BAG & keep it away from strong-smelling foods; butter can absorb smells & taste like them.

FREEZE any butter you won't use in a month. Properly wrapped & stored, frozen butter can keep 6-9 months.

SOURCES Agricultural Marketing Service - www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/dairy-program
Butter grades - www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/butter-grades-and-standards

