

Cannabis Grading: A Consumer's Guide to Quality

One of the biggest concerns cannabis consumers have is around quality. Specifically, they want to know how to determine quality beyond whether plants have been grown without the use of pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizer.

Although I'm happy to provide crash courses in knowing what to look for, it may be easier to offer an analogy. Think of a cannabis grower as a vintner and your dispensary a sommelier. When determining quality, what a cannabis cultivator looks for in a plant is complex. They want to ensure it meets the standard for that particular strain.

All cannabis strains—whether sativa, indica or hybrid—have a unique profile made up of cannabinoids and terpenes. No two strains are alike, and an experienced cultivator knows how to determine whether the strain you buy from your dispensary meets the standard for that strain. Like wine cultivation, cannabis growing is a science that takes a grower many years to develop.

Because you are unlikely to meet the grower or the manufacturer who made the edible, the oil, tincture or topical you buy from your dispensary, it's up to your dispensary to hire budtenders who are knowledgeable about cannabis. Their job is to explain each strain in a way you'll understand.