



POULTRY GRADING SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Purpose

This instruction states requirements necessary for a grader to perform their duties.

Procedures

I. Grading Stations

A. Grading Station Requirements

1. Sufficient linear space for each authorized grader. For each grader (authorized graders or USDA), a minimum of 36 inches of linear space is required.
2. Line shackles, grading belts, tables, and bins are to be at proper heights to facilitate accurate and efficient grading. Proper height is defined to mean grader or authorized grader may:
 - a. Grade products without bending, stooping, stretching, etc., to reach products.
 - b. See each carcass, part, or further processed product.
 - c. Perform duties in a grading area free of obstructions.
3. Grading is not to be performed on curves, inclines, declines, etc., and must be located in areas that provide unbiased sampling.
4. Line shackles are to be marked for easy identification. The markings are to be located so graders or authorized graders may identify without losing eye contact with products they are grading.
5. Stands, if used, must be of sturdy and safe construction. If over 12 inches high, guard rails must be provided. The stands must be a minimum of 2 feet wide and the area must completely cover the full length of the grading station.
6. Bunching and piling up of product shall be prevented by providing facilities with belts and tables of adequate size to handle the maximum volume of product to be graded.



7. Locations for performing test weighing, condition examination, or any other official checks of products by graders are considered as grading stations. These stations must be at a proper height and adequate in size and design to permit accurate product checks.
8. Grading by authorized graders may be performed either before or after chilling. The required official AQL check grading shall generally be performed after the product has been chilled. As an option and upon approval from the National Poultry supervisor, official grading may be performed prior to chilling provided the following provisions have been met:
 - a. The grader must be present during all grading, chilling, and bagging activities.
 - b. Satisfactory controls and procedures are established to properly identify and segregate all affected product when retention occurs.
 - c. The plant must have an established history of grade compliance in order to participate in this optional program.

Plants interested in this option must file a written request to the National Poultry supervisor. Upon receipt of the request, the National Poultry supervisor will request the supervisor to evaluate the plant facilities and product control procedures. After this evaluation, the supervisor will either recommend approval or disapproval based on provisions that have not been met. Once the approval has been obtained, the pre-chill grading option will remain in effect provided a satisfactory level of compliance is maintained.

II. Lighting Requirements for Grading Facilities

A. Quantity and Quality of Illumination

The initial installation of lighting equipment or subsequent replacement of lamps must provide a minimum of 100 foot-candles at the actual level where products are examined. Note: Areas devoted specifically to official test weighing require only a minimum of 50 foot candles of light.

Lighting should be generally diffused with enough direction to allow depth perception and be uniform over all working areas with no glare and no cross lighting. Mercury vapor lighting is not acceptable.



B. Maintenance

Establishment of a regularly scheduled system of maintenance is required to insure that light fixtures are kept clean and in proper condition. The illumination level requires periodic checks with a light meter. Lamps shall be replaced when the illumination level falls below 100 foot-candles. Corrective action should be taken whenever lighting is obviously inadequate; for example, burned out bulbs or lights that flicker or are obviously deficient in illumination.

III. Poultry Graders Filing System

A. Filing

The responsibility for a current filing and maintenance system for instructions, supplies, memorandums, reports, certificates, etc., is an essential part of a grader's duties. Adequate file cabinets shall be available at each plant and kept locked when not in use. File folders shall be stored vertically beginning with file No. 1 in the front of the cabinet and working toward the back for additional folders. All filing systems should be set up on a uniform basis following the general guide plan shown below. After supervisory review, the forms designated by an asterisk may be moved to an inactive section in the grader's files.

- 1a. Current set of report forms requiring daily completion [LP-101, etc.].
- 1b. Completed Forms LP-101, LP- 101a, LP-240, etc. (attached together according to billing periods).
- 2a. Information for relief graders regarding arrangements for service, location of grading stations, products graded, retention procedures, company contacts, etc.
- 2b. Reduction of Authorized Graders Request Form and letter from plant management certifying Authorized Graders have been adequately trained.
- 2c. Information on tare weights of packaging material, other pertinent information which may be helpful; that is, motel, restaurants, etc.
- 3a. Current certificates (LP-210), (LP-209), and memorandums (LP-211).
- 3b. File copies of issued certificates and memorandums (according to billing periods).
- 4a. Completed LP-232-L 1 and LP-232-L2 "Poultry Grading Record."



- 4b. Completed LP-237 "Poultry Grade Yield Report."
- 4c. Retention Log (QAD 538a)
5. LP-227 "Graders Performance Record"
6. LP-238 "Grading Stamp Control Record."
7. Current pad of unused numbered certificates with current LP-185.
8. General correspondence to and from state, regional, and national offices.
9. Miscellaneous material (not indexed) such as "Information Only."
10. Personnel records (include AMS-453 "AMS Orientation Check List").
11. Injury reporting information
12. Travel vouchers.
13. Institutional purchase information, approved commercial specifications, and materials of this type.
14. Completed LP-185 "Accountability and Use Record."
15. Official stationery.
16. Official envelopes.

As required, additional folders may follow in numerical order.

B. Additional Equipment, Forms, and Instruction Storage

Official identification stamps, unused numbered certificates, and official forms must be kept in a locked drawer or file which is accessible only to authorized personnel. RUBBER STAMPS AND DIES MAY BE USED ONLY WHEN THE RESIDENT GRADER IS ON DUTY IN THE PLANT.



It is recommended that unused certificates or forms be kept in the back of the file drawer or other locked facilities rather than in vertical folders. When some file folders are not applicable, they may be omitted.

Each Supervisor will supply a government-owned lock for securing the files. The use of the keys to these locks must be restricted to authorized USDA personnel. Duplicate keys must be obtained only from supervisors.

Supervisors are required to check grader's files and record their observations on Form LP-227, Grader's Performance Record.

C. Disposition Schedule for Grading Program Records

The disposition schedule is filed as QAD 437 previously, R-1 RECORDS in the Supervisors/Resident Graders General Index.

Richard H. Lawson, National Poultry Supervisor
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