



CARCASS GRADING AND CERTIFICATION SERVICE STAFFING GUIDELINES

1 Purpose

This Procedure provides general guidance for Quality Assessment Division (QAD) supervisors in determining assignment of personnel for applicants requesting carcass grading and/or Live Animal/Carcass Schedule certification service.

2 Scope

The following guidelines were developed to assist personnel in the proper procedures for staffing in establishments where the primary QAD activity is carcass grading and/or Live Animal/Carcass Schedule certification. QAD supervisors will evaluate the assignment relative to the criteria contained in the Staffing Categories section of this Procedure for recommended use of personnel.

3 References

The following referenced document is used for the application of this document. The latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[QAD 515 Procedure: *Beef Carcass Instrument Grading Procedures*](#)

4 Policy

It is QAD policy to provide grading and certification services to applicants that exceed industry expectations for timely and effective service delivery. Additionally, all final staffing determinations will be made in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, instructions, and applicable provisions of the union contract.

5 Background

Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTD) associated with repetitive motions are the leading cause of QAD, Office of Worker's Compensation Program (OWCP) claims. In an effort to reduce employee injuries, several large volume plants with high speed chains participated in a pilot project that used additional graders on each shift to perform grading and certification duties. The results of the pilot project were that there was a positive impact on grader workload, plant productivity, efficiency, and the reduced repetitive motions associated with CTD. The success of that pilot project supports the staffing guidance contained in this Procedure.



6 Staffing Categories

QAD supervisors will consider the guidelines listed below, consult plant management, and apply their personal knowledge of each individual operation when determining the work assignments for QAD graders:

- 6.1 One grader: when up to 1,200 beef carcasses or 1,400 lamb carcasses are offered for grading and/or certification per shift and the grader applies all grade and certification stamps.
- 6.2 Two graders: when the total number of beef carcasses offered for grading and/or certification ranges from 1,201 to 2,400 head per shift or 1,401 to 2,800 lamb carcasses are offered for grading and/or certification per shift and the graders apply all grade and certification stamps.
- 6.3 In lieu of a second grader in lamb plants that have over 1,400 lambs to grade on one shift, the plant may provide a plant employee to physically handle all remaining lambs in excess of 1,400. That person would open the flanks for the grader to review, turn the lamb for the grader to see the conformation, probe the lamb for the grader, if necessary, and stamp/roller brand the lamb with the appropriate grade.
- 6.4 Three graders: when the total number of beef carcasses offered for grading and/or certification ranges from 2,401 to 3,600 head per shift and the graders apply all grade and certification stamps.
- 6.5 Four graders: when more than 3,600 beef carcasses are offered for grading and/or certification per shift and the graders apply all grade and certification stamps.

From time to time, the number of carcasses that are graded and/or certified may occasionally exceed the upper limits for a staffing level. Additional graders will only be considered when the number of carcasses that are offered for a particular staffing level is sustained for an extended period of time. Carcasses offered for re-examination will not be considered when determining staffing requirements.

In those establishments that provide a plant employee to apply the grade and/or certification stamps under the direct supervision of a grader, the Regional Director will determine appropriate grader staffing levels on a case-by-case basis. For plants utilizing approved beef carcass instrument grading systems for official USDA grade factors, the application of an official grade and/or certification stamp shall be in accordance with QAD 515 Procedure: *Beef Carcass Instrument Grading Procedures*.

The complexity of the workload assignment (such as number of certified Schedules) will also be evaluated to ensure adequate staffing resources are available to perform the requested services.



7 Change Record

The following changes were made to the 01/27/15 revision of this document.

1. The header was updated to include the most recent mail stop.

Jennifer G. Porter, Director
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