



USDA Federal Purchase Program Specification - Poultry **General Requirements: 2023**

I. Responsibility

Grading personnel will continuously monitor production of poultry commodity items for contract compliance. The USDA, AMS grader (grader) is required to make the necessary examinations to determine compliance with the contract terms of the Federal Purchase Program Specification (FPPS) or technical proposal when applicable. The general term “commodity specification” is being replaced with FPPS.

Graders must read the applicable [FPPS](#), specific [USDA Commodity procedures located at QAD 621 and QAD 622](#), and this general requirements procedure carefully and note the items that must be observed during formulation, further processing, sampling, packaging, packing, labeling, loading, shipping, and preparation of worksheets and certificates. Graders who are unfamiliar or do not have experience with the FPPS should not proceed until their supervisor has reviewed the specification requirements and these instructions with them.

The FPPS procedures are composed of multiple parts, the QAD 620 general requirements procedure and specific commodity procedures located at QAD 621 for chicken products and QAD 622 for turkey products. QAD 621 and QAD 622 were previously known as the USDA commodity instructions. The QAD 620 general requirements procedure incorporates any requirement(s) that are general in nature and common for multiple commodities. The specific USDA commodity procedures address items specific to individual commodities. Therefore, all graders must review the QAD 620 general requirements and specific commodity procedure applicable to the commodity being processed. Any forms not provided in this procedure can be obtained from supervisors.

Since specification requirements also impact Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) areas of responsibility, graders must have a working relationship with FSIS. When the specification references compliance with 9 CFR 381 Temperature and Processing Requirements rather than stating the requirements, compliance for these items are the responsibility of FSIS.

The following materials are referenced throughout the specification and will be used during the certification process:

- [QAD 600 Policies and Procedures](#)
- [United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers](#)
- [Condition of Food Container Manual](#)
- [Visual Aids for Inspection of Rigid and Semi-rigid Containers](#)



II. General Requirements

A. Pre-Certification

A copy of the Purchase Order (PO) (**Exhibit 1**) will be sent to each grader stationed at a plant that was successful in bidding under the current purchase program. Upon receipt of the purchase order, graders must contact management and review the specified requirements. The production labeling, packaging, and packing materials must be reviewed to determine compliance with the specification requirements.

B. Food Defense Plan

Each contractor and subcontractor must have a documented food defense plan audit on file. Verification of the food defense audit requirement can be accomplished by maintaining a copy of the signed currently approved audit cover page only (**Exhibit 2**) in file folder number 2a. The supervisor will conduct an audit verifying the contractor's and subcontractor's Food Defense Plan.

C. Supplier Certification

Ready-to-cook poultry may be transferred or obtained from other processing plants to produce commodity products. USDA grading certification or other USDA documents issued by inspection personnel, as outlined in the specification, must indicate the required information to demonstrate compliance with the specification. The integrity of product moving between plants must be maintained by either stamping the shipping containers with the USDA Officially Certified stamp or utilizing other methods of product/certificate linking which have been reviewed and approved by the supervisor. When other methods are approved, the supervisor will ensure that such methods provide official certification to applicable specification requirements that cannot be verified at destination (i.e., slaughter date).

Product that is not officially graded/certified for quality factors at the origin plant must be officially graded/certified at destination using current online or lot grading procedures.

D. Domestic Origin

All poultry specifications require that donated commodities be produced from chickens or turkeys of domestic origin. Furthermore, contractors must supply the grader with a domestic origin certificate for each contract. This form, contained in the [*AMS Master Solicitation for Commodity Procurement*](#), will indicate whether the contractor or subcontractors are receiving or processing products from sources other than the United States, its territories or possessions, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (**Exhibit 3**). Contractors and subcontractors that handle products from such sources must have an acceptable identification and segregation plan to ensure they are not used in producing USDA commodities. Processors must maintain records such as invoices or production and inventory records documenting product origin and make them available for review by the Government. In addition to these control procedures, the grader and/or supervisor will verify domestic origin by one of the following methods:



1. When the contractor does not obtain product from other processors, the grader or supervisor must review company records quarterly to verify domestic origin. Once all purchase order(s) have been completed for a purchase period or the year, this review is no longer necessary. The date, results, and initials of the reviewer must be documented on the domestic origin certificate or as approved by the supervisor.
2. Contractors receiving domestic product (whole carcasses, parts, or meat) for use in donated commodities must provide certification of compliance with origin requirements on each load. Certification may be accomplished either by an official USDA certificate or a certificate of conformance (COC) signed by a company representative. The certificate must specifically state that the product is of “domestic origin” or words of similar import. The grader or supervisor must check records at the origin plant quarterly (as stated above). In the case where the origin plant and destination plant are in two separate sub management areas, the destination supervisor must notify the origin supervisor of the production dates and plant where the product was produced to ensure a proper record review.

If a contractor or processor is receiving live or processed poultry from non-domestic suppliers, graders and supervisors must review the adequacy of the system implemented by the firm to ensure that this product is not used in commodities produced under the specification. In addition to reviewing the plan, the supervisor must verify integrity of the system by following the plan through each phase of identification and segregation when non-domestic poultry is actually received and processed or handled. Noncompliance with domestic origin requirements must be reported to the National Office through the Regional Director immediately.

Graders must maintain the domestic origin COC with the documents covering the applicable contract.

When conducting domestic origin certification at locations with or without grading service supervision, the cost associated will be charged to the plant where the certification activity is performed.

E. Online Processing Examinations

The attached LP-232L1 & L2 worksheets (**Exhibit 4-6**) and QAD 631B (**Exhibit 7**) are to assist graders in certifying donated commodities. All Acceptable Quality Level (AQL) examinations must be recorded on the LP-232L1 or LP-232L2. If retention occurs, record the reasons for the rejection on the applicable worksheet. When eligible, retained product may be regraded on a stationary lot basis if the requirements for Sample Plan Levels 1 and 2 are met and the product is re-examined in its original form. Product retained for bone defects greater than the allowable tolerance for maximum length is not eligible for a stationary lot examination unless the product is reworked to remove the defects. Additional examinations and checks to monitor the processing operation may be necessary as determined by the supervisor. Graders must maintain a daily record of the total pounds of product produced on the applicable worksheet.



F. Organoleptic Requirements

Organoleptic examinations (sensory examination) must be conducted on a continuous basis throughout all phases of processing by grading personnel as outlined in [QAD 614: Organoleptic Examination](#). Meat or skin exhibiting any of the organoleptic defects listed in the specification must be rejected and is not eligible for use in the fabrication of the applicable commodity.

1. Product Contamination

When graders encounter product that has been contaminated by chemicals or foreign material such as metal, plastic, rubber, or glass, the grader must:

- Retain all suspect products.
- Immediately contact the FSIS representative, advise them of the problem, and turn the product over to them for proper handling and disposition. Additionally, notify plant management and the supervisor and provide them specific details pertaining to the incident. The supervisor will report the incident to the Regional Director who will, in turn report it to the National Office. If it is necessary to place Retained Tags (Form LP-36) on the product to ensure product control, remove the tags when the product is turned over to the FSIS representative.

G. Weight Range Requirements

For products that specify a weight range requirement, select 10 whole carcasses or 10 units of finished product each sampling interval and weigh them individually to determine compliance with weight range requirements. Use Sample Plan Level 2 (SPL-2) acceptance criteria to determine product acceptability. Only product weights outside the weight range need to be recorded on the worksheet. For bulk parts, drumsticks, thighs, and leg quarters, weight range requirements may be determined either prior to or after cut-up as provided in the specification.

H. Grade Requirements

As applicable, each product must be officially graded according to the grade criteria contained in the specification. To check parts for compliance with grade requirements, randomly select bags, cases, or bins from production representing each sampling interval. Do not select product in any manner that may result in biased sampling. Check product for grade requirements based on the parts standards and use Sample Plan Level 1 (SPL-1) criteria to determine product acceptability for each sampling interval. Parts will be examined for the grade designated in the specification. Grade B or better product may be checked for grade requirements using SPL-2.



I. Meat and Skin Requirements - Further Processed Products

Prior to size reduction or fabrication, graders must check meat of randomly selected containers on an hourly basis and, when applicable, skin, trim meat, and/or boneless parts each sampling interval. SPL-1 sample size and acceptance criteria must be used to determine compliance with the specification requirements. Each defect, as listed in the specification, must be recorded separately. For example: 1 discoloration, 1 feather, and 1 cartilage will be recorded as three defects.

All boneless parts of the AQL will be used for determining compliance with bone defects. Each bone or bone-like material defect less than or equal to the allowable tolerance for maximum length will be recorded on the worksheet (LP-232L1) as an individual defect. For example: a Commodity Turkey Ham AQL with 2 bones <0.40 inch will be recorded as 2 defects. Samples with any bone or bone-like material exceeding 0.40 inch in length, or exceeding the tolerance for SPL-1, must result in retention of the product the samples represent. If the bone defects found 1) exceed the allowable tolerance for maximum length, 2) exceed the “target level” for the respective sample, or 3) result in a rejection, the frequency for sampling for bone defects will be increased to twice each hour until the cumulative number of bone defects returns to the “target level.” Results must be recorded on the LP-232L1.

Meat that is size-reduced using equipment designed to extract and discharge bone, bone-like material, cartilage (gristle), cartilage-like material, or hard tendons or tendonous material must be examined after size-reduction. Graders must select samples of meat and make a detailed examination for defect requirements listed in the applicable specification. Each bone or bone-like material defect must result in retention of the product the samples represent.

J. Processing Sequence

Many food purchase program specifications require continuous process/continuous sequential process during production. Other specifications have specific time requirements which must be adhered to. When the terms, continuous/sequential are used, the intent is to ensure that commodities produced for Federal nutrition assistance programs are done so in a coherent process (sized reduced, formulation, marinated, stuffing, cooking, etc.) not one that is fragmented or otherwise interchangeable.

For example:

1. Raw material is marinated during the day, the production process is then suspended due to the end of the workday/weekend, and the commodity is then cooked immediately upon resuming work the following production day. Example **meets** the intent of the specification.
2. Raw material is marinated in the morning, the process is halted in the early afternoon due to an equipment failure or power outage, and the commodity is cooked immediately upon beginning of operations. Example **meets** the intent of the specification.
3. Raw material is marinated during the day, the production process is then suspended due to the end of the workday/weekend, and upon resuming work the following production day other



products are produced prior to the marinated product being cooked. Example **does not meet** the intent of the specification.

K. Formulation

Graders must verify and document the formulation on a minimum of the equivalent of one complete batch each plant shift or more frequently if requested by their supervisor. Graders must check-weigh several ingredients to verify proper formulation on an hourly basis during their normal AQL checks. [QAD 604: Formulation Certification](#) must be used to assess compliance with formulation requirements.

Although restricted ingredients such as sodium erythorbate, sodium ascorbate, and sodium nitrite are monitored by FSIS, these ingredients will also be verified during formulation. If the maximums are exceeded, the FSIS inspector must immediately be notified. During formulation, any check showing ingredients that do not comply with the amounts specified in the formulation section of the specification must cause retention of that batch. Unless the formulation can be corrected, that product is not eligible for use in the commodity. Also, production records must be reviewed to determine compliance with batches produced since the last formulation check. If any evidence of incorrect formulation is discovered, retain all product produced since the last acceptable sample.

L. Net Weight

For products that specify a net weight on the individual package label, the grader must certify hourly that the average individual package weight meets or exceeds the amount stated on the label as outlined in [QAD 611: Net Weight Examination](#). Acceptable lower limits for individual packages are determined by applying the appropriate Maximum Allowable Variations (MAVs) from the National Institute of Standards and Technology 133 Handbook specifications:

Weight on Label	Maximum Allowable Variations (MAVs)
0.4375 lb. to 3.0 lbs. (7 oz. to 48 oz.)	0.062 lb. (1 oz.)
3.0 lbs. to 10 lbs. (48 oz. to 160 oz.)	0.094 lb. (1.5 oz.)
More than 10 lbs. (160 oz.)	1% of labeled quantity

Example:

A facility is packaging 5 lbs. (80 oz.) consumer labeled bags of chicken drumsticks. Based on the table above, the MAVs is 0.094 lbs. (1.5 oz.). By subtracting the MAVs from the labeled weight, each bag must weigh at least 4.906 lbs. (78.5 oz.) and the combined average weight of the 5 bags checked must exceed 5 lbs. (80 oz.).



M. Metal Detection Verification

With the exception of bulk pack and raw bone-in or boneless commodities, all commodities must be examined by a metal detection device accepted by FSIS. The procedures outlined in the specification and [QAD 609: Metal Detection](#) must be used in performing this examination.

N. Freezing Checks

For frozen products, the plant's current freezing history will determine the sample size for 72-hour freezing verification, see [QAD 613: Frozen Product Examination](#). In plants utilizing in-line freezing systems, graders must sample product from each applicable sampling interval during production. Product exiting in-line freezing systems with temperatures for ready-to-cook at 0°F (-17.8°C) and 10°F (-12.2°C) for ready-to-eat or below is considered in compliance with the freezing requirements. Product exiting in-line freezing systems that do not comply with the specification requirements may either be re-run through the in-line freezing system and resampled or segregated and sampled for 72-hour freezing verification according to the applicable sampling level and procedures. USDA sample stickers must be used to cover the holes in official samples resulting from drilling and thermometer insertion into primary containers of product.

O. Commodity Labeling

Processors may use USDA labeling or commercial labeling for commodity products. When a selection of which type to use is made, both the packages and shipping containers within a purchase unit must be labeled in the selected format. Review the specification for immediate packaging labeling.

Nutritional labeling is required on all shipping containers as outlined in the specification. Graders are responsible for visually assuring that nutritional labeling information is legible and present on each shipping container.

Many specifications have a maximum sodium level which is verified by the nutritional label.

Example: *The finished product shall contain no more than 500mg sodium per 100g as evidenced by the nutritional labeling.*

The ingredient statement, even for single ingredient foods, must be included as a statement separate from the name of the product, e.g. Ingredients: _____. The allergen statement must be provided in the format which complies with the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) for any product which contains milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, soy or wheat; e.g. Allergen: This product contains _____.

1. Commercial Labeling Requirements

Commercially labeled packages and shipping containers must be labeled in accordance with FSIS requirements.



a. Label Types Allowed

Commercial labels must be the manufacturer’s own commercial label. Distributors’ labels will not be allowed. If a question arises as to whether a label is a manufacturer’s own label or that of a distributor, the grader will contact their supervisor for guidance.

b. Traceable Product

The manufacturer must establish a product identification and record system that clearly links product by place and date/time of manufacture to specific USDA contracts and destinations.

2. USDA Labeling Requirements

Commodity products labeled with USDA labeling will be labeled in accordance with the appropriate specification.

Each shipping container must be labeled according to the requirements outlined in the specification. Each recyclable shipping container must be labeled with the recycle statement as outlined in the specification. Shipping containers containing materials that are not recyclable do not require the labeling. Contractors are responsible for label format and obtaining FSIS label approval.

P. Submission of Laboratory Samples (Diced chicken only)

Use **Exhibit 8** as a guide to preparing LP-210P certificates for submission of samples to a laboratory for analysis. The laboratory technician will complete the analyses and enter the results on the certificate. A separate certificate must be prepared for each lot or group of sublots. Each lot or subplot must be positively identified on the certificate by lot number, number of cases, and weight. Graders must ensure that certificates are legible prior to submission. The instructions to the laboratory, as shown in Exhibit 8, must be placed in the remarks section. After retaining a copy of the certificate, place original certificate in an envelope and place in the shipping container with the sample being sent to the laboratory. If multiple shipping containers are used, a copy of the certificate must accompany each container. All laboratory samples must be sealed to maintain sample integrity. Samples should be shipped early in the workweek (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday) so they arrive at the laboratory during the same workweek.

The contractor may not load or ship product prior to receipt of acceptable laboratory analysis. In order for the Commodity Procurement Program staff to validate late delivery requests based on delayed receipt of laboratory results, the grader must include the following information from the laboratory certificate on the certificate issued at time of shipment:

- Date Sample Received for Analysis _____
- Date Results Reported to Grader _____



These dates must be listed for each lot in the delivery unit. Laboratory will provide results to plant management, who then provides them to the grader in order for the load to ship. Graders must record the date the results were received from the laboratory on the applicable worksheet.

Q. Shipping Examinations

1. Sample Selection

At the time of shipment, product must be examined for organoleptic condition, net weight, packaging and packing, and temperature. The containers selected for temperature checks and test weighing will be used for the condition examination. The sample size for net weight, condition examination and temperature checks will be according to [QAD 615: Lot Definition](#). Samples must be representative from all portions of the lot and must be predetermined as to which pallet, layer, and container position they will be selected from. The predetermination process must be reviewed with the supervisor and approved by the Regional Director.

The samples must be determined using any random number generator. Alternative methods of random sample selection may be approved by the supervisor.

If more samples are required than pallets, each pallet must be sampled at least once. When selecting layers and container positions, product information such as freezing characteristics, handling practices, and freezing history will be considered. Samples must be numbered and initialed by the grader at time of selection. Temperature and condition checks should be completed as soon as the product is removed from the freezer to preclude any tempering of the product.

Alternatively, if product has been examined for organoleptic condition, net weight, and packaging and packing online during processing these items would be excluded from examination during shipment.

Additionally, as an option to verification of frozen temperatures at time of shipment, procedures listed in [QAD 613: Frozen Product Examination](#) may be used.

2. Test Weighing

Except for bulk pack commodity, the net weight of each delivery unit will be determined at origin by performing an official test weighing according to procedures outlined in [QAD 611: Net Weight Examination](#).

As an option to test weighing at time of shipment and upon review and approval by the supervisor, plants may elect to use the alternate online test weighing procedures in QAD 611. Other methods or test weighing procedures require approval by the National Office prior to use.



a. Bulk Pack Poultry

All bulk poultry delivered for further processing will be weighed at destination on a direct net basis. All ice and free moisture must be removed from the product prior to test weighing. Test weighing must not begin until the entire lot to be test weighed is assembled. The marked weight presented by the plant must be equal to, or greater than the minimum of the weight range that can be delivered under the purchase order. All bulk loads are purchased as 36,000 pound delivery units without any allowable weight variation at destination.

An official test weight performed at the time of delivery will determine compliance with the contracted weight requirements. If the test weight reveals a minimum of 36,000 pounds, no further action is necessary. The origin plant will not be paid for any product that exceeds 36,000 pounds. An LP-210P will be issued with the correct test weight information in order for the origin plant to be paid.

Additionally, the processor may have in place an approved substitution plan that addresses commodity delivery issues and has procedures in place for providing the proper delivered weight. In this case, the grader is to refer to the processors approved substitution plan for further guidance.

b. Standard Yield Deliveries

Deliveries of boneless/skinless meat in lieu of whole birds can be performed between plants. [QAD 635: Standard Yield](#) will be used to determine whether the load meets the weight requirements. The LP-210P must state 36,000 pounds in the total net weight portion of the certificate. An accompanying statement in the remarks must state the standard yield equivalency for that load. For example: *Deer Valley Poultry* may fulfill a USDA contract for 36,000 pounds of whole chicken by sending boneless/skinless meat (using Standard Yield percentages) from their deboning plant in Hickory, KY to a plant in Moorefield, WV for processing into the finished product for the recipient agency.

c. Finished Product

For finished catch weight items, the grader must observe the weight tallying process used for shipping. Since bulk pack product is weighed at destination, it is not necessary to tally the weights of bulk shipments. Most processors utilize automated equipment for tallying container weights at time of shipment. A description of the automated equipment used for tallying weights must be placed in the grader files. Weights obtained utilizing electronic equipment must be verified on a spot check basis throughout the weight recording process. A spot check in this instance means to verify that the weight marked on the pallet label (commonly referred to as a Tombstone label)



equals the combined total weight of all of the individual box labels on that pallet on a daily basis. The grader will manually add up the individual box weights on that pallet to verify the marked total pallet weight is accurate.

If the electronic equipment fails to accurately record any product weights during a spot check, the accuracy of the system will be verified by checking at least 10 percent of the product for each delivery unit. If the verification check of marked weight indicates additional errors in the plant's weight recording procedures, the weights for the entire delivery unit must be retallied. Subsequently, the grader must again verify at least 10 percent of the product weights to ensure accuracy.

If the company does not use automated equipment for tallying shipping weights, the grader must check the accuracy of the company's system for tallying the marked weights of individual boxes by personally verifying the weights recorded on at least 10 percent of the product for each delivery unit. The supervisor must approve the verification of the manual system prior to use. If the verification check of marked weight indicates errors in the plant's weight recording procedures, the weights for the entire delivery must be retallied. Subsequently, the grader must again verify at least 10 percent of the product weights to ensure accuracy. Regardless of the type of system used, if problems are routinely encountered, graders must notify supervisors for follow-up with plant management. Weight tally worksheets must be maintained by delivery unit in the grader's files.

3. Packaging and Packing Examinations

a. Online Examination

Plants are encouraged to use the on-line packaging and packing verification procedures as outlined in [QAD 617: *Packaging and Packing*](#). AQL checks for packaging and packing examinations are recorded on the backside of the LP-232L2.

b. Packaging

As an alternative to online examination, packaging examination for cuts, tears, holes, improper closure, excess moisture, dirty, smeared, or stained areas affecting primary containers can be performed at time of shipment. The criteria listed on the QAD 617A: *Packaging Defects Worksheet* (previously PY-110) (**Exhibit 9**) must be used in checking the primary containers for the above listed items.

c. Packing

As an alternative to online examination, shipping containers can be examined for condition, labeling, and markings at time of shipment. The criteria listed on the QAD 617A worksheet (**Exhibit 9-Reverse**) must be used in checking the shipping containers



for the above listed items. The manuals, “[Visual Aids for Inspection of Rigid and Semi-rigid Containers](#),” and “[Condition of Food Container Manual](#),” must be used as references for interpreting and applying the standards listed on the QAD 617A worksheet. Prior to sample selection, each lot is to undergo a preliminary inspection (scanning) to identify obviously damaged containers. When damaged containers are encountered, the lot is to be retained until the containers have been removed and replaced. Initial sampling may not proceed until the lot has been reworked.

4. Unitization - Product Palletization

Except for bulk pack poultry, each delivery unit of commodity product shipped by truck must be unitized (palletized and stretch wrapped). Pallets must be in new or well-maintained condition and product must be stacked to minimize overhang of the shipping containers over the edges of the pallet. At time of shipment, graders must examine each unitized pallet to ensure that the principal display panel is visible for each container and that all containers are held firmly in place. If any containers need to be reoriented, the pallet must be rewrapped and resubmitted for acceptance.

5. Loading

Inspect each truck or railcar for cleanliness and freedom from damage. Do not permit product to be loaded into a truck or railcar that is damaged, dirty, has foreign odors, or is exhibiting signs of rodent or insect infestation. All shipments of frozen product must be loaded on trucks or railcars that are equipped with working refrigeration units. Ensure that the refrigeration unit is operating and producing cool air before and after loading. The grader must personally prepare the load and tally diagram on the LP-211 (**Exhibit 10**), for finished products only, listing the number of individual shipping containers, number of pallets, and number of containers on each pallet as applicable.

There is no variation allowed in the boxes/pounds of finished product per delivery unit. If a processor desires an exception to this requirement, they must request a waiver from the Contracting Officer. Truck shipments and all railcars must be sealed upon completion of loading.

Prior to shipment, each case of product eligible for delivery must be officially identified with the USDA Inspected for Contract Compliance stamp bearing the appropriate certificate number, month/year, or FPCP stamp. During the actual loading of product into a truck or railcar, the grader must be present at all times to ensure that the container count is correct. When it is necessary to take a lunch break or any absence by the grader, including normal grading duties, the doors of the truck or railcar must be closed and sealed. If the seal has been removed during the grader’s absence, the product loaded must be unloaded and recounted. If a grader misses performing normal grading duties during loading, the grader must abide by the “Sampling – Return From Absence” instructions referenced in



[QAD 537](#). If loading and grading cannot be accomplished at the same time, please inform your supervisor.

During shipping examinations, graders must record the production dates and number of cases per date on a LP-211 grading memorandum for all product in each delivery unit.

This information must not be shown on the grading certificate. After loading, the delivery unit must be sealed, and the seal numbers recorded on the certificate.

6. Seals

All delivery units must be secured with serially numbered, barrier-type seals. The contractor is responsible for recording for providing all seals and recording on each shipping document (bill of lading, shipment manifest, or other delivery document) the applicable seal number to be applied to each delivery destination. In the case of a multiple delivery shipment, the contractor is responsible for ensuring seals are in place at time of delivery.

7. Certificate Preparation

Use **Exhibits 11 & 12** as guides to prepare LP-210P certificates. The initial seal number used to seal the truck shall be recorded on the LP-210P certificate below the transport container and temperature. If more than one seal is used, list the seals by stop number in the “Remarks” section. In the “Additional Certification” section of the LP-210P, the “Product represented by this certificate meets specification requirements for _____ dated _____ shall be completed with the appropriate FPPS and current approval date. Also, select the checkboxes of the following statements, “Product derived from poultry of domestic origin” and “The number of containers shown above was counted by the official grader.”

All backup documents (such as LP-210P’s, LP-211’s, LP-232’s, loading diagram, worksheets, etc.) used in the inspection, grading, and shipping of commodity products shall be filed as a packet, by delivery unit, at the plant for one year following the end of the fiscal year in which the documents were created. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to ensure that all documents are retained for the specified period. Other procedures or systems for filing documents may be used upon review and approval by the supervisor.

R. Deliveries

1. Late Deliveries

Whenever a plant fails to meet delivery schedules as listed on the sales order/item number, graders are to notify their supervisor by phone/email using the “Report of Late Delivery Notice” (**Exhibit 13**). The supervisor will contact the Regional Office, who will



subsequently provide the information to the National Office. The information provided will include type of product, name of processor, purchase order, delivery period, projected dates of delivery, and reason for delay. When production of the late load is completed and shipped, graders are to notify the Regional Office that the product has in fact been produced and shipped. The form used for late delivery notification may again be used to inform the Regional Director that the product has now been produced and shipped. Dates of production and shipment of the late load are to be recorded on the form.

2. Split Delivery Shipments

a. Bulk for Further Processing

Due to the amount of product to be shipped for reprocessing, it may require more than one trailer to complete the delivery. In this case, each identified subplot will stand on its own in relation to the weight of product to be delivered for a sales order/item number. For instance: trailer one carries 18,000 pounds of whole birds in 10 bins for purchase order 12345. A second trailer carries another 18,000 pounds of whole birds in 10 bins plus 9,000 pounds of whole birds in five more bins. Ten bins in the second trailer must be identified as belonging to purchase order 12345. The combined test weights of product identified for purchase order 12345 from both trailers will be used to determine compliance with contract delivery weights.

b. First Contract Direct Delivery

For some purchase units, the same sales order number may have two item numbers for different destinations. The sales order will list quantities by weight for each destination. At time of shipment, contractors must provide the graders the number of boxes and pounds for each destination. Graders will show the total number of boxes and pounds to be delivered to each drop point in the remarks section of the certificate. Distinct separation of product on the load by drop point is encouraged, but not required. If necessary, the number of catch weight pounds may be pro-rated between drops by multiplying the average case weight times the number of cases to be delivered. Average case weight is determined by total weight of the load divided by the total number of containers shipped. Correct box count and weight at each drop point will be the responsibility of the vendor and the receiving agency. The grader must send two copies of the grading certificate with the load. As an option, contractors may elect to ship split deliveries on two separate trucks provided each truck ships the total quantity stated on the sales order/item number. If this option is used, separate certificates must be issued for each delivery.



S. Contractor Checkloading

As of April 1, 2021, all chicken and turkey solicitations for commodity loads are eligible for contractor checkloading. This provides the vendor an option to load and ship commodity trucks on their own, or they may choose to remain under USDA grader checkloading. A tracking spreadsheet is listed on AGNIS to identify which solicitations are eligible or not eligible and available at: Grading Services Poultry > USDA Purchases > Commodity Procurement Tracking Spreadsheet.

If the company requests that the USDA grader perform the checkloading, the USDA grader will perform all the required verification checks and issue an LP-210P: *Poultry Products Grading Certificate* as has been done in the past with no changes to the process.

If the company elects contractor checkloading, all certification checks in plant will be conducted by the USDA grader as normal, up through freezing temperature certification. It is expected that certification for packaging defects, labels, and net weight examinations will be performed online at the plant. Also, plants must either have the contract compliance stamp added to their label, or all cases must be stamped at the origin plant with the contract compliance stamp (using production date) prior to entering the freezer. USDA graders must maintain control of the product until the freezing temperature is verified. This applies to both level I and level II freezer history facilities as stated in [QAD 613](#). Product can then be released to the company for shipment.

An LP-210P must not be provided for loads that are contractor checkloaded. The contractor will be responsible for issuing their own Certificate of Conformance along with the Bill of Lading. Additionally, if contractor checkloading is elected, a USDA grader or supervisor will perform a quarterly surveillance visit at each shipping point.

In either case, USDA graders must maintain accurate daily records (LP-232) of production and quantity produced under each contract.

T. Submission of Samples to the National Office

Samples of commodity product will be requested by the National Office on a random basis from each contractor. The grader will be notified by their supervisor to submit a sample to the National Office for evaluation.

The samples must be shipped by commercial overnight mail (not U.S. Express Mail) to the address provided by the National Office.

When preparing the sample for shipment, graders must oversee packaging to ensure precautions are taken to safeguard the integrity of the samples. Use commercial type sample containers that are suitable for shipping the product. For frozen products, the box size should be kept to a minimum to eliminate excessive headspace, which accelerates defrosting. If the container should be returned, graders must provide a return address label for this purpose.



The company is responsible for all expenses associated with preparing and shipping the product. An LP-210P grading certificate must be issued for each sample shipment (**Exhibit 14**). One copy of the certificate must be filed in the grader's office and the remaining submitted with the sample. The applicant must be to the above address. Record in the remarks section the purchase order number (if applicable), production lot number (shown on the sample), seal number used to secure the package and any other pertinent information.

Attachments

- Exhibit 1 Purchase Order Example
- Exhibit 2 1032A Food Defense Cover Sheet
- Exhibit 3 Domestic Origin Certification Form
- Exhibit 4 LP-232L1 Example
- Exhibit 5 LP-232L2 Example
- Exhibit 6 LP-232L2 (reverse) Example
- Exhibit 7 QAD 631B Form
- Exhibit 8 LP-210P Laboratory Certificate Example (Diced Chicken)
- Exhibit 9 QAD 617A worksheet
- Exhibit 10 LP-211 Example (Oven Roasted Split Delivery)
- Exhibit 11 LP-201P Certificate Example (Consumer Pack Chicken)
- Exhibit 12 LP-210P Certificate Example (Oven Roasted Chicken Split Delivery)
- Exhibit 13 Report of Late Delivery Form
- Exhibit 14 LP-210P National Sample Submission Certificate Example (Turkey Roast)