

COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION

MUSHROOMS, INDIVIDUALLY QUICK FROZEN (IQF), MINIMALLY PROCESSED

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description (CID).

1. SCOPE. This CID covers minimally processed, IQF mushrooms (mushrooms), packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties. **Please note: This document does not guarantee purchase of this item by USDA.**¹

2. PURCHASER NOTES.

2.1 Purchasers *must specify* the following:

- Variety(ies), style(s), dice size(s), slice thickness(es), cap size(s), application(s), package size(s), and agricultural practice(s) of mushrooms desired (Sec. 3).
- When compliance with analytical requirements must be verified (Sec. 7.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.5)

2.2 Purchasers *may specify* the following:

- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Audit (Sec. 10.1).
- Food Defense (Sec. 10.2) and Manufacturer's Quality Assurance (Sec. 10.3). *Purchaser must specify 10.4 or 10.5. In addition, purchaser may specify 10.1 or one of the following combinations: 10.2 with 10.3.1; 10.2 with 10.3.2; 10.3 with 10.3.1 or 10.3 with 10.3.2.*
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 11).

3. CLASSIFICATION. The mushrooms must conform to the following list which must be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

¹ USDA purchase specifications are available at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food/product-specs>.

A-A-20376

Varieties, styles, dice sizes, slice thicknesses, cap sizes, applications, package sizes, and agricultural practices.²

- Variety I** - White button (*Agaricus bisporus*)
- Variety II** - Crimini (baby bellas) (*Agaricus bisporus*)
- Variety III** - Portabella (mature *Agaricus bisporus*)
- Variety IV** - Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*)
- Variety V** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Style A - Diced

- Dice size 1** - 4.8 millimeters (mm) (3/16 inch (in))
- Dice size 2** - 6.4 mm (1/4 in)
- Dice size 3** - 9.5 mm (3/8 in)
- Dice size 4** - 19.0 mm (3/4 in)
- Dice size 5** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Style B - Sliced

- Slice thickness a** - 4.8 mm (3/16 in)
- Slice thickness b** - 6.4 mm (1/4 in)
- Slice thickness c** - 8.0 mm (5/16 in)
- Slice thickness d** - 9.5 mm (3/8 in)

Style C - Cap/Destemmed

- Cap size i** - 19.0 mm - 32.0 mm (3/4 in - 1 1/4 in)
- Cap size ii** - 32.0 mm - 38.0 mm (1 1/4 in - 1 1/2 in)
- Cap size iii** - 32.0 mm - 45.0 mm (1 1/4 in - 1 3/4 in)
- Cap size iv** - 38.0 - 45.0 mm (1 1/2 in - 1 3/4 in)
- Cap size v** - 19.0 mm - 57.0 mm (3/4 in - 2 1/4 in)
- Cap size vi** - 10.0 centimeters (cm) - 11.0 cm (4 in - 4 1/3 in)

Style D - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

- Application (1)** - Fresh IQF
- Application (2)** - Blanched IQF
- Application (3)** - Fire-roasted/grilled IQF
- Application (4)** - Sautéed IQF
- Application (5)** - Sautéed-roasted IQF
- Application (6)** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Package size (a) - 0.9 kilograms (kg) (2.0 pounds (lb))

Package size (b) - 1.1 kg (2.5 lb)

² Not all options are available from every manufacturer. Check with the manufacturer/distributor for availability.

- Package size (c)** - 6.4 kg (14.0 lb)
- Package size (d)** - 9.1 kg (20.0 lb)
- Package size (e)** - 13.6 kg - 18.1 kg (30.0 lb - 40.0 lb bag-in-box)
- Package size (f)** - 18.1 kg - 22.7 kg (40.0 lb - 50.0 lb)
- Package size (g)** - 499.0 kg (1,100.1 lb tote)
- Package size (h)** - 907.2 kg - 997.9 kg (2,000.0 lb - 2,200.0 lb bulk)
- Package size (i)** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

Agricultural practice (i) - Conventional

Agricultural practice (ii) - Organic

4. MANUFACTURER’S/DISTRIBUTOR’S NOTES. Manufacturer’s/distributor’s products must meet the requirements of the:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 7).
- Manufacturer’s/distributor’s product assurance (Sec. 8).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 9).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec.11).

5. PROCESSING GUIDELINES.

5.1 Processing. The mushrooms must be minimally processed in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 117).

5.2 Food defense. The mushrooms must be processed and transported in accordance with *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121). This regulation identifies the kinds of preventive measures food manufacturers, processors, or handlers may take to minimize the risk that food under their control will be subject to tampering or other malicious, criminal, or terrorist actions. The implementation of enhanced food defense preventive measures provides for the security of a plant’s production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials, other ingredients, and post-production finished product.

5.3 Organic ingredients. When organic mushrooms are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the mushrooms must be produced, handled, and labeled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations by an operation that is certified organic in accordance with the requirements of the National Organic Program (7 CFR Part 205). A Certificate of Organic

A-A-20376

Production or Handling must be provided to verify that the product was processed and handled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations.

5.4 Temperature. Freshly harvested mushrooms waiting to be processed must be held at 1°C (34°F). Once processed and packaged, the mushrooms must be maintained at a temperature of -18°C (0°F) or lower, with an ideal storage temperature range for frozen mushrooms -18°C to -23°C (0°F to -10°F). During transportation, target for a trailer ambient temperature is -23°C to -26°C (-10°F to -14°F).

5.5 Shelf life. Once the mushrooms are packaged, the mushrooms must have a remaining shelf life of at least 1 year. Mushrooms may be kept up to 24 months when held at -18°C (0°F) or lower and packed in an original, unopened case, starting from the date of production. Thawed mushrooms may be kept under refrigeration for 5 to 7 days.

6. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.

6.1 Definitions.

6.1.1 Fresh IQF. This is ideal for in-house cooking where flavor and moisture released during cooking by the end user will enhance the final product. Fresh IQF mushrooms are economical as minimally processed.

6.1.2 Blanched IQF. Mushrooms are scalded in hot water or steam for a brief period and then plunged into cold water or cool air to halt cooking. This process denatures (inactivates) enzymes responsible for post-harvest browning. Blanching mushrooms prior to freezing may be available as a value-added option.

6.1.3 Fire-roasted/grilled IQF. Open-flame roasting enhances the mushroom natural earthy flavor. This is ideal where moisture release is not desired by the end user. Fire-roasting/grilling mushrooms prior to freezing may be available as a value-added option.

6.1.4 Sautéed IQF. Freshly sautéed and lightly seasoned for texture and flavor. The sauté process allows retention of mushroom cell structure throughout freeze/thaw cycle. Sautéing mushrooms prior to freezing may be available as a value-added option.

6.1.5 Sautéed-roasted IQF. Freshly sautéed mushrooms are then open-flame roasted. Ready-to-eat and suitable for in-house cooking processes. This is ideal where moisture release is not desired by the end user. Sautéing-roasting mushrooms prior to freezing may be available as a value-added option.

6.2 Labeling. All ingredients must be declared by their common or usual name in descending order of predominance by weight (21 CFR §101.4) unless exempted by 21 CFR §101.100.

6.3 Ingredients. When specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order, the mushrooms must originate from crops grown, processed, and packed in the United States and/or its territories.

6.3.1 Raw ingredients. The mushrooms must be sound, wholesome, appropriately mature upon harvest. The raw mushrooms must be at least a U.S. Grade No. 2 of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Mushrooms for Processing.³

6.3.2 Additional processing ingredients. When used, all additional ingredients must meet the standards specified in the Food Chemicals Codex (FCC) or, in the absence of FCC specification at a minimum, meet the specifications for quality set by the U.S. Pharmacopeia (USP)-National Formulary. The additional ingredients must be approved food additives (21 CFR Part 170) or meet Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) requirements (21 CFR Parts 182 and 184) for those uses by Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

6.4 Finished product.

6.4.1 Flavor and aroma. Typical of fresh mushrooms after thawing. Enhanced flavor and aroma achieved with applications (3), (4), and (5) may be available.

6.4.2 Color. White, cream, medium to dark tan, or brown color (depending on the variety) and may possess a grayish cast. The color of the gills of the Style A diced units may not be darker than tannish gray for white or cream and may be dark brownish gray for brown. The contrast in color between the gills and surface of the Style A diced units must not seriously affect the overall color appearance of the product.

6.4.3 Texture. Mushrooms must have a meaty texture and be tender and crisp after thawing. The mushrooms must not contain more than 10 percent, by weight, mushroom pieces that are excessively soft, fibrous, or rubbery.

6.4.4 Defects. The raw mushrooms must comply with all tolerances specified for U.S. No. 2 in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Mushrooms for Processing. The finished product must not contain more than 10 percent by weight mechanically damaged pieces with a ragged appearance.

6.4.5 Age requirement. The raw, whole mushrooms must come from the most recent year's crop.

6.4.6 Foreign material. The mushrooms must not contain foreign material, such as, but not limited to, grit, soil, compost, wood, rot or decay, insects, insect pieces or maggots. The mushrooms must not contain more than one piece per 2.8 kg (100 ounces (oz)) of harmless

³ United States Standards for Grades of Mushrooms for Processing can be found at:
https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Mushrooms_for_Processing_Standard%5B1%5D.pdf

A-A-20376

extraneous material, including, but not limited to, loose root material or small pieces of straw, not longer than 2.5 cm (1 in) in length.

7. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.

7.1 Analytical and microbiological requirements. Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract or purchase order, the following analytical and microbiological requirements for the mushrooms must conform to those in Table I:

TABLE I. Analytical and microbiological requirements

Test	Requirement
<i>Salmonella</i>	Must be negative
<i>Escherichia coli (E. coli)</i>	Less than 10 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per gram (g) or less than 3 per g using Most Probable Number (MPN) technique ⁴
Non-O157:H7 Shiga toxin-producing <i>E. coli</i> (STEC)	Less than 10 CFU per g or less than 3 g using MPN technique ⁴
Coagulase positive <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	Less than 10 CFU per g or less than 3 per g using MPN technique ⁴
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Must be negative
Coliforms	100 - 200 CFU per g
Yeast and mold	100 - 200 CFU per g
APC	25,000 - 50,000 CFU per g

7.2 Analytical verification. Purchaser must specify manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.5).

7.3 USDA verification procedures. When USDA certification (Sec. 10.5) is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed as follows.

⁴ Findings indicate zero colonies (CFU) per plate or zero tubes producing gas for MPN.

7.3.1 Product verification sampling. When USDA verification of analytical requirements is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing must be performed on subsamples of packages randomly selected from the lot. The number of subsamples must be based on USDA inspection service sampling procedures and plans (7 CFR §52.38). The contents of each will be used to create a composite sample that will be used in the analytical testing.

7.3.2 Analytical testing and reporting. When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the analyses must be made in accordance with the following methods from the Association of Official Analytical Collaboration (AOAC) International Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) or as specified in Table II. Any result not conforming to the analytical requirements may be cause for rejection of the lot.

TABLE II. Analytical and microbiological testing and reporting

Test	Method	Reported as
<i>Salmonella</i>	AOAC 2013.09, 2004.03, 996.08, 967.25, 967.27 or BAM Chapter 5, Sec. C-7 ⁵	Must be reported as positive or negative
<i>E. coli</i>	AOAC 966.23, 966.24, 991.14 or BAM Chapter 4, Sec. C, D, F ⁵	Must be reported to the nearest MPN per g or the nearest CFU per g
Non-O157:H7 STEC	BAM Chapter 4A: Diarrheagenic <i>Escherichia coli</i> ⁵	Must be reported to the nearest CFU per g or the nearest MPN per g
Coagulase positive <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	AOAC 2003.07, 975.55, 987.09 or BAM Chapter 12, Direct Plate Count ⁵	Must be reported to the nearest MPN per g or the nearest CFU per g
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	AOAC 2016.08, 995.22, 997.03, 2004.02 or BAM Chapter 10, Sec. C, D, E ⁵	Must be reported as positive or negative

8. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S PRODUCT ASSURANCE. The manufacturer/distributor must certify that the mushrooms provided meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same

⁵ 8th Edition, FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) or the FDA BAM Online is available at: <https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam>.

A-A-20376

mushrooms offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

9. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS. The delivered mushrooms must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the mushrooms in the commercial marketplace. Delivered mushrooms must comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic (FD&C) Act, Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FALCPA), and regulations promulgated thereunder. The allergen statement must be provided in a format which complies with FALCPA for any product which contains wheat, fish, milk, soy, tree nuts, eggs, peanuts, and Crustacean shellfish or those in effect on the date of the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. When the mushrooms are used for Child Nutrition (CN) Programs, the mushrooms must comply with all applicable provisions of those Programs.

10. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS. *Purchaser must specify 10.4 or 10.5. In addition, purchaser may specify 10.1 or one of the following combinations: 10.2 with 10.3.1, 10.2 with 10.3.2, 10.3 with 10.3.1, OR 10.3 with 10.3.2.*

10.1 GAP audit verification program. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a GAP audit must be conducted by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). A GAP audit must be performed at the site where the mushrooms are grown and at the packing house where the mushrooms are packed. The audit program consists of one initial audit, and at least one unannounced audit depending on how long the facility is in operation during a growing season. The purpose of the GAP audit verification program is to demonstrate that the participating company is adhering to generally recognized GAP principles.

10.2 Food defense. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense Systems Survey (FDSS) or audit must be conducted by USDA, AMS, Specialty Crops Program (SCP), Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division. Food defense requirements include a documented and operational food defense plan that provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials and other ingredients and post-production finished product. The plan must address the following areas: (1) food security plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) processing, including all raw material sources; (4) shipping and receiving; (5) storage; (6) water and ice supply; (7) mail handling; (8) personnel security; and (9) transportation, shipping, and receiving.

10.2.1 FDSS. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS must be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division. The FDSS verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. An AMS FDSS verifies the participating company's

adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.2.2 Food defense section of the Plant Systems Audit (PSA). When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a food defense audit will be conducted as part of the PSA. The audit will be conducted by USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division auditors. This verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. The food defense section of the PSA verifies the participating company's adherence to *Mitigation Strategies to Protect Food Against Intentional Adulteration* (21 CFR Part 121).

10.3 Manufacturer's quality assurance. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer will be required to provide evidence, by certificate that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures within 12 months prior to providing a bid or no later than 10 business days from the date of the awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

10.3.1 Plant survey. A plant survey conducted by USDA, AMS is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The plant survey audit verifies that, at the time of the survey, the manufacturer produces products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117).

10.3.2 PSA. A PSA conducted by USDA, AMS is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. The PSA verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice, Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food* (21 CFR Part 117) and verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program that meets or exceeds USDA requirements.

10.4 Manufacturer's/distributor's certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor must certify that the mushrooms delivered meet or exceed the requirements of this CID. The manufacturer/distributor must certify via a Certificate of Conformance or other adequate documentation (*as specified by the purchaser*) that the mushrooms meet the analytical requirements specified in Sec. 7 of this CID.

10.5 USDA certification. When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division inspectors, must be the certifying program. SCI Division inspectors must certify the quality and acceptability of the mushrooms in accordance with SCI Division procedures, which include selecting random samples of the mushrooms, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics and analytical requirements of this CID and other contractual

A-A-20376

requirements, and documenting the findings on official SCI Division score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, SCI Division inspectors will examine the mushrooms for conformance to the Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42) in effect on the date of the solicitation.

11. PACKAGING. Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking must be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

12. USDA INSPECTION NOTES. When Sec. 10.5 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification must include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of mushrooms and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Analytical requirements *when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order* (Sec. 7). When USDA analytical testing is specified, SCI Division inspection personnel must select samples and submit them to the USDA, AMS, Science and Technology Program (S&TP) laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 11).

13. REFERENCE NOTES.

13.1 USDA services.

13.1.1 USDA certification. For USDA certification contact: **National Program Mission Support, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, via E-mail: SCIinspectionoperations@usda.gov.**

13.1.2 USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA. For a USDA FDSS, plant survey, and PSA contact the **Chief, Auditing Services Branch, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1566 South Building, STOP 0247, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0247, telephone (202) 720-5021, fax (866) 230-9168, or via E-mail: SCAudits@usda.gov.**

13.1.3 Analytical testing and technical information. For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact the **Laboratory Approval and Testing Division, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272, telephone (202) 690-4089 or via E-mail: LATD@usda.gov.** Samples for specified USDA analytical testing should be sent to the USDA, AMS, S&TP laboratory for analysis at: **USDA, AMS, S&T, National Science Laboratory, 801 Summit Crossing Place, Suite B, Gastonia, NC 28054.**

13.2 Sources of documents.

13.2.1 Sources of information for nongovernmental documents are as follows:

Copies of the AOAC International OMA may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 2275 Research Boulevard, Suite 300, Rockville, MD 20850-3250, telephone (301) 924-7077.** Internet address: <http://www.aoac.org> for nonmembers and <http://www.eoma.aoac.org> for members and AOAC OMA subscribers.

Copies of the Food Chemicals Codex and U.S. Pharmacopeia may be purchased from: **United States Pharmacopeia Convention, 12601 Twinbrook Parkway, Rockville, MD 20877, telephone (800) 227-8772 or (301) 881-0666, fax (301) 816-8148 or on the Internet at: <http://www.usp.org>.**

13.2.2 Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:

Applicable provisions of the Standards for Condition of Food Containers are contained in 7 CFR Part 42, the National Organic Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 205, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503, and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000. Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover/NOVUS, and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents on (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800. These documents may also be obtained free of charge on the Internet at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>.**

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) are available online from: **FDA, Center of Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: <https://www.fda.gov/food/laboratory-methods-food/bacteriological-analytical-manual-bam>.**

Copies of U.S. standards and inspection instructions for fruits, vegetables, and other specialty products may be obtained from: **USDA, AMS, SCP, SCI Division, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406 telephone (650) 552-9073, fax (650) 552-9147, or via E-mail: FVSupplyDepot@usda.gov or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards> and <http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/how-purchase-equipment-and-visual-aids>.**

Copies of this CID and the Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42) are available from: **Director, SCI Division, SCP, AMS, USDA, Room 1536 South Building, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, via E-mail: CIDS@usda.gov or on the Internet at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/cids> and <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2015-title7-vol2/pdf/CFR-2015-title7-vol2-part42.pdf>.**

A-A-20376

CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITY:

DOJ - BOP
HHS - FDA
USDA - SCP
VA - OSS

PREPARING ACTIVITY:

USDA - SCP

Non-Discrimination Policy: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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