



Meat Grading & Certification Branch

APPLICATION FOR MEAT GRADING AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES

Purpose

The purpose of this Instruction is to provide Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch policies regarding requests for service.

Policy

Livestock and Seed (LS) Program Mission Statement: To provide timely, high-quality, unbiased service that facilitates orderly marketing and distribution of agricultural commodities, and fosters goodwill in the global marketplace.

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Customer Standards

1. You will be treated with courtesy and respect by a responsive and knowledgeable staff.
2. You will be provided accurate, unbiased, and reliable services based on established standards, procedures, and/or specifications.
3. All services will be provided in a cost-effective manner within established time frames.
4. Your suggestions and comments will be considered to continually improve and tailor the services to meet your needs.
5. We will respond to your inquiries and strive to resolve your complaints quickly and efficiently.

Applicant Responsibility

Applicants are responsible for providing a work environment where MGC Branch graders are not subjected to physical and/or verbal abuse concerning grade placements, certification determinations, or other elements which could have a negative effect on providing an unbiased, third-party evaluation. Applicants shall designate one primary company representative to discuss grade placements and certification determinations with MGC Branch graders. AMS regulations allow services to be denied or withdrawn from "any person who, or whose employee or agent...has interfered or obstructed any employee of the Department by intimidation, threats, assaults, abuse, or

any improper means.” The regulation has in place an appeal process for applicants who question the services provided.

Non-commitment Applicants

Non-commitment applicants requesting service will be charged a minimum of 1/2 hour revenue time plus round trip mileage and travel time from the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) agent’s regular duty point. Requests for service are to be made through the Customer Service Director and are to be made by 12:00 noon Mountain Time on Tuesday of the week prior to service, and will be scheduled on a first come first serve basis. Applicants will be charged for all scheduled services and travel expenses, if applicable, that have not been cancelled by 12:00 noon Mountain Time on Friday of the week prior to service unless the scheduled AMS agent can be utilized elsewhere.

Debt Collection

The MGC Branch reserves the right to place an applicant in a cash on delivery (COD) status or a pre-pay status to ensure expenses for services are covered. Payment must be in the form of a certified or cashier’s check, bank draft, U.S. Postal Money Order, or personal check (prior approval from the MGC Branch office is required).

MGC Branch policy is to place all new accounts on a COD basis of service for a minimum period of two years. After two years, the applicant may submit a request to the MGC Branch office, in writing, to be placed on a normal billing cycle.

Accounts that demonstrate a history of late payments will be converted to a COD status. When accounts are converted to a COD status due to payment issues, they will not have the option to revert to a normal billing cycle.

Overtime

It is the responsibility of the MGC Branch supervisor and not the MGC Branch grader to grant overtime. Supervisors are instructed not to permit graders to work such long hours as will endanger their health or cause unsatisfactory work performance. Except in extreme emergency situations, all grader workdays will be a 10-hour maximum.

Callback

Applicants requesting a callback will be charged a minimum of 2-hours premium time. A callback is unscheduled overtime (hours worked over 8 in a day or 40 in a week) performed when a grader is called back to the worksite after having completed the regular daily tour of duty and has left the worksite, or on a day when no work was scheduled for the grader.

General Procedures

1. Any applicant who operates a federally inspected establishment or an establishment operating under an inspection system equal to and recognized by the Federal system can receive MGC Branch services. A request for services must be filed on the, Application for Service (LS-313) form (Exhibit A). Requests for immediate service can be provided by oral request, letter, express mail, facsimile, etc., as long as the LS-313 application is submitted within 3 working days of the request. The applicant should also include the Supplemental Information for the Application of Service (Exhibit B) with the submission of the Form LS-313. The [LS-313](#) is also available on line.
2. Approved applications remain valid until:
 - a. Voided in writing by the applicant or MGC Branch;
 - b. A change in name, ownership, and/or location of applicant occurs; or,
 - c. A period of 1 year has elapsed since service was last performed at the establishment.
3. Federal agencies requesting service are not required to submit written applications.

Application for Service Processing Procedure

1. Multiple applicants/one establishment – When more than one applicant(s) operating in the same establishment requests service, each applicant must complete an LS-313.
2. Single applicant/multiple establishment – When one applicant operates multiple establishments requiring MGC Branch services, each establishment requesting service must complete an LS-313.
3. The MGC Branch office provides general information and brochures on MGC Branch services, hourly fees, regulations, an LS-313 form, and the Supplemental Information form for the Application for Service to the applicant.
4. The applicant completes, signs, and returns the LS-313 and the Supplemental Information for the Application for Service forms to the MGC Branch office.

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13952 Denver West Parkway
Suite 350
Lakewood, CO 80401

Application for Commitment Service Processing Procedures

1. The Customer Service Director and the Assistant Directors will assure that a copy of the Application for Commitment Grading or Certification Service (LS-315) form (Exhibit C), is provided to establishments requesting commitment services. The [LS-315](#) is also available on line. The applicant completes, signs, and returns the form to the MGC Branch office.

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2. Once the application is processed, commitment services will be provided when personnel are available. Personnel transfers required to establish a new commitment must be approved. The applicant may incur travel expenses until personnel reassignments are accomplished to provide commitment services.
3. Single Applicant – A single commitment applicant must guarantee 8 hours revenue per day, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal legal holidays.
4. Multiple Applicants – When two or more applicants request to share a commitment, they must collectively guarantee 8 hours revenue per day, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal legal holidays. The hours of service, starting times, prorated driving time and mileage, etc., must be approved by all parties involved prior to processing the agreement. This information can be included on the LS-315 or as an attachment. Graders, if requested, will vary their schedules to multiple applicants so as to give alternate early service to each applicant.
5. The date of application is the date that the applicant signs the form. Commitment agreements are effective on Sunday of a given week.

Federal Holidays

Supervisory Meat Graders will inform commitment applicants requesting service on a Federal legal holiday that it is a non-workday by law for graders. Services may be provided for that day at the established holiday rate. No charge will be assessed to commitment applicants on Federal legal holidays when no work is performed. Federal legal holidays are as follows:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Day	Third Monday in January
President's Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Christmas Day	December 25

In instances where a Federal legal holiday occurs on a Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday or following Monday will be designated a paid holiday for Federal employees. Commitment applicants will be charged at the appropriate base or premium rate on designated holidays whether services are provided or not.

Commitment Credits

Allowable credits may be granted to commitment applicants when:

1. Service of the grader is not required by the commitment applicant, and the grader can be utilized elsewhere in revenue-earning activities.
2. Due to emergency situations, the supervisor determines that personnel to provide service are not available.

Changes to and Cancellation of Commitments

1. When a change in ownership, number of hours, or realignment of applicants occurs, the commitment must be canceled and a new application completed. Notification of intent to cancel must be made in writing 7 days prior to the effective date.

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2. When an applicant terminates a commitment and within 1 year is granted a new commitment, the applicant must pay for grader relocation costs. Any relocation costs involving multiple applicants who were involved in the cancellation and reapplication will be prorated in the same proportion as the agreed commitment hours.
3. Any change with a multiple commitment (either withdrawal or addition of one or more applications) necessitates the negotiation of a revised commitment agreement. Supervisors shall ensure that the commitment agreement guarantees 8 hours revenue per day, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal legal holidays.
4. There may be circumstances when it is mutually advantageous to the MGC Branch and the applicant(s) to temporarily suspend a commitment agreement. Examples are:
 - a. Emergencies such as fire, flood, strikes, etc., which affect plant operations, and the assigned grader can be utilized elsewhere.
 - b. National emergencies.
 - c. A trial period for a grader assignment which is likely to result in more efficient utilization of personnel. A memorandum of understanding signed by the Customer Service Director and the applicant(s) specifying the conditions of the temporary suspension of service must be signed, dated, and maintained in the office files.
5. Supervisors will provide notice of new applicants, commitments, non-commitments, cancellations, etc., via the biweekly Management Information Network (MIN) reports.

Fees for Service

1. Base Rate for Commitment Applicant – 8 hours per day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday = \$61.00/hour.
2. Base Rate for Noncommitment Applicant – 8 hours or less per day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday = \$71.00/hour.
3. Premium Rate – excess of 8 hours/day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., any hours before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and any time Saturday and Sunday = \$78.00/hour.
4. Holiday Rate – any hours worked on Federal legal holidays = \$122.00/hour.
5. Mileage Rate = \$0.59/mile.
6. Official Carcass Grade Data = \$0.50/grade factor.
7. Chicago Mercantile Exchange Pork Bellies = \$350.00/load.

8. Chicago Mercantile Exchange Beef Carcasses = \$350.00/load.
9. Laboratory Analysis Fees = see MGC Instruction 428.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
 LIVESTOCK AND SEED PROGRAMS

Please fax to (720) 497-0571
 E-mail to: LSMGCB.ORMS@usda.gov
 Mail original to: USDA, MRP, AMS, LS, MGCB, OFO - Denver West Office Building 53
 13952 Denver West Parkway, Suite 350
 Lakewood, CO 80401

APPLICATION FOR SERVICE

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0124. The time to complete this information collection is estimated to average 12 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity provider and employer.

Information provided in this application is needed to authorize USDA employees to perform the requested service (7 CFR 54.6). You may, by law, be fined up to \$10,000, imprisoned up to 5 years, or both, for knowingly or willfully making false statements within this document (18 U.S.C. Section 1001).

The undersigned hereby applies to the Meat Grading and Certification Branch, Livestock and Seed Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, for the furnishing of official services to be provided at the following location:

NAME AND ADDRESS OF ESTABLISHMENT WHERE SERVICE IS TO BE PROVIDED (Include Street, City, State, and ZIP - NO P.O. BOX) TAX ID # (Required by IRS)

TYPE OF SERVICE APPLIED FOR:

- CARCASS GRADING (Check applicable species): BEEF PORK VEAL AND CALF LAMB
- PRODUCT CERTIFICATION/REPROCESSING AUDITING MEAT JUDGING CONTEST OTHER (Specify) _____

INSPECTION INFORMATION:

US EST. NO. _____ or NFI EST. NO. _____

OPERATIONS CONDUCTED (Check all that apply):

- SLAUGHTERING (Check applicable species): PROCESSING FABRICATING DISTRIBUTING
- CATTLE CALVES SHEEP SWINE BREEDING FEEDING SUPPORT SERVICES
- OTHER (Specify) _____ ASSOCIATION MARKETING OTHER (Specify) _____

LEGAL STATUS (Check one):

- INDIVIDUAL OWNER PARTNERSHIP CORPORATION
- OTHER (Specify) _____

FINANCIAL INTEREST IN THE PRODUCT (Check one):

- OWNER/PART OWNER CONTRACTOR
- OTHER (Specify) _____

I (We), agree:

- To comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal Meat Grading and Certification Regulations, 7 CFR, Part 54 (Revised), a copy of which I (we) have received and read;
- To notify the Meat Grading and Certification Director, Office of Field Operations, in writing and in advance of my (our) cancellation of this application;
- To notify the Meat Grading and Certification Office of Field Operations immediately when a change occurs in my (our) legal status/Applicant Representative; and
- That the Federal meat grading and certification service for which application is hereby made may be denied or withdrawn at any time as provided in the Federal Meat Grading and Certification Regulations.

NAME AND MAILING ADDRESS OF APPLICANT		SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT OR REPRESENTATIVE AND DATE	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (Required by NFC)		PRINT OR TYPE NAME OF SIGNEE	
TELEPHONE NUMBER	E-MAIL ADDRESS	TITLE OF APPLICANT OR REPRESENTATIVE <u>1/</u>	

APPROVAL (FOR USE BY USDA)

DATE OF APPROVAL	TITLE OF APPROVING OFFICER	SIGNATURE OF APPROVING OFFICER
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1/ Also include signature of operator of establishment (or title and signature of his/her representative) if operator is not the applicant. See 54.6 of the Regulations (Revised).

Supplemental Information for the Application for Service

A. Terms of Service

It is the policy of the Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch to begin providing services to new accounts or companies that change ownership on a cash on delivery (COD) basis. Once service is provided for a minimum of 2 years, the plant may request we convert the account to a normal billing cycle.

For accounts that are on a normal billing cycle, Account Statements are issued by the National Finance Center at the end of the month. Payment is due by the 25th of the month following the date of the invoice. For example, an invoice date of July 31, 2006 means the payment is due by August 25, 2006.

The Government charges a 15% interest rate for delinquent balances. If the payment is not applied to the account by the 25th of the month, interest will be assessed and will not be waived.

Accounts with a payment history that demonstrates chronic late payments will be converted to a COD basis of service. When accounts are converted to COD basis of service due to payment history issues, they will not have the option to revert to a normal billing cycle.

B. Points to Consider that Ensure Timely Processing of Checks:

Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) payments are applied to the account in a timely manner. If you indicate you are interested in making EFT payments, we will provide the necessary information.

If payment is via check, the time lapse between when you mail the check and the payment is applied to the account is 7 to 10 days. This means that checks should be mailed by the 15th of the month. Interest and penalty fees will not be waived for late payments.

Include your account number on the memo portion of the check to ensure payment is applied properly.

Include the Account Statement stub with the payment.

I have read and understand the information outlined above.

Name and Title – Printed

Signature

Date

<p>United States Department of Agriculture Marketing and Regulatory Programs Agricultural Marketing Service Livestock and Seed Program Meat Grading and Certification Branch</p> <p style="text-align: center;">APPLICATION FOR COMMITMENT GRADING OR CERTIFICATION SERVICE</p>	<p>For Official Use Only</p> <p>Effective Date</p> <hr/> <p>Application Number</p>
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According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0124. The time to complete this information collection is estimated to average 12 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity provider and employer.
 Information provided in this application is needed to authorize USDA employees to perform the requested service (7 CFR 54, 6, & 7 CFR 62). You may by law, be fined up to \$10,000, imprisoned up to 5 years, or both for knowingly or willfully making false statements within this document (18 U.S.C. Section 1001).

Agreement Terms:

1. The provisions of the "Regulations of the Department of Agriculture governing the grading and certification of meats, prepared meats, and meat products" (7CFR Part 54, Subpart A, as amended), shall be applicable to this application and the signers thereof.
2. The applicant shall pay for the following:
 - a. For 8 hours per day, Monday through Friday, of the grader's time excluding 8 hours on Federal legal holidays on which no work is performed, at the hourly rate prescribed in Section 54.27, "Fees and other charges for service," as amended (or portion thereof, if more than one applicant). At any time that the services of the official grader are not required by the applicant(s), he/she may be utilized elsewhere for the performance of Federal grading and certification service. Credits for service so performed elsewhere (Monday through Friday) will be allowed to the applicant(s) (or prorated to the applicant(s) to cover their unused hours) so long as allowable credit hours plus hours actually worked for the applicant(s) do not exceed 8 hours per day, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal legal holidays.
 - b. For hours worked in excess of 8 hours per day Monday through Friday (or portions of 8 hours if more than one applicant) and all hours worked on Saturday or Sunday, except Federal legal holidays, at the rate prescribed in Section 54.27, as amended.
 - c. For work performed on Federal legal holidays at the rate prescribed in Section 54.27, as amended.
 - d. The costs for transportation, mileage and per diem incurred by the grader in performing grading or certification at the applicant's request in accordance with Section 54.27, as amended.
 - e. To the Agricultural Marketing Service, within 7 days after the receipt of the billing covering any period, the sums due in accordance with paragraphs a, b, c and d.
3. The United States Department of Agriculture shall not be responsible for damages accruing to the applicant(s) through any acts of commission or omission on the part of any of its official graders.
4. The services to be rendered under this commitment may be denied or withdrawn at any time in accordance with Section 54.11, "Denial or withdrawal of service," as amended.
5. (Any of) the applicant(s) may terminate the application at his/her (their) discretion, effective at close of business on any Saturday, by giving written notice thereof to the Customer Service Director, Meat Grading and Certification Branch, 13952 Denver West Parkway, Bldg. 53, Suite 350, Lakewood, CO 80401, at least 7 days prior to such Saturday.

Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	

Signature of Responsible Official	Type or Print Name and Title	Date

Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	

Signature of Responsible Official	Type or Print Name and Title	Date

Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	

Signature of Responsible Official	Type or Print Name and Title	Date

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Signature of Approving Official and Title	Date Signed

Continuation Sheet – Application for Commitment Grading or Certification Service

Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	
Signature of Responsible Official		Type or Print Name and Title		Date	
Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	
Signature of Responsible Official		Type or Print Name and Title		Date	
Account Number (If known)	Name of Applicant	Address of Facility	Commitment Hours		Miles (if applicable)
			Hours Per Day	Hours Per Week	
Signature of Responsible Official		Type or Print Name and Title		Date	

General Comments or Special Provisions