



QUALIFICATION STANDARDS FOR MEAT ACCEPTANCE SPECIALISTS AND CHICAGO MERCANTILE EXCHANGE (CME) LIVESTOCK CLERKS

PURPOSE

This Instruction defines qualification requirements for meat acceptance specialists and Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) livestock clerks.

SCOPE

Selection of personnel is a significant factor in providing high quality service. Before prospective employees are selected for employment to certify meat or meat products for the Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch, they must meet the general qualifications outlined in this instruction.

Qualifications

A. Requirements for a GS-3 Meat Acceptance Specialist

1. Applicants must have one year of progressively responsible experience equivalent in level of difficulty and responsibility to the GS-2 level in the Federal service. Experience must demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. Such experience may have been gained in cutting, wrapping, and weighing meat in a retail outlet; meat inspection sanitation, kill floor inspection, or disease eradication; or office manager, accountant, bookkeeper, or general clerk.
2. Education may be substituted for experience. Successful completion of 30 semester hours or the equivalent at an accredited college or university meets the minimum qualifications.

B. Requirements for a GS-4 Meat Acceptance Specialist

1. Applicants must have two years of progressively responsible experience equivalent in level of difficulty and responsibility to the GS-3 level in the Federal service. Experience must demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. Such experience may have been gained in cutting, wrapping, and weighing meat in a retail outlet; meat inspection sanitation, kill floor inspection, or disease eradication. General clerical experience (typing, filing, routine processing, or other non-specialized repetitive tasks) is not creditable.
2. Education may be substituted for experience. An associate's degree from an accredited college or university meets the minimum qualifications.

C. Requirements for a GS-5 Meat Acceptance Specialist

1. Applicants must have three years of progressively responsible experience equivalent in level of difficulty and responsibility to the GS-4 level in the Federal service. Experience must demonstrate the ability to (1) analyze problems to identify significant factors, gather pertinent data, and recognize solutions; (2) plan and organize work; and (3) communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. Such experience must have been gained in quality assurance, food processing, farming/ranching, technical, administrative work, etc. Experience must provide evidence of the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the duties of the position, and show decision making responsibilities. General clerical experience (typing, filing, routine processing, or other nonspecialized repetitive tasks) is not creditable.
2. Education may be substituted for experience. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university meets the minimum qualifications.

D. Requirements for a GS-6 Meat Acceptance Specialist

1. Applicants must have four years of progressively responsible experience equivalent in level of difficulty and responsibility to the GS-5 level in the Federal service. Experience must demonstrate the ability to (1) analyze problems to identify significant factors, gather pertinent data, and recognize solutions; (2) plan and organize work; and (3) communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. Such experience must have been gained in meat quality assurance or meat processing. Experience must provide evidence of the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the duties of the position, and show decision making responsibilities.
2. Education may be substituted for experience. A bachelor's degree in animal science, meat science, food science, or a closely related degree from an accredited college or university plus an additional year of experience equivalent to the GS-5 level meets the minimum qualifications.

E. Requirements for a GS-7 Meat Acceptance Specialist

1. Applicants must have one year of specialized experience equivalent in difficulty to the GS-6 level. Specialized experience is gained in meat management, production, quality control, inspection (if it involves quality determination), research, or receiving of meat which involves making quality determinations using an applicable specification such as Institutional Meat Purchase Specification or equivalent. Experience may have been gained in chain stores, the military, or manufacturing. Experience as a meat cutter is not creditable.
2. Education may substitute for experience. One year of college-graduate-level education from an accredited college or university food, or meat science with superior academic achievement (cumulative GPA 3.0 or higher) in agriculture or another related field of study or a bachelor's degree in animal, is fully qualifying for the GS-7 level.

F. Requirements for a GS-3 CME Livestock Clerk

1. Applicants must have one year of progressively responsible experience equivalent in level of difficulty and responsibility to the GS-2 level in the Federal service. Experience must demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively, verbally and in writing. Such experience may have been gained as a farmer, rancher, veterinarian's assistant, feedlot laborer, auction-barn livestock handler, or kill-floor meat inspector. Office manager, accountant, bookkeeper, and general clerk experience is not creditable.
2. Education may substitute for experience. Successful completion of 30 semester hours or the equivalent at an accredited college or university meets the minimum qualifications.

G. Basis of Level Determination

No written tests are required. Candidates will be rated based on an evaluation of education/experience as provided in the application. The Meat Acceptance Specialist or CME Livestock Clerk Rating Plans will be used to rate the applicant.

H. Physical Abilities

Applicants must be physically able to perform certification duties. They also must have good, long-range vision, good depth perception, the ability to read printed material the size of typewritten characters without strain, and the ability to differentiate between colors.

I. Comprehension and Analytical Abilities

Applicants must have the ability to read and comprehend contracts, specifications, regulations, and instructional material and perform basic arithmetic computations.

J. Technical Abilities

Qualifying applicants must successfully complete the applicable training as identified in MGC Instruction 209, Service Limitations and Training Required to Perform Work as a Meat Acceptance Specialist or Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) Livestock Clerk.

K. Driver's License

If the position involves operating a motor vehicle, the applicant is required to have or must obtain a driver's license in his/her state of residence prior to performing work involving travel.

L. Conduct Standards

1. Employees are prohibited from performing grading, inspection, regulatory, or other official duties at any establishment:
 - a. Where a close relative is employed.

- b. Where the employee's or a close relative's agricultural commodity is graded, inspected, stored, etc.
 - c. In which the employee or a close relative has a financial interest. This prohibition does not include any holding in a widely held mutual fund or regulated investment company which does not specialize in a particular industry or commodity, and in which no managerial control or directorship is exercised by the employee.
 - d. Where the employee's interests or relationships with individuals or organizations might appear to be in conflict with the employee's duties.
2. In addition to the prohibitions listed in Part 1., employees must comply with MGC 400, Personal Conduct Standards; AMS Directive 362.1, Political Activity; AMS Directive 365.1, Employee Responsibilities and Conduct; AMS Directive 365.2, Conflicts of Interest and Outside Employment; and other applicable rules, instructions, directives, regulations, and laws.
3. Failure to comply with the aforementioned instructions and directives could result in removal from the service.

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