



QUALIFICATION STANDARDS AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR STATE AND FEDERAL EMPLOYEES CROSS-UTILIZED AS MEAT GRADERS

PURPOSE

This Procedure defines qualification and training requirements for employees of other Federal agencies and States who are licensed and cross-utilized as meat graders.

SCOPE

Selection and training of personnel is a significant consideration in providing satisfactory service. Before prospective licensees will be considered, they must meet the general qualifications outlined in this Procedure and meet the education and training requirements. The length of the training needed for a license varies based on whether the applicant meets the general qualifications, Level I qualifications, Level II qualifications, and the type of license applied for.

I. Qualifications

A. General Requirements

1. Applicants must have three years of progressively responsible experience. 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 may have been gained in quality assurance, food processing, farming/ranching, technical, or administrative work, etc. Experience must provide evidence of the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed 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 substitute for experience. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university meets the minimum qualifications.

B. Level I Requirements

1. To meet Level I requirements, applicants must have one year of specialized experience. Specialized experience is gained in production, quality control, inspection (if it involves quality determination), research, or receiving of meat that involves making quality determinations using an applicable grading standard. Experience may have been gained in chain stores, the military, or manufacturing. Experience as a meat cutter is not creditable.
2. Education may be substituted for experience. One year of college graduate level education from an accredited college or university in agriculture or other related field of study or a bachelor's degree with Superior Academic Achievement (cumulative GPA 3.0 or higher) is fully qualifying for Level I.



C. Level II Requirements

1. To meet Level II requirements, applicants must have one year of "hands on" meat grading experience. Such experience must have included final responsibility for certifying the condition and grade according to universally accepted standards for meat.
2. Education may substitute for experience. Two full years of progressively higher level graduate education or a master's or equivalent graduate degree in Animal Science or Meat Science is necessary in order to qualify under Level II requirements.

D. 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.

E. Physical Abilities

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

F. Mental Abilities

Applicants used to perform the full range of a meat grader's duties must have the ability to read and comprehend official grade standards and specifications, meat grading regulations, and instructional material. Those hired for less responsible positions will not be required to comprehend official grade standards. All applicants must be able to perform basic mathematical computations.

G. Technical Abilities

Qualifying applicants must successfully complete the applicable training for the kind of license applied for.

1. Training Requirements

a. General Training

Selected applicants must successfully complete the training outlined in the applicable training plan. All applicants must complete training in personal conduct standards, hearing conservation, document preparation, misuse and misrepresentation of USDA grade names, employee responsibilities and conduct workbook, trade relationships, conflicts of interest and outside employment, meat grading terms, applicable species charts, equal opportunity and civil rights, control and retention of meat, required marks of inspection, and equipment use and control.

b. Certification Training

Applicants for a certification license must also complete training in certification methods and procedures, specifications, and if applicable, Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications (IMPS) General Requirements, quality assurance provisions, major muscle nomenclature and cuts, condition of meat, condition of food containers, and statistical sampling.

c. Grading Training

Grading license applicants must complete training in standards and grading methods and procedures.



d. Grading or Certification License

- 1) Applicants who meet the General qualifications must successfully complete at least eight weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.
- 2) Applicants who meet Level I qualifications must successfully complete at least six weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.
- 3) Applicants who meet Level II qualifications must successfully complete at least four weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.

e. Grading and Certification (Combination) License

- 1) Applicants who meet the General qualifications must successfully complete at least nine weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.
- 2) Applicants who meet Level I qualifications must successfully complete at least seven weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.
- 3) Applicants who meet Level II qualifications must successfully complete at least five weeks of training for one species and an added two weeks for each additional species.

f. Processing License

All applicants for a license to process donated products who meet the General qualifications must successfully complete the training listed in a. General Training, and other issues specific to the assignment. The pertinent supervisory meat grader must certify that the prospective licensee has finished the required training.

g. Security Training

All applicants must complete the necessary security training as required.

H. Conflict of Interest

A license to grade meat carcasses and/or certify meat and meat products for compliance may not be issued to prospective licensees who have a direct or indirect financial interest that conflicts substantially, or appears to conflict substantially, with the licensee's other duties or responsibilities. A conflict of interest includes direct or indirect financial transactions by the licensee or any member of the licensee's family by blood or marriage with meatpacking or processing establishments officially serviced by the licensee, or with agricultural commodities that the licensee is officially grading or certifying.

II. License Maintenance

To maintain a license, in addition to the training listed in **Qualifications**, part G of this Procedure, licensees must complete applicable training every 12 months.



A. Training for Grading Licensees

Grading licensees must complete at least eight hours of training for each species that they are licensed to grade.

B. Training for Certification Licensees

Certification licensees must complete at least eight hours of training for each species they are licensed to certify.

C. Training for Grading and Certification Licensees

Combination grading and certification licensees must complete the applicable training listed in parts A and B of this section.