



## **ATTENDANCE AND OR DEMONSTRATIONS AT MEETINGS OUTSIDE THE DEPARTMENT**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Instruction is to encourage employees to attend public meetings for the purpose of explaining programs and services of the Livestock and Seed Division and the Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch.

### **POLICY**

The policy of the MGC Branch is to provide qualified MGC Branch personnel for media appearances and broadcasts, meetings of trade and farm associations, consumer groups, professional societies, and other groups to disseminate information on: (1) the interpretation and application of official grade standards and purchases specification; (2) meat grading and certification services available; and (3) the importance of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grades as guidelines for consumer meat purchases and as reliable marketing tools for producers, processors, and others.

#### **I. Participation in Meetings**

An important part of each supervisor's and grader's expected performance is giving presentations and demonstrations at meetings on the interpretation and application of Federal grade standards and/or specifications. Such presentations and demonstrations are useful public services and can be a beneficial personal development experience.

- A. Local Meetings and Demonstrations at the Field Level. Responsibility for routinely providing information, explanations, and demonstrations to regular and potential users of grading services extends also to local meetings of church and civic organizations, parent/teacher associations, and other groups interested in learning more about meat grading and certification. Supervisors and graders are strongly encouraged to participate in these local activities during duty hours and non-duty hours to increase consumer awareness of grades by explaining official USDA grades and their usefulness in buying meat. These presentations can encourage increased consumer use of USDA grades, promote widespread public acceptance of the meat grading program, and contribute to the usefulness of grades as a marketing tool. Local meetings of this nature do not require prior approval from the Office of Field Operations (OFO). Field employees should not hesitate to ask their supervisor or the OFO staff for assistance. Exhibits, pamphlets, color slides, and films are available upon request through the OFO.
- B. Presentations at International, National, Regional, or Statewide Meetings. Meetings at this level, including trade associations and/or industry organizations which involve the discussion and/or demonstrations of official standards, are the

responsibility of the Standardization Branch unless otherwise designated. MGC Branch personnel shall refer invitations or requests to participate in such meetings to the OFO. As necessary, meat graders and supervisors shall assist Standardization Branch employees at these meetings, or may be assigned to handle them directly.

## II. Approval

- A. Meetings or Demonstrations. Prior approval from the OFO is necessary for presentations or demonstrations at the State, regional, national, or international level.
- B. Media Appearances, Presentations, and Articles for Publication. Prior approval from the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Information Staff through the OFO is required for all media appearances, presentations, and articles for publication.

## III. Nondiscrimination

Supervisors and graders may not participate in any meetings where participants are segregated, treated unequally, or excluded because of race, sex, religion, age, or national origin.

## IV. Report of Attendance and/or Demonstrations

- A. Each supervisor or grader making a presentation or giving a demonstration shall submit a memorandum recapping the event to their Assistant Director. The memorandum shall contain the following information:
  - 1. Name and location of organization.
  - 2. Date and place of appearance.
  - 3. Topic of discussion and/or nature of demonstration.
  - 4. Number of persons attending.
  - 5. Number and type of printed material distributed or visual aids used.
  - 6. Any other pertinent remarks, including any Equal Employment Opportunity related activities.
- B. Supervisors also shall include these presentations in their Management Information Network (MIN) Reports.

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.