



FINAL ACCEPTANCE OF FROZEN PRODUCTS EXAMINED AND CERTIFIED IN THE CHILLED STATE

Purpose

This Instruction defines procedures for final acceptance of frozen products previously certified in the chilled state, for verification of projected net weight, and for transferring USDA product in storage. Additionally, this Instruction provides guidance for certification of products to be delivered frozen without final acceptance.

Procedures

Graders performing final acceptance of frozen product previously examined and certified in the fresh state will conduct examinations for temperature, physical characteristics, and condition of containers.

1. Temperature Examination:

- a. To determine compliance with the temperature requirement, the grader will randomly select a minimum of three shipping containers or pieces, as applicable, per delivery unit. At least one shipping container or piece, as applicable, must be examined from each production lot.
- b. Temperatures should be taken from product located in the approximate center of the shipping container or piece.
- c. Remove enough packaging material to expose the product. Do not drill through the packaging material or pierce it with the thermometer.
- d. Using a sanitized drill bit, drill a hole slightly larger than the diameter of the thermometer into the product.
- e. Allow the thermometer reading to stabilize before recording the temperature, a thermometer tolerance of $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ is permitted.
- f. If the temperature examination was performed on product that was individually packaged, i.e. a roast, steak, or ground beef chub; place the sample into a plastic bag and return it to the shipping container.
- g. For rejection criteria, refer to the purchase requirements or applicable specification.

2. Physical Characteristics:

- a. The finding of any product showing evidence of deterioration due to mishandling,

thawing and refreezing, freezer burn, or obvious deviation from specification requirements will cause rejection of the lot.

- b. For product that is 60 days or less from the time of initial certification the examination for physical characteristics shall be limited to those boxes opened for temperatures as described above.
- c. Product more than 60 day since initial certification shall be examined for physical characteristics by randomly selecting containers from the delivery unit in accordance with the sample plan set forth below. The lot size will be the number of containers of each item from each day's production.
- d. Lots rejected for condition of container requirements may be reconstituted and reoffered for re-examination one time only. For re-examinations, the lot size will be the size of the reconstituted lot. The sample size used will be the one in the previous table designated for the next larger lot size.

Physical Characteristics Examination Sample Plan

Lot size	Sample Size
10 or less	1
11 - 50	2
51 - 300	5
301 - 800	9
Over 800	14
Re-examination over 800	21

3. Condition of Container:

Graders shall refer to the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers and Handbook for Inspection of the Condition of Food Containers to determine the appropriate examination and re-examination sample size and related criteria. Lots rejected for condition of container requirements may be reconstituted and offered for re-examination one time only.

4. Verification of Projected Net Weight:

The projected net weight for lots of product with inconsistent container weights (catch weight) shall be verified, if applicable, at the time of final acceptance using either Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 1

The grader will observe and record the marked net weight of each container in the lot or delivery unit to verify the projected net weight.

Option 2

The contractor may provide the grader with a manifest documenting the marked net weight, and corresponding box number of each container in the delivery unit. If the contractor cannot provide a manifest by box number then a manifest listing all boxes by pallet is acceptable.

- a. During the condition of container examination, the grader will verify that the marked net weights on each of the applicable sample boxes correspond to the net weights listed on the contractor's manifest. If the manifest lists box weights by pallet, then the entire pallet must be examined. If the examination is limited to a scan, a minimum of 18 boxes must be compared against the manifest.
- b. If all of the marked net weights of the sample boxes examined match the applicable net weights listed on the contractor's manifest, the manifest will be accepted as accurate.
- c. The finding of any discrepancy in the weight or box number between the contractor's manifest and the sample containers will result in the use of Option 1 for the involved delivery unit, and the next five delivery units offered for verification of projected net weight. Upon completion of the fifth delivery unit after reverting to Option 1, the contractor may request Option 2.
- d. The grader will then tally the box weights listed on the manifest to verify the projected net weight of the lot.

5. USDA Product Transfer In Storage:

When ownership of product is transferred from the contractor to the USDA while the product is still in storage, the following statement will be entered on the final acceptance certificate; "Transferred in storage, warehouse storage lot number ____." (Fill in correct number) Refer to MGC Instruction 616, for container sealing and stamping requirements.

6. Certification of products to be delivered frozen without final acceptance at time of delivery.

The contractor will be responsible for freezing and delivering products as specified by the purchaser.

Refer to MGC Instruction 616, for container sealing and stamping requirements.

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