



## **PRODUCT EXAMINATION SERVICE**

### **PURPOSE**

This Instruction defines Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch procedures for providing Product Examination Services.

### **POLICY**

The MGC Branch Product Examination Service is available to purchasers, wholesalers, distributors, truck lines, or any other party having a financial interest in the products to be examined.

Determinations provided under the Product Examination Service are limited to:

1. Condition

Examinations for excellent condition (stickiness, discoloration, lacking bloom, foreign odors, etc.) may be made in the chilled state only.

2. Temperature

Temperature determinations may be provided for products and/or conveyances (rail cars, trucks, etc.).

3. Damage

Examinations for damage may be for either the products, containers, or both, and may include but are not limited to:

- a. Product damage due to freezer burn, thawing and refreezing, or mishandling.
- b. Container damage due to mishandling or accidents.

#### 4. Foreign Material

Examinations for presence of foreign material such as glass, dirt, insect parts, rodent droppings, rust stains, hair, metal, wood, etc. If, in the opinion of the grader, the product is contaminated to the point of being unwholesome, the product shall be detained and referred to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

#### 5. Product Attributes

Examinations may also include verification of product attributes such as proper item, weight range, fat thickness, style of packaging, and other characteristics which are normally listed in approved specifications. Product examinations may not include quality grade factor determinations.

### I. **Procedures for Requesting Service**

#### Applicant:

Request product examination services by contacting the Customer Service Director at the Office of Field Operations (OFO) located in Golden, Colorado, at (720) 497-2531. New applicants must submit a completed LS-313 Application for Service by mail or fax prior to receiving service.

#### Customer Service Director:

- A. Obtain information from applicant and complete Product Examination Request (**Exhibit A**).
- B. Make arrangements for payment prior to providing service. Established applicants in good financial standing with the MGC Branch may receive service and be billed through normal procedures. New applicants, or applicants with outstanding account balances with the MGC Branch, must submit payment prior to the release of certificates or any results of the examination. Acceptable arrangements for payment are at the discretion of the Customer Service Director.
- C. Refer requests for a wholesomeness determination to FSIS.

### II. **Procedures for Conducting and Reporting Product Examinations**

#### Customer Service Director:

- A. After verifying proper application procedures and arranging for payment, schedule service as requested by the applicant.
- B. Provide all information pertinent to the examination to the grader scheduled to perform the examination verbally and electronically or by fax, including whether or not to release information at the time of the examination. Provide a copy of the examination request form, if possible.
- C. File Product Examination Request Form or letter requesting service, if applicable.

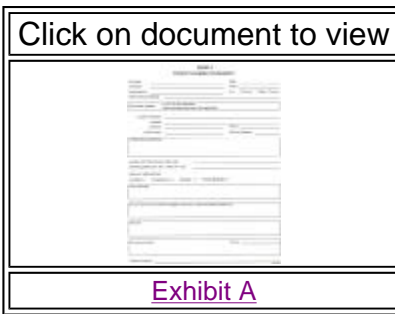
Retain in files for one year.

Applicant:

- A. If the examination is to be performed in a cold storage or similar facility, the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that the examination area is under federal inspection or a state inspection program recognized as being equal to or better than federal inspection.
- B. If the examination is to be performed as a tailgate inspection on a refrigerated trailer, railcar, ship, etc., the applicant will be responsible for ensuring that the product is in transit from or to a federal/state inspection facility.
- C. Make product easily accessible to grader.
- D. Ensure that there are materials available at the time of inspection to re-close the containers, i.e. tape, strapping equipment, etc.

Grader:

- A. When available, notify local inspection personnel at the examination location and inquire about an acceptable area to perform the product examination.
- B. Provide examinations as directed. Refer to applicable MGC Instructions for specific examination procedures when required.
- C. Complete an LS-5-3 Agricultural Products Acceptance Certificate.
  - 1. Enter the name and title of the person requesting the service on the certificate.
  - 2. List only the requested factors noted during the examination. Use descriptive terms only. Do not use terms normally associated with "accept" or "reject" criteria. For example, make notations such as: "Discoloration and slight off-odor" instead of "less than excellent condition."
  - 3. Be detailed on the certificate. Remember, this information may be used in a legal action.
- D. Notify the requesting applicant by the preferred means. Distribute LS-5-3 per MGC Instruction 426 Preparation and Distribution of Meat Grading and Certification Official Documents.



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## PRODUCT EXAMINATION REQUEST

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Requested By \_\_\_\_\_ Via  Phone  Mail  Other  
Payment Authorized By \_\_\_\_\_

Documents Needed:	LS-313 (if new applicant) Letter requesting service (if new applicant)
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Location of Review \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Local Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Date to Examine \_\_\_\_\_

Product to be Examined
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Location of Product (truck, trailer, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
Identifying Marks (Est. No., Trailer No., etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

### SERVICE REQUESTED

Condition     Temperature     Damage     Foreign Materials

Other (Specify)
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Amount of Product to Review (tailgate, side door, number of pieces, boxes, etc.)
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Remarks
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Who/How to Notify	Phone _____
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Grader Assigned \_\_\_\_\_