



Meat Grading & Certification Branch

**Monitoring and Verification Guidelines for Federal Ground Beef Purchases**

**SCOPE**

These following guidelines were developed to help Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch Agents perform the duties required by USDA Technical Requirements Schedule – GB-2005 during the grinding process for all U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ground beef contracts. The Agent will monitor and verify the processing steps and quality assurance activities outlined in the contractor’s approved Technical Proposal (TP) to insure compliance. The Agent will assure that corrective actions implemented as a result of non-compliances are effective and will monitor and control the selection and preparation of samples submitted for (Agricultural Marketing Service) AMS assessment.

**BACKGROUND**

Interested suppliers may submit a TP to produce ground beef in accordance with the current USDA Announcement. Each page of the contractor’s TP must be signed and dated by the Contracting Officer. Following notice of acceptance of the TP(s) from the Contracting Officer, the supplier may request a pre-award supplier assessment. A supplier is eligible to bid after notification by the Contracting Officer of a satisfactory pre-award assessment. Technical proposal changes must be approved by the Contracting Officer prior to implementation.

**DEFINITIONS**

Technical Requirements Schedule (TRS) – GB-2005	Used by the USDA, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, AMS, Livestock and Seed Program to buy ground beef products.
Contractor’s technical proposal	A detailed description of the beef item offered and production steps taken to meet or exceed the minimum product requirements in the TRS.
Monitor	The MGC Branch agent will observe designated contractor’s employee perform and document the specific task as required by the approved TP.
Verify	The MGC Branch agent will review contractor’s documentation to determine if the specific examination was performed, accurately documented, and in the specified tolerances required by the approved TP.
Non-conformance	A deviation from program requirements; TRS or TP.
Corrective Action	Action submitted and taken by the contractor to eliminate the cause of a detected nonconformity or other undesirable situation.

## WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

An MGC Branch agent will be present during ground beef production to monitor each grinding operation for compliance with the Technical Requirements of the Schedule – GB and contractor’s approved proposal(s).

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

AMS agents will:

1. Be familiar with the approved contractor’s TP, contracts, product specifications, amendments, waivers, and grinding process for all USDA ground beef contracts. Maintain copies of all programs, contracts, and amendments used in the procurement of USDA ground beef items.
2. Monitor and verify program requirements as outlined in the TRS Checklist (attached) on a shift basis. The agent will also verify the processing steps, quality assurance activities and corrective actions of the approved contractor’s TP during the production of ground beef items.

- a. Record the time that each monitoring or verification is completed.
- b. Verify each requirement according to the number of frequencies listed in the MGC Audit Checklist column labeled Time Verified (Minimum Frequency).

**Note:** These are minimum requirements. Customize the MGC Audit Checklist, USDA Verification Checklist for Federal Purchase and Checklist of Requirements to include other requirements listed in the approved technical proposal. If needed, MGC Branch agents may conduct more frequent verifications than the frequencies listed in the MGC Audit Checklist.

- c. Report contractual deviations and non-conformances (NC) to the plant for corrective action. Record actions submitted and taken by the plant for correction and verify that the corrective actions are effective.
  - d. If a continuous occurrence of the same NC is observed, a written summary NC shall be submitted to Commodity Procurement outlining the history of the issue and leaving part C. blank.
3. Establish “hold points” in operations that fail to comply with the Technical Requirements Schedule-GB and applicable MGC Branch Instructions. The operations must be stopped when gross NC’s are observed and immediate corrective action taken on product produced since the last acceptable sampling. Gross NC’s (hold points) are: use of non-approved suppliers or products, a specific defect not being removed throughout boneless product, incorrect LFTB or VPP formulation, bone extruder not functional, metal detector not functional, and net weights not correct.

4. Monitor fat and microbial sampling and randomly select independent samples to be sent to the AMS designated laboratory for analysis according to the Technical Requirements of Schedule-GB and MGC Branch Instructions.

**NOTE:** If more than one production lot is produced per day, select only one lot for sampling and fat analysis testing.

5. After monitoring the preparation of AMS microbial and fat samples, complete lab forms and assure samples are secured in MGC provided tamper-proof sampling bags, for mailing to AMS approved laboratories.
6. As specified in the TRS, one microbial sample per day and two fat samples per week are to be submitted to the designated AMS laboratory for AMS assessment.
7. Record applicable laboratory charges on official certificates.
8. Issue NC's for program deficiencies to the contractor and forward copies of NC reports by e-mail.
9. Prepare the Weekly Summary Report on the amount of product produced per item per contract as well as any general observations that are noted which are not covered by a nonconformance and distribute via e-mail.
10. Organize completed copies of the following in a secure file folder:
  - a. Contractor's Approved Technical Proposal and Process Plan,
  - b. Audit Checklist of Requirements,
  - c. Daily completed TRS Checklist's,
  - d. Nonconformance Report(s), and
  - e. Weekly Summary Reports.

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TRS Checklist

Plant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Est No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Grader Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Contract No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved Proposal No. (Page)	Certification Checks	Time Monitored (Minimum Once/Shift)	Time Monitored	Time Verified (Minimum Frequency)	Time Verified					
<b>Boneless Beef Requirements</b>										
	Quality Control Program			1/Shift						
	Lot Declaration			1/Shift						
	Traceability			1/Shift						
	Handling			3/Shift						
	Objectionable Materials			4/Shift						
	Microbial Testing			1/Shift						
<b>Ground Beef Requirements</b>										
	Lot			1/Shift						
	Traceability			4/Shift						
	Handling			1/Shift						
	Micro Testing			2/Shift						
	Irradiated Ground Beef			N/A						
	Meat Recovery System			N/A						
	Disnewed Beef			N/A						
	Ground Beef Patties (VFP)			N/A						
	Ground Beef Patties (10%)			N/A						
<b>Grinding/Blending</b>										
	Ground Beef			4/Shift						
	Coarse Ground Beef			4/Shift						
	Fat Break-Outs			4/Shift						
	Bone Collector/Extruder			2/Shift						
	Scoring Patties			N/A						
	Metal Detection (page 14, 15)			4/Shift						
	LFTB Color/Formulation			2/Shift						

Approved Proposal No. (Page)	Certification Checks	Time Monitored (Minimum Once/Shift)	Time Monitored	Time Verified (Minimum Frequency)	Time Verified					
<b>State of Refrigeration</b>										
	Bulk Packaged Ground Beef			2/Shift						
	Patties			N/A						
	Shipping			N/A						
<b>Fat Limitations</b>										
	Sampling			4/Shift						
	Records and Comparison			4/Shift						
<b>Patty Conformance</b>										
	Weight/Thickness/Shape			N/A						
<b>Preparation for Delivery</b>										
	Packaging & Packing			2/Shift						
	Net Weight			4/Shift						
	Closure			2/Shift						
	Marking of Containers			2/Shift						
	Palletized Unit Loads			2/Shift						
	Total Net Wt./Del Unit			1/Shift						
<b>USDA Quality Assurance</b>										
	Corrective Actions			2/Shift						

**REMARKS:**  
 Random times for fat samples: \_\_\_\_\_

Monitor = Observe Examination  
 Verify = Check Written Records

**EXHIBIT B**

Audit Checklist 1 Questions

Contractor's Approved Plan Requirements	Types of Questions to be asked during the Review (Audit)
<b>3. Boneless Beef Requirements</b>	
a. Quality Control Program (The exact statement from the technical program can be entered here instead of carry the plan)	Do the records indicate the boneless meat is from the suppliers listed in plan?
b. Lot	Is the boneless beef from a single slaughterer or from a single processor that is listed in the plan?
c. Traceability	Do the records verify the source of raw materials used in each lot comes from an approved source that complies with domestic origin and slaughter requirements listed in the plan?
d. Handling	Do the records verify all boneless beef is maintained in excellent condition with regard to time and temperature listed in the plan?  Is the frozen beef being used within time frames listed in the plan?  Does the boneless beef destined for irradiated ground beef meet the requirements of the plan?
e. Objectionable Materials	Is the contractor following plan procedures listed for removal of these materials?
f. Microbial Testing	Do the records indicate all lots of fresh chilled boneless beef are tested for microbes listed in the plan?  Were the micro samples sent to a third party independent lab for appropriate testing by the contractor?  Were the results accurately recorded and plotted on the histograms?  Are the results within compliance of the plan?
g. Preventive and Corrective Action	If the requirements of the plan are not obtained, are the preventive and correction actions procedures being followed?
<b>4. Ground Beef Requirements</b>	
a. Lot	Was the lot of finished product produced between "clean-ups"?
b. Traceability	Can each lot be traced back to the boneless beef microbial test results?
c. Handling	Does each lot meet the time and temperature controls to maintain excellent condition of the ground beef established by the plan?

Contractor's Approved Plan Requirements	Types of Questions to be asked during the Review (Audit)
<b>4. Ground Beef Requirements (con't)</b>	
d. Microbial Testing	<p>Is the sample preparation being prepared as stated in the plan?</p> <p>Are the samples being tested, recorded and plotted on control charts and histograms as stated in the plan?</p> <p>Is the contractor following plan procedures for corrective actions if notified by FSIS of a positive E.coli 0157:H7?</p> <p>Do the control charts and histogram records indicate the contractor is in compliance with plan?</p> <p>Does the ground beef comply with requirements listed in the plan for irradiated product?</p>
e. Preventive and Corrective Action	If the requirements are not obtained, are the preventive and correction action procedures being followed?
<b>5. Meat Recovery Systems</b>	
	Does the LFTB being used comply with plan requirements with regard to allowed percentages and the material section?
<b>6. Desinewed Beef</b>	
	If applicable, does the process meet plan requirements?
<b>7. Ground Beef Patties with Vegetable Protein Product (VPP)</b>	
	Does the Vegetable Protein Product (VPP) meet the requirements of the plan?
	Does the hydration meet plan requirements?
<b>8. Ground Beef Patties, NTE 10% Fat</b>	
	Do the patties meet plan requirements?
<b>Processing</b>	
<b>1. Grinding &amp; Blending</b>	
	<p>Is the ground beef being ground with final grind passing through the plate size listed in the plan?</p> <p>Is the coarse ground being processed through the plate size required by the plan?</p> <p>Does the grinding, blending and packaging process eliminate the fat break-outs as required by the plan?</p>
<b>2. Bone Collector/Extruder System</b>	Are these systems working as required by the plan?
<b>3. Scoring or Waffling Patties</b>	Is this process being completed as required the plan?
<b>4. Metal Detection</b>	Do the records indicate detection procedures are being performed as required by the plan?
<b>5. Preventive and Corrective Action</b>	If the requirements are not obtained, are the preventive and correction action procedures being followed?

Contractor's Approved Plan Requirements	Types of Questions to be asked during the Review (Audit)
<b>Bulk Packaged Ground Beef Items/Patties/Shipping</b>	
	Do the records indicate temperature requirements are being taken and meet requirements of the contractor's plan?
Preventive and Correction Action	If the requirements of the plan are not obtained, are the preventive and correction action procedures being followed?
<b>Fat Limitations</b>	
1. Sampling and Testing	<p>Is the contractor selecting samples for testing according to the plan?</p> <p>Is the contractor recording and plotting results on variable data control charts and histograms as required by the plan? Are the histograms being used to determine process capability?</p> <p>Do the records indicate deliveries to the USDA are within tolerances prescribed by the plan?</p> <p>Do the records indicate process capability assessments are being completed as required by the plan?</p>
2. Preventive and Corrective Action	
<b>Patty Weight, Thickness and Shape</b>	
1. Requirements	Do the records indicate patty weight, thickness and shape are in compliance with requirements of the plan?
2. Preventive and Correction Action	If the requirements are not obtained, are the preventive and correction action procedures being followed?
<b>Preparation for Delivery</b>	
1. Packaging and Packing	Is the product packaged and packed according to the plan?
2. Net Weight	Is the net weight of the boxes in compliance with the plan?
3. Closure	Are the shipping containers closed according to the plan?
4. Marking of Containers	Are the primary and shipping containers labeled according to the plan?
5. Palletized Loads	Is the product being palletized as required by the plan?
6. Total Net Weight per Delivery Unit	Is the total weight of the delivery unit in compliance with the plan?
7. Preventive and Correction Action	If the requirements are not obtained, are the preventive and correction action procedures being followed?

Contractor's Approved Plan Requirements	Types of Questions to be asked during the Review (Audit)
USDA Quality Assurance	
1. Warranty and Complaint Resolution	Are the warranty and complaint resolution contained in the plan being used?
2. Checkloading	If the plan requires Option 1 for checkloading, is the contractor following the plan's requirements?
Other	

EXHIBIT C

NONCONFORMANCE REPORT 1

Company \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Area Audited \_\_\_\_\_

NCR Report Number \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Nonconformance

1. Plan Requirements

2. Nonconformance Observation

3. Action to Prevent Nonconformance

Auditor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Plant Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Original to Contracting Officer  
Retain one copy for plant records

**EXHIBIT D  
WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORT**

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Week Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Production</b>				
	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Fri</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>

	<b>Narrative:</b>				
<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
	<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Contract Number</b>	<b>Product Code</b>	<b>Lot Number</b>	<b>Box Count</b>	<b>Boneless Origin</b>
	<b>Narrative:</b>				
	<b>Auditor:</b>			<b>Date:</b>	

**Laboratory Testing -- Updated September 23, 2008**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Fat</b>	<b>Micro</b>	<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Lab Location</b>
American Foods Group LLC <u>Corporate Office</u> (Green Bay, WI)					
Green Bay Dressed Beef (Green Bay, WI)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
American Foods Group LLC (Green Bay, WI)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Skylark Meats (Omaha, NE)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Minnetonka, Minnesota
Beef Products, Inc. <u>Corporate Office</u> (Dakota Dunes, SD)					
Beef Products, Inc. (Amarillo, TX)	Lean Textured Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Chicago Heights, Illinois
Beef Products, Inc. (Holcomb, KS)	Lean Textured Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Chicago Heights, Illinois
Beef Products, Inc. (S. Sioux City, NB)	Lean Textured Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Chicago Heights, Illinois
Beef Products, Inc. (Waterloo, IA)	Lean Textured Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Chicago Heights, Illinois
Cargill Meat Solutions <u>Coporate Office</u> (Wichita, KS)					
Cargill, Beef Packers, Inc. (Fresno, CA)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Modesto, California
Cargill, Beef Packers, Inc. (Fresno, CA)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Modesto, California
Cargill, Taylor Packing, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Cargill, Taylor Packing, Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Cargill, Taylor Packing, Inc. (Wyalusing, PA)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Allentown, Pennsylvania
Cargill, Taylor Packing, Inc. (Wyalusing, PA)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Allentown, Pennsylvania
Central Beef (Center Hill, FL)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Stone Mountain, Georgia
Central Valley Meats Company (Hanford, CA)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Modesto, California
Central Valley Meats Company (Hanford, CA)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Modesto, California
Cherry Meat Packers (Chicago, IL)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Chicago Heights, Illinois
H & B Packing (Waco, TX)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Grand Prairie, Texas
Lonestar Beef Processor (San Angelo, TX)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Grand Prairie, Texas
Martin's Abattoir & Wholesale Meats, Inc. (Godwin, NC)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Stone Mountain, Georgia
McGreevy's Mid-West Meat Company	Ground Bison	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Minnetonka, Minnesota
North American Bison Cooperative	Ground Bison	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Minnetonka, Minnesota
Palo Duro Meat Processing (Amarillo, TX)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Grand Prairie, Texas
Palo Duro Meat Processing (Amarillo, TX)	Ground Beef Items		X	Silliker Laboratories	Grand Prairie, Texas
Palo Duro Meat Processing (Amarillo, TX)	Ground Beef Items	X		Silliker Laboratories	Stone Mountain, Georgia

**Laboratory Testing -- Updated September 23, 2008**

<b>Company</b>	<b>Product</b>	<b>Fat</b>	<b>Micro</b>	<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Lab Location</b>
Rosen Meat Group, Inc. <u>Corporate Office</u> (Alexandria, MN)					
Rosen Meat Group, Inc. CIMPL Meats, Inc. (Yankton, SD)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Omaha, Nebraska
Rosen Meat Group, Inc. Dakota Premium Foods (St. Paul, MN)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Minnetonka, Minnesota
Rosen Meat Group, Inc. Gibbon Packing Company (Gibbon, NE)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Omaha, Nebraska
Rosen Meat Group, Inc. Long Prairie Packing (Long Prairie, MN)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Minnetonka, Minnesota
JBS Swift & Company <u>Corporate Office</u> (Greeley, CO)					
JBS Swift & Company (Grand Island, NE)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Omaha, Nebraska
JBS Swift & Company (Greeley, CO)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Omaha, Nebraska
XL Four Star Beef (Omaha, NE)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Omaha, Nebraska
Tyson Fresh Meats <u>Corporate Office</u> (Dakota Dunes, SD)					
Tyson Fresh Meats (Amarillo, TX)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (Emporia, KS)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (Denison, IA)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (Holcomb, KS)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (Joslin, IL)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (Lexington, NE)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Tyson Fresh Meats (West Point, NE)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Valley Pride Pack Inc <u>Corporate Office</u> (Norwalk, WI)					
Valley Pride Pack Inc (Norwalk, WI)	Fresh-Chilled Boneless Beef		X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin
Criss-Cross Express of Illinois, Inc. (Rantoul, IL)	Ground Beef Items	X	X	Silliker Laboratories	Madison, Wisconsin