

**AMS No. 142-07**

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**USDA ANNOUNCES THE REVISION OF FEES FOR FRESH PRODUCE  
TERMINAL MARKET INSPECTION SERVICES**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 1, 2007 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it will increase fees charged to grade and certify fresh fruits and vegetables at terminal markets. The new fees go into effect Aug. 31, 2007.

The increase is needed to cover program costs, maintain enhancements to the program, maintain the program's operating reserve and maintain updated technology. Current fees have been in effect since 2006. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 authorizes USDA to set fees for inspection services, requires USDA to keep the level of fees "reasonable" and permits the fees to be raised as needed "to cover the costs of services rendered."

The fees for grading products each in quantities of 51 or more packages from the same land or air conveyance are as follows:

- Quality and condition inspections for more than a half-carlot equivalent of each product -- from \$114 to \$131;
- Quality and condition inspections for a half-carlot or less of each product -- from \$95 to \$109;
- Condition-only inspections for more than a half-carlot of each product -- from \$95 to \$109; and
- Condition-only inspections for a half-carlot or less of each product -- from \$87 to \$100.

The fees for listing on an inspection certificate an additional lot of a product unloaded from the same land or air conveyance would increase from \$52 to \$60.

The fees for small lots -- 50 packages or less -- of the same product that are unloaded from the same land or air conveyance would increase from \$52 to \$60 for the same product and from \$52 to \$60 for each additional lot of the same product.

The fees for dock-side inspections of individual products unloaded from the same ship would increase as follows:

- Packages weighing less than 30 pounds -- from 2.9 cents to 3.3 cents; and
- Packages weighing 30 or more pounds -- from 4.4 cents to 5.1 cents.

The minimum fee for each individual product inspected at dockside would increase from \$114 to \$131 and from \$52 to \$60 for each additional lot of the same product.

The fee for other types of inspections would increase from \$56 to \$64 an hour during the grader's regular hours; the premium portion from \$29 to \$33 an hour and holiday portion to \$66 an hour.

The fee for inspections performed under 40-hour contracts during the grader's regular hours would increase from \$56 to \$64 an hour.

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) provides official inspections to grade and certify fresh fruit, vegetables and other products, such as raw nuts and Christmas trees. The service is provided on a user-fee basis and use of these services is voluntary.

The fee changes will be published in the Aug. 1, 2007, *Federal Register*. Copies of the proposal and more information are available from Rita Bibbs-Booth, AMS Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Room 0640-S/USDA Stop 0295, Washington, DC 20250-0295; or by calling (202) 720-0391.

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