



Quality Assessment Division Policies for USDA Process Verified Program

1. Purpose

This document provides the policies for programs that are submitted to the Quality Assessment Division (QAD) for approval under the USDA Process Verified Program.

2. Scope

This document applies to all programs submitted for approval under the USDA Process Verified Program and includes all programs that are currently approved.

3 References

GVD 1001 Procedure, USDA Process Verified Program

GU7309CCA Additional Requirements for USDA PVP and QSA Program

USDA Process Verified Program Web site: <http://processverified.usda.gov>

4. Policies (Clauses 1 to 5)

1. Process verified points must add value to the product or service, and be substantive, verifiable, repeatable, auditable, feasible, factual, and within the scope of the Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program (LPSP)
2. Process verified points must not be requirements of regulations or the USDA Process Verified Program, or a standard under which clients in the same industry generally operate.
3. Allowable process verified points may include:
 - 3.1 Adherence to a recognized standard that is not otherwise required by industry or regulations;
 - 3.2 A production and/or handling practice that is either unique or provides specific information to consumers to enable them to make informed decisions on the products that they buy.
 - 3.3 A service with a unique characteristic for that type of operation or that is outside normal business practices;
 - 3.4 A quantifiable characteristic such as size, weight, age, or grade;
 - 3.5 Documentation, monitoring, or auditing that is unique to the company and is outside normal business practice; and
 - 3.6 A characteristic, practice, or requirement that is specifically requested by a customer or consumer.
- 4 A Program Review Committee conducts reviews of all new process verified points to ensure that the above requirements are met.

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5 USDA Process Verified Shield and Term

- 5.1** Information about the use of the “USDA Process Verified” shield and/or term is available at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/UseofPVShieldandTerm>.
- 5.2** Companies must have a defined process for ensuring that the Process Verified shield and/or term is used appropriately in accordance with GVD 1001 Procedure Section 6 *Promotional Materials*. This process cannot be comprised of sole reliance on the GVD for approval.
- 5.3** Companies that use the USDA Process Verified shield and/or the term "USDA Process Verified" in promotional material must ensure that the shield and/or term is used in direct association with a clear description of the specified process verified points. Companies must also ensure that the shield and/or term are not misrepresented and are not used in association with any company claims.
- 5.4** Companies that include a company designed logo which displays the USDA Process Verified term on labels or promotional materials must also include the USDA Process Verified shield somewhere on the label or in the promotional materials.
- 5.5** Companies may not make statements in reference to or in conjunction with the company’s PV Program, PV claims, or in association with the PV shield and/or term that are disparaging toward other agricultural products and/or other sections of the agricultural industry.
- 5.6** The use of the USDA Process Verified shield and/or term on a label must meet one of the following conditions:
- 5.6.1** The specified process verified points are printed immediately adjacent to the USDA Process Verified shield and/or term.
- 5.6.2** An asterisk referring the consumer to the information panel for further information about the specified process verified points is printed with the USDA Process Verified shield and/or term.
- 5.6.3** An asterisk referring the consumer to point of sale information is printed with the USDA Process Verified shield and/or term. In this situation, the company must ensure that the point of sale information is readily available and within close proximity of the display counter containing the product.
- 5.7** It is recommended that promotional materials include the USDA Process Verified web address (<http://processverified.usda.gov/>).
- 5.8** All promotional materials, including labels, packaging, and other marketing materials, must be submitted to the Grading and Verification Division (GVD) for review. Such review is not an official approval. Instead, the review is to ensure that the shield and/or term are accurately represented.
- 5.9** The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) Labeling and Consumer Protection Staff is the authority for evaluation and approval of federally inspected meat labeling bearing special claims, such as the Process Verified Program. All labels must be submitted to the FSIS Labeling and Consumer Protection Staff for review and approval prior to use.
- FSIS label application guidance is available at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations/Label_Application_Guidance/index.asp.
 - The label application form and its instructions are available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fsisforms/7234-1.pdf>