



USDA Supplier Eligibility Program

1 Purpose

This document sets forth the policies, procedures, and requirements for (1) the assessment of suppliers to determine eligibility to supply meat and meat products to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Livestock and Seed (LS), Commodity Purchase Programs, (2) the continued verification of the eligible suppliers, (3) the responsibilities of the Audit, Review and Compliance (ARC) Branch, and (4) the responsibilities of the eligible suppliers.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to U.S. suppliers, meat packers, and processors who wish to supply meat or meat products to USDA, LS Commodity Purchase Programs. Meat and meat products must conform to the specified product requirements outlined in the USDA Supplier Eligibility Program. These requirements must be met through an approved USDA Quality System Assessment (QSA) Program.

3 References

ARC 1000 Procedure Quality Systems Verification Programs General Policies and Procedures
ARC 1002 Procedure, Quality System Assessment (QSA) Program

4 Responsibilities

Suppliers, meat packers, and processors who supply meat or meat products for USDA, LS Commodity Purchase Programs must meet the applicable policies and procedures outlined in this Procedure, *ARC 1000 Procedure*, and *ARC 1002 Procedure*.

The ARC Branch must meet all applicable policies and procedures outlined in this Procedure.

Any suggested changes to this Procedure should be submitted via email to the ARC Branch Program Manager.

5 Definitions

Domestic Product: Any product manufactured from livestock raised in the United States, its territories, possessions, Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Domestic products do not include imported meat or meat from livestock imported directly for immediate slaughter.

Non-ambulatory Animals: Animals that are unable to walk to slaughter under their own power. This includes animals with acute injuries that occur during shipment or at the facility.

6 Listing of Approved Programs

Only U.S. suppliers that have an approved USDA QSA Program that meets the specified product requirements for the USDA Supplier Eligibility Program are listed under the applicable section on the *Official Listing of Eligible Suppliers for USDA Purchase Programs*.

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7 Specified Product Requirements (Clauses 1 to 9)

Meat and meat products must conform to the following applicable specified product requirements in order to be eligible for use in USDA, LS Commodity Purchase Programs.

- 1 Material Requirements for Beef (Fresh or Frozen)
 - 1.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
 - 1.2 Product must be derived from ambulatory animals. Product from non-ambulatory animals or animals with acute injuries must be excluded.
 - 1.3 All spinal cord tissue must be removed during the slaughter process.
 - 1.4 The slaughter process must include at least 2 pathogen intervention steps. One of the interventions steps must be steam pasteurization, an organic acid rinse, or a 180° F hot water wash and must be a critical control point (CCP) in the FSIS recognized slaughter process Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan.
 - 1.5 Carcasses must be routinely tested for E. coli 0157:H7 to verify the effectiveness of interventions at CCP.
- 2 Material Requirements for Beef (Canned)
 - 2.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
 - 2.2 Product must be derived from ambulatory animals. Product from non-ambulatory or animals with acute injuries must be excluded.
 - 2.3 All spinal cord tissue must be removed during the slaughter process.
- 3 Material Requirements for Lean Beef that is Processed from Fat Boneless Beef Trimmings
 - 3.1 Product must be produced by eligible suppliers and must be identified as meeting the requirements of the Supplier Eligibility Program.
- 4 Material Requirements for Bison (Buffalo) (Fresh or Frozen)
 - 4.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
 - 4.2 Product must be derived from ambulatory animals. Product from non-ambulatory or animals with acute injuries must be excluded.
 - 4.3 All spinal cord tissue must be removed during the slaughter process.
 - 4.4 The slaughter process must include at least 2 pathogen intervention steps. One of the interventions steps must be steam pasteurization, an organic acid rinse, or a 180° F hot water wash and must be a critical control point (CCP) in the FSIS recognized slaughter process Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan.
 - 4.5 Carcasses must be routinely tested for E. coli 0157:H7 to verify the effectiveness of interventions at CCP.
- 5 Material Requirements for Bison (Buffalo) (Canned)
 - 5.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
 - 5.2 Product must be derived from ambulatory animals. Product from non-ambulatory or animals with acute injuries must be excluded.
 - 5.3 All spinal cord tissue must be removed during the slaughter process.



- 6 Material Requirements for Pork
 - 6.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
 - 6.2 Product must be derived from ambulatory animals. Product from non-ambulatory or animals with acute injuries must be excluded.
- 7 Material Requirements for Lamb
 - 7.1 Product must be derived from domestic animals.
- 8 Material Requirements for Re-Boxed Product
 - 8.1 Product must be produced by eligible suppliers and must be identified as meeting the requirements of the Supplier Eligibility Program.
- 9 Identification Requirements for All Meat and Meat Products
 - 9.1 Shipping containers for meat and meat products that meet the applicable material requirements must be clearly labeled as “Supplier Eligibility Program Product” on the principle display panel.
 - 9.2 Shipping documentation (bills of lading, shipping manifests, or letters of guarantee) must have the statement “Product Meets SEP Requirements” and must clearly identify the product and product quantity.

8 Exclusions to the Quality System Assessment (QSA) Program Requirements

Clause 1.4 and 4.4 of Section 7 are monitored and verified by the USDA, Food Safety Inspection Service. As a result, clause 4.5 Control of Monitoring and Measuring Devices in *ARC 1002 Procedure, USDA Quality System Assessment (QSA) Program* may be excluded from a supplier’s QSA Program. This exclusion does not exempt suppliers from ensuring that product conforms to clause 1.4 and 4.4.