

**COMMERCIAL ITEM DESCRIPTION****FRESH CITRUS FRUIT, CUT, PACKAGED**

**The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has authorized the use of this Commercial Item Description (CID).**

**1. SCOPE.** This CID covers packaged, cut, fresh citrus fruit (citrus slices) packed in commercially acceptable containers, suitable for use by Federal, State, local governments, and other interested parties. **Please note: This document is not associated with Federal nutrition assistance programs and does not guarantee purchase of this item by USDA.<sup>1</sup>**

**2. PURCHASER NOTES.****2.1. Purchasers *must specify* the following:**

- Type(s), subtype(s), styles(s), agricultural practice(s), packaging, and package size(s) of citrus slices desired (Sec. 3).
- When microbiological requirements are different than specified (Sec. 7.1).
- Process for verification of microbiological requirements (Sec. 7.2).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's certification (Sec. 10.4) or USDA certification (Sec. 10.5).

**2.2. Purchasers *may specify* the following:**

- When a Child Nutrition program (CN) meal pattern must be met (Sec. 3).
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) or Good Handling Practices (GHP) Audit (Sec. 10.1).
- Food Defense (Sec. 10.2) and Manufacturer's Quality Assurance (Sec. 10.3). Purchaser may specify one of the following combinations: Sec. 10.2.1 with 10.3.1; 10.2.2 with 10.3.2; 10.2.1 with 10.3.1 and 10.3.3; or 10.2.2 with 10.3.2 and 10.3.3.
- Packaging requirements other than commercial (Sec. 11).

**3. CLASSIFICATION.** The citrus slices must conform to the following list which must be specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

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<sup>1</sup> For USDA purchase specifications please visit the following websites: [Commodity Purchase Specifications for Agricultural Marketing Service \(AMS\)](#) and [Commodity Purchase Specifications for Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#).

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**Types, subtypes, styles, agricultural practices, packaging, and package sizes.**<sup>2</sup>

- Type I** - Orange
  - Subtype A** - Valencia
  - Subtype B** - Navel
- Type II** - Tangerine
- Type III** - Tangelo
- Type IV** - Mandarin
- Type V** - Grapefruit
- Type VI** - Lemon
- Type VII** - Lime
- Type VIII** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

- Style A** - Wedges,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of original produce
- Style B** - Wedges,  $\frac{1}{6}$  of original produce
- Style C** - Wedges,  $\frac{1}{8}$  of original produce
- Style D** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

- Agricultural practice 1** - Conventional
- Agricultural practice 2** - Organic

- Packaging a** - Poly bag
- Packaging b** - Clamshell with poly bag

- Package size (i)** - 56 g (2 oz)
- Package size (ii)** - 62 g (2.2 oz)
- Package size (iii)** - 71 g (2.5 oz)
- Package size (iv)** - 86 g (3 oz)
- Package size (v)** - 113 g (4 oz)
- Package size (vi)** - 133 g (4.7 oz)
- Package size (vii)** - 170 g (6 oz)
- Package size (viii)** - 454 g (16 oz)
- Package size (ix)** - 1.36 kg (3 lb)
- Package size (x)** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

**When CN meal pattern contribution information is required (upon request the manufacturer/distributor must supply the information to prove crediting).**

- Fruit (a)** -  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fruit
- Fruit (b)** -  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of fruit
- Fruit (c)** - Other (*as specified by the purchaser*)

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<sup>2</sup> Not all options are available from every manufacturer. Check with the manufacturer/distributor for availability.

**4. MANUFACTURER'S/DISTRIBUTOR'S NOTES. Manufacturer's/distributor's products *must meet* the requirements of the:**

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Microbiological requirements: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 7).
- Manufacturer's/distributor's product assurance (Sec. 8).
- Regulatory requirements (Sec. 9).
- Quality assurance provisions: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 10).
- Packaging requirements other than commercial: *as specified by the purchaser* (Sec. 11).

**5. PROCESSING GUIDELINES.**

**5.1. Processing.** The raw citrus fruit must be grown, harvested, and handled in accordance with GAP and GHP and should use as guidance the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) *Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables.*<sup>3</sup> The fresh citrus slices must be processed and packaged in accordance with Current Good Manufacturing Practices (CGMPs) (21 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 110) and should use as guidance FDA's *Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables.*<sup>4</sup>

**5.2. Food security.** The raw citrus fruit and cut citrus slices should be processed and transported in accordance with the FDA's *Guidance for Industry: Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance.*<sup>5</sup> This guidance identifies the kinds of preventive measures food manufacturers, processors, or handlers may take to minimize the risk that food under their control will be subject to tampering or other malicious, criminal, or terrorist actions. The implementation of enhanced food security preventive measures provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials, other ingredients, and postproduction finished product.

**5.3. Organic ingredients.** When organic citrus slices are specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the produce must be produced, handled, and labeled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations by an operation that is certified organic in accordance with the requirements of the National Organic Program (7 CFR Part 205). A Certificate of Organic Production or Handling must be provided to verify that the product was processed and handled in accordance with the USDA organic regulations.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/ProducePlantProducts/default.htm>.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/ProducePlantProducts/ucm064458.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/FoodDefense/ucm083075.htm>.

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**5.4. Preparation of raw materials.** The whole raw citrus fruit must be washed prior to cutting. The cut fruit must then be sorted and properly drained prior to packaging.

**5.5. Shelf life.** The citrus slices must have a minimum shelf life of 14 days from the date of processing and packaging.

**5.6. Temperature.** The citrus slices must be kept under refrigeration to maintain quality. Unless otherwise specified, the citrus slices must be prepared, stored, shipped, and delivered at temperatures greater than 0°C (32°F) but not more than 5°C (41°F).

**6. SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS.**

**6.1. Ingredients.**

**6.1.1. Raw ingredients.** The raw, unpeeled whole fruit used must be properly matured and be certified as at least a U.S. Grade No. 1. of the U.S. Standards for grade of the type specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order. The fruit must be fairly smooth, fairly well colored, firm, and mature fruit of acceptable color and shape characteristic of its variety. All raw fruit must be similar in size and must meet the size requirements and tolerances specified for the U.S. Grade No. 1 Standards for size for its variety and place of origin. When specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the raw fruit used for the citrus slices must originate from crops grown, processed, and packed in the United States.

**6.1.2. Defects.** The raw fruit must be free from decay, unhealed skin breaks, bruises, sprayburn, and exanthema (ammoniation). The raw fruit must comply with all defect levels and tolerances specified in the U.S. Grade No. 1 Standards for its variety and place of origin.

**6.1.3. Age requirement.** The raw, whole fruit used must come from the most recent year's crop.

**6.2. Finished product.**

**6.2.1. Flavor and aroma.** The finished citrus slices must have good flavor and aroma characteristic of mature properly ripened fruit of the specified type. The citrus slices must be free of any off flavors and off odors including, but not limited to, that of fermented juices, and those specified by the purchaser in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**6.2.2. Color.** The finished citrus slices must have an orange, yellow, pink, or green peel and flesh color consistent with the U.S. Grade No. 1 Standards of the specified type.

**6.2.3. Texture.** The finished citrus slices must have a uniform, firm, juicy texture and must not be mushy, hard, dry/ricy, or slimy.

**6.3. Defects.** The finished citrus slices must be free of defects such as seeds, dry juice sacs, bruising, mushy texture, decay or evidence of fermentation or spoilage. The total number of defective slices must not exceed 10 percent by weight.

**6.4. Foreign material.** The finished citrus slices must be free from foreign material, including, but not limited to, leaves, sticks, dirt, insects, or worms.

**7. ANALYTICAL REQUIREMENTS.**

**7.1. Microbiological requirements.** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the citrus slices must comply with the following microbiological ranges and tolerances:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Tolerance</u>
Total Plate Count (TPC)	Less than 10,000 Colony Forming Units (CFU) per g
<i>Salmonella</i>	Must be negative
<i>Escherichia coli</i> ( <i>E. coli</i> ) O157:H7	Must be negative
Non-O157:H7 STEC	Must be negative
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> ( <i>L. monocytogenes</i> )	Must be negative

**7.2. Microbiological verification.** Purchaser must specify Sec. 7.2.1 or Sec. 7.2.2.

**7.2.1. Manufacturer/distributor verification.** The manufacturer/distributor must certify via a Certificate of Conformance or other adequate documentation (*as specified by the purchaser*) that each production run of the citrus slices meets the microbiological requirements specified in Sec. 7.1 of this CID.

**7.2.2. USDA verification.** Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Fruit and Vegetable Program (FV), Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division inspection personnel will verify that the citrus slices meet the microbiological requirements using the procedures specified in Sec. 7.3 of this CID.

**7.3. USDA verification procedures.** When USDA verification of microbiological requirements (Sec. 7.2.2) is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, analytical testing will be performed as follows.

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**7.3.1. Product verification sampling.** SCI Division inspection personnel will select sealed samples and submit them to the USDA, Science and Technology Program (S&TP) laboratory for creation of a composite sample. For TPC, *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7, Non-O157:H7 STEC, and *L. monocytogenes*, six composite samples should be prepared from the smaller-by-weight of 60 packages or 10 pounds of citrus slices. The composite samples must be composed of randomly selected subsamples which must consist of at least four packages of citrus slices.

**7.3.2. Test portion sizes.** The test portions must be derived from the composite sample specified in section 7.3.1. The test portion size for testing *Salmonella* must be 25 g. The test portion sizes for testing TPC, *E. coli* O157:H7, non-O157:H7 STEC, and *L. monocytogenes* must be 50 g each.

**7.3.3. Microbiological test methods.** Unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, microbiological requirements for citrus slices must be made in accordance with the following methods from the AOAC International Official Methods of Analysis (OMA) or the FDA’s Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) as follows:

<b><u>Test</u></b>	<b><u>Method</u></b>
TPC	990.12, or BAM Ch 3
<i>Salmonella</i>	967.27, 996.08, 2003.09, 2004.03, or BAM Ch 5 Section C-7
<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	2005.04, or BAM Ch 4A Section K
Non-O157:H7:STEC	BAM Ch 4A Section R
<i>L. monocytogenes</i>	997.03, 2003.12, or BAM Ch 10 Sections C, D, and E

**7.4. Test results.** Test results for TPC must be reported to the nearest CFU per g. Test results for *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7, non-O157:H7:STEC, and *L. monocytogenes* must be reported as either positive or negative. Any results not in compliance with the tolerance levels specified in section 7.1 of this CID will be cause for rejection of the lot.

**8. MANUFACTURER’S/DISTRIBUTOR’S PRODUCT ASSURANCE.** The manufacturer/distributor must certify that the citrus slices provided meet the salient characteristics of this CID, conform to their own specifications, standards, and quality assurance practices, and be the same citrus slices offered for sale in the commercial market. The purchaser reserves the right to require proof of conformance.

**9. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS.** The delivered citrus slices must comply with all applicable federal and state mandatory requirements and regulations relating to the preparation, packaging, labeling, storage, distribution, and sale of the citrus slices in the commercial marketplace. Delivered citrus slices must comply with all applicable provisions of the Federal

Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, and regulations promulgated thereunder. When the citrus slices are used for the National School Lunch Program, the citrus slices must comply with all applicable provisions of the CN Programs.

**10. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS.** *Purchaser must specify 10.4 or 10.5; purchaser may specify 10.1 and one of the following combinations: 10.2.1 with 10.3.1; 10.2.2 with 10.3.2; 10.2.1 with 10.3.1 and 10.3.3; or 10.2.2 with 10.3.2 and 10.3.3.*

**10.1. GAP and/or GHP Audit Verification Program.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a GAP or GHP Audit must be conducted by USDA, AMS. A GAP audit must be performed at the site where the citrus fruit is grown and a GHP must be performed at the packing house where the citrus slices are packed. The audit program consists of one initial audit, and at least one unannounced audit depending on how long the facility is in operation during a growing season. The purpose of the GAP and GHP Audit Program is to demonstrate that the participating company is adhering to generally recognized GAP or GHP principles. This is a voluntary program established to verify a participant's adherence to the FDA's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* and does not guarantee a safe product.<sup>3</sup>

**10.2. Food defense.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA, AMS, FV, SCI Division will conduct an assessment of a facility's compliance with food defense requirements. Food defense requirements include a documented and operational food defense plan that provides for the security of a plant's production processes and includes the storage and transportation of pre-production raw materials and other ingredients and post-production finished product. The plan shall address the following areas: (1) food security plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) slaughter, when applicable, and processing, including all raw material sources; (4) shipping and receiving; (5) storage; (6) water and ice supply; (7) mail handling; (8) personnel security; and (9) transportation, shipping, and receiving.

**10.2.1. Food Defense System Survey (FDSS).** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a FDSS must be conducted by USDA, AMS auditors. The FDSS assesses the measures that operators of food establishments have taken to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. An AMS FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to the FDA's *Guidance for Industry – Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance*.<sup>5</sup>

**10.2.2. Food defense addendum to Plant Systems Audit (PSA).** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, a Food Defense addendum to PSA audit shall be conducted by USDA, AMS, FV, SCI Division auditors. This verifies that operators of food establishments have implemented measures to minimize the risk of tampering or other criminal actions against the food under their control. An AMS, FDSS verifies the participating company's adherence to the FDA's *Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance*.<sup>5</sup>

**10.3. Manufacturer's quality assurance.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the product manufacturer must be required to provide evidence, by certificate, that the manufacturing plant has undertaken one of the following quality assurance measures demonstrating compliance with FDA's CGMPs within 12 months prior to providing a bid or no later than 10 business days from the date of awarding of the contract. Failure to provide this documentation within the proper time frame may result in the contract being terminated for cause.

**10.3.1. Plant survey.** A plant survey must be conducted by USDA, AMS, or other third party auditing service and is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. This verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food* (21 CFR Part 110).

**10.3.2. PSA.** A PSA conducted by USDA, AMS or other third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of the awarding of the contract. This verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food* (21 CFR Part 110). The PSA also verifies that the manufacturer has in place an internal quality assurance program and determines the manufacturer's ability to produce under this CID, if the products of interest are identified at the time of the PSA.

**10.3.3. Qualified Through Verification (QTV) Audit.** A QTV audit conducted by USDA, AMS, or other Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan assessment by a third party auditing service is required within 12 months prior to the date of awarding of the contract. This verifies the manufacturer's capability to produce products in a clean, sanitary environment in accordance with *Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food* (21 CFR Part 110) and FDA's *Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables*.<sup>4</sup>

**10.4. Manufacturer's/distributor's certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, the manufacturer/distributor will certify that the finished citrus slices distributed meet or exceed the requirements of this CID.

**10.5. USDA certification.** When required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, that product quality and acceptability or both be determined, the SCI Division, FV, AMS, USDA, must be the certifying program. SCI Division inspectors must certify the quality and acceptability of the citrus slices in accordance with SCI Division procedures. This includes selecting random samples of the citrus slices, evaluating the samples for conformance with the salient characteristics of this CID and other contractual requirements, and documenting the findings on official SCI Division score sheets and/or certificates. In addition, when required in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, SCI Division inspectors will examine the citrus slices for conformance to the U.S. Standards for Condition of Food Containers in effect on the date of the solicitation (7 CFR Part 42).

**11. PACKAGING.** Preservation, packaging, packing, labeling, and case marking must be commercial unless otherwise specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order.

**12. USDA INSPECTION NOTES.** When Section 10.5 is specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order, USDA certification must include evaluation of the quality and condition of samples of citrus slices, and compliance with requirements in the following areas:

- Processing guidelines (Sec. 5).
- Salient characteristics (Sec. 6).
- Microbiological requirements when specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order (Sec. 7.1). When USDA analytical testing is specified, SCI Division inspection personnel must select samples and submit them to the USDA, S&TP laboratory for analysis.
- Packaging requirements (Sec. 11 or as specified in the solicitation, contract, or purchase order).

**13. REFERENCE NOTES.**

**13.1. USDA certification, GAP, GHP, FDSS, Plant Survey, PSA, and QTV contact.** For USDA certification, GAP & GHP, FDSS, Plant Survey, PSA, and QTV contact the **Chief, Audit Services Branch, SCI Division, FV, AMS, USDA, STOP 0240, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0240, telephone (202) 720-5021 or via E-mail: [fvaudits@ams.usda.gov](mailto:fvaudits@ams.usda.gov).**

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**13.2. Analytical testing and technical information contact.** For USDA technical information on analytical testing, contact a member of the **Laboratory Approval and Testing Division, S&TP, AMS, USDA, STOP 0272, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0272**, telephone (202) 690-0621 or via E-mail: [KerryR.Smith@ams.usda.gov](mailto:KerryR.Smith@ams.usda.gov).

**13.3. Sources of documents.**

**13.3.1. Sources of information for nongovernmental documents are as follows:**

Copies of the AOAC International OMA may be obtained from: **AOAC International, 481 North Frederick Avenue, Suite 500, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2417**, telephone (301) 924-7077. Internet address: <http://www.aoac.org> for nonmembers and <http://www.eoma.aoac.org> for members and AOAC OMA subscribers.

**13.3.2. Sources of information for governmental documents are as follows:**

Applicable provisions of the U.S. Standards for Condition of Food Containers are contained in 7 CFR Part 42, the National Organic Program are contained in 7 CFR Part 205, the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act are contained in 16 CFR Parts 500 to 503, and the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act are contained in 21 CFR Parts 1 to 199. These documents may be purchased from: **Superintendent of Documents, New Orders, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000. Credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover/ NOVUS, and American Express) purchases may be made by calling the Superintendent of Documents on (866) 512-1800, (202) 512-1800. These documents may also be obtained free of charge on the Internet at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collectionCfr.action?collectionCode=CFR>.**

Applicable provisions of the Child Nutrition Programs are contained in 7 CFR Parts 210, 220, 225, and 226. Child Nutrition Program serving sizes are based on the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs, available online at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/foodbuying-guide-child-nutrition-programs>.

Copies of Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables is available from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) on the Internet at: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceComplianceRegulatoryInformation/GuidanceDocuments/ProduceandPlantProducts/ucm064574.htm>.**

Copies of Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards of Fresh-cut Fruits and Vegetables is available from **FDA, CFSAN on the Internet at: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/ProducePlantProducts/ucm064458.htm>.**

Copies of Guidance for Industry - Food Producers, Processors, and Transporters: Food Security Preventive Measures Guidance is available online from: **FDA, CFSAN on the Internet at:** <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/GuidanceDocumentsRegulatoryInformation/FoodDefense/ucm083075.htm>.

Copies of US Standards and Inspection Instructions for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables and Other Special Products may be obtained from: **Chief, Standardization Branch, USDA, AMS, FV, SCI Division, Riverside Business Park, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406, telephone (540) 361-1130, Fax (540) 361-1199, or on the Internet at:** <http://www.ams.usda.gov/standards>.

Copies of the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual (BAM) are available online from: **FDA, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition on the Internet at:** <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodScienceResearch/LaboratoryMethods/ucm2006949.htm>.

Copies of this CID, the U.S. Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR Part 42), and beneficial comments, recommendations, additions, deletions, clarifications, etc. and any data which may improve this CID are available from or provided to: **Chief, Standardization Branch, USDA, AMS, FV, SCI Division, Riverside Business Park, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406, telephone (540) 361-1130, Fax (540) 361-1199, via E-mail: [CIDS@ams.usda.gov](mailto:CIDS@ams.usda.gov), or on the Internet at:** [www.ams.usda.gov/CommercialItemDescription](http://www.ams.usda.gov/CommercialItemDescription).

**CIVIL AGENCY COORDINATING ACTIVITIES:**

DOJ - BOP  
HHS - NIH, FDA  
USDA - FV  
VA - OSS

**PREPARING ACTIVITY:**

USDA - FV

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**Non-Discrimination Policy:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) **To File an Employment Complaint:** If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's [EEO Counselor](#) (PDF) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_file.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html). **To File a Program Complaint:** If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) (PDF), found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). **Persons with Disabilities:** Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).