

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Livestock and Seed Program
Washington, D.C. 20250

CERTIFIED NATURE VEAL SPECIFICATION
OCTOBER 2004

SCOPE

This specification is for Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) certification of products marketed by Certified Nature Veal. This product may be produced from domestic or non-domestic veal calves.

APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

1. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), AMS, Livestock and Seed (LS) Program, Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch Instructions
2. United States Standards for Grades of Veal and Calf Carcasses, October 1980
3. Plant Quality Management System pre-approved by AMS, Standardization Branch

PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

An AMS, MGC Branch representative will certify the following set of requirements:

1. **GRADE**

All carcasses must be classed as veal and graded either U.S. Prime or U.S. Choice in accordance with the Official United States Standards for Grades of Veal and Calf Carcasses, October 6, 1980, by an AMS, MGC Branch representative. Carcasses must show no evidence of bruising or internal hemorrhages in the ribeye muscle.

2. **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

A. **Dressing Percent.** The dressing percent will be determined on an identified group of veal calves and must exceed 58% for the group based on the following criteria:

- a. Dressing percent = [(hot carcass weight, hide-off/live weight taken on certified scales on the farm of origin or within 10 miles of the farm of origin) * 100].
- b. Live weight will be determined on a group basis consisting of at least 50 calves.
- c. Dressing percent will be determined by the use of combined hot carcass weights of those carcasses specifically associated within each live group.
- d. If the dressing percent for the group does not exceed 58%, no carcasses within that group will be eligible for certification.

B. **Hot Carcass Weight.** Carcasses for this program must have an individual hide off, carcass weight from 200-350 pounds.

- C. **Chill.** Program carcasses shall be chilled for at least 36 hours prior to ribbing.
- D. **Ribeye Presentation.** Carcasses presented for certification must be presented for evaluation by the exposure of the longissimus dorsi muscle at the 11th and 12th thoracic interface. This exposure shall be done by a plant representative at least 10 minutes prior to official evaluations conducted by the AMS agent. The resulting exposed longissimus dorsi muscle shall be perpendicular to the outside skin surface of the carcass at an angle toward the hindquarter which is slightly greater (more nearly horizontal) than the angle made by the 13th rib with the vertebral column.
- E. **Lean Color.** Certified Nature Veal's proprietary color evaluation software program will be used by AMS to evaluate lean color using the Minolta Chromameter. The AMS agent shall calibrate the Minolta Chromameter according to the operation manual at each location to ensure accurate functionality of the equipment.

Certified Nature Veal's Minolta Chromameter classification:

Term	Color Score
Blanc	0
Crème	1
Blush	2
Rosé	3

- F. **Ribeye Size.** Ribeye size will be determined by the AMS agent.

Certified Nature Veal's Ribeye classification:

Premium	carcasses having ribeyes greater than 7.5 square inches
Grand	carcasses having ribeyes from 6.0 to 7.5 square inches
Fine	carcasses that have ribeyes less than 6.0 square inches

- G. **Official Certification.** Carcasses that have met all the program requirements will be eligible for official certification by the AMS agent. One classification term from the Ribeye and one classification term from the Minolta Chromameter will be used in combination to identify the final classification of certified product. (e.g., Premium Blanc, Premium Crème, Premium Blush, Premium Rosé, Grand Blanc, Grand Crème, etc.)

PLANT QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PRE-APPROVED BY AMS, STANDARDIZATION BRANCH

1. Documented procedure for dressing percent validation (e.g., net weight of the calves, certified scale monitoring, etc.).
2. Documented inventory control system (including carcass and finished product traceability, box counts, and all steps necessary) for finished products fabricated from certified carcasses by lot or production date.

3. Procedures for the identification and segregation of carcasses presented for certification.
4. The slaughter time and lot identification of calves intended for this program will be provided to the AMS agent prior to slaughter.
5. Certified Nature Veal shall train individuals responsible for program integrity. A record designating that each trained employee has completed the approved training, signed by the trainer and trainee, shall be issued and must be on file at the slaughter plant.
6. All other supporting documents that preserve the integrity of the Certified Nature Veal program.

AUTHORITY

This service is provided by the USDA, AMS, LS Program, under the authority of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended; the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 7, Part 54.

CERTIFIED NATURE VEAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The costs of all grading and certification services performed by the AMS agent involving examinations, supervision, official documentation, and related services shall be the responsibility of the person, group, or plant requesting the service. Certified Nature Veal representatives must have any program changes approved by AMS prior to implementation.

LABELING

Labeling of Certified Nature Veal products shall be in compliance with Food Safety and Inspection Service regulations and LS Program's Beef Carcass Certification Program Policy – SP2.