



## **Agricultural Marketing Service**

**COMMODITY SPECIFICATION**

**SHELL EGGS**

**APRIL 2013**

## Table of Contents

I.	GENERAL .....	1
A.	Product Description .....	1
B.	Food Defense Requirements .....	1
C.	Commodity Complaints .....	1
II.	COMMODITY SPECIFICATION .....	1
A.	Basic Requirements .....	1
1.	Origin of Shell Eggs .....	1
2.	USDA Requirements .....	2
3.	Shell Eggs .....	2
B.	Packaging and Packing Materials .....	2
1.	Requirements .....	2
2.	Fiberboard shipping containers .....	2
III.	LABELING .....	3
A.	Commercial Labels .....	3
B.	Traceable Product .....	3
IV.	FINAL EXAMINATION OF PACKAGED AND PACKED COMMODITY .....	3
A.	Verification of Packaging and Packing Material .....	3
B.	Examination of Packed and Packaged Commodity .....	4
C.	Inspection and Checkloading .....	4
1.	Requirements .....	4
2.	Procedures .....	4
3.	Contract Compliance Stamp .....	4
V.	UNITIZATION .....	4
A.	Pallets .....	5
B.	Pallet Exchange .....	5
VI.	SHIPMENT AND DELIVERY .....	5
A.	Grading Certificate .....	5
B.	Loading and Sealing of Vehicles .....	5
C.	Delivery Notification .....	6
D.	Split Deliveries .....	6

## **I. GENERAL**

### **A. Product Description**

U.S. Grade AA, or A Large or Medium Eggs (15 dozen case) (100936). Shell eggs must be of current production from domestic chickens; the eggs must be packaged in one dozen cartons and packed in fiberboard cases with 15 dozens per case.

A purchase unit will total 1,500 cases.

### **B. Food Defense Requirements**

Contractors and subcontractors participating in the commodity purchase program must have 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 finished product after production. The plan shall address the following areas: (1) food defense plan management; (2) outside and inside security of the production and storage facilities; (3) processing, including all raw material sources; (4) shipping and receiving; (5) storage; (6) water supply; (7) mail handling; (8) personnel security; and (9) controlled access to production and storage areas. The food defense plan shall be made available to United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Auditor immediately upon request. Verification of the Food Defense Program at the processing, storage, and distribution facility will be conducted by the USDA/AMS Auditor. For guidance regarding development of a food defense plan, visit the following web site: <http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense>

### **C. Commodity Complaints**

The contractor/processor must immediately report all complaints received on the commodity to the Contracting Officer.

## **II. COMMODITY SPECIFICATION**

Once awarded a contract, the contractor/processor must provide a copy of this Specification to the USDA Grader.

### **A. Basic Requirements**

1. Origin of Shell Eggs. The shell eggs from domesticated chickens must have been produced in the United States, its territories or possessions, Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands. If the contractor uses or handles shell eggs originating from sources other than the United States, its territories or possessions, Puerto Rico, or the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, the contractor must have an acceptable identification and segregation plan for those shell eggs to ensure they are not used in the commodities produced under this Specification. This plan must be made available to the USDA Grader and the Contracting Officer or agent thereof upon request.

The contractor must ensure that both the contractor and subcontractor(s) maintain records such as invoices, or production and inventory records evidencing product origin (name and address of producer), and make such records available for review by the Grader or other Government official(s).

2. USDA Requirements. The commodity must be produced and processed in an official plant operating under the USDA/AMS voluntary shell egg grading program, be accurately marked and/or labeled, and meet all USDA regulatory requirements currently in place.

3. Shell Eggs. All shell eggs are to be fresh, certified U.S. Grade AA or A Large or Medium of current production as defined in 7 CFR part 56.1. Eggs must be processed in accordance with 7 CFR part 56. Eggs must be processed no more than 10 calendar days from the date of shipment. Sampling of the product will be as detailed in the Shell Egg Graders Handbook (AMS/Livestock, Poultry and Seed (LPS) (formerly PY)) program Instruction No. 910 (Shell Eggs)-1).

#### B. Packaging and Packing Materials

1. Requirements. All packaging and packing materials must be clean and in new condition and must not impart objectionable odors. All packing materials (shipping containers) must be tamper evident. Tamper-evident is defined as packing materials with one or more indicators or barriers to entry, which, if breached or missing, can reasonably be expected to provide visible evidence that tampering has occurred. A purchase unit must consist of only one size eggs in one type of packaging and packing material, with only one format of labeling. Mixing egg sizes, packaging and packing materials and labeling format are not permitted in a purchase unit.

#### 2. Fiberboard shipping containers.

(a) Requirements. The fiberboard shipping container must: (a) be of such size to pack the cartons of product without slack filling or bulging; (b) protect the interior cartons against loss and damage; (c) withstand the humidity and temperature during the conditions of use; and (d) have the combined facings weight, the bursting strength, and the compression strength (edge crush value) to withstand the stress of handling, shipping, stacking, and storage.

(b) Final closure. The final closure of the fiberboard shipping containers must be secure and made with commercially acceptable adhesive filament-reinforced plastic-type tape, plastic-film package tape, gummed adhesive paper tape, or other similar types of materials that are applicable to refrigerated temperature storage conditions and that provide for safe handling of the shell eggs and a tamper-evident seal. Tape must be 2 to 3 inches wide applied across the top of the case and a minimum of 2 inches down each end. All fiberboard shipping containers within a purchase unit must be sealed with a similar type of commercially available tamper-evident seal. Steel or wire straps must not be used for the final closure. Staples must not be used for the final closing of fiberboard

shipping containers. However, staples may be used to manufacture and to assemble the fiberboard shipping containers, provided the staples are fastened into the container and tightly clenched to eliminate sharp edges prior to packing cartons of product into the shipping containers.

### **III. LABELING**

Commercial labeling must be used. The contractor must use the same label format within a purchase unit.

Commercially labeled packages and shipping containers must be approved in accordance with USDA requirements (7 CFR part 56). Labeling must be approved by AMS/LPS Program prior to acceptance for use under this Specification. Commercial packages (cartons) for one dozen eggs must bear official identification in the form of the USDA Grademark (shield).

#### **A. Commercial Labels**

Commercial labels must be the processor's own commercial label (brand name). Distributors' labels are not allowed.

#### **B. Traceable Product**

The processor must establish a product identification and record system that clearly links product by place and time of production and processing to specific USDA contracts and destinations. When the company uses the same commercial label for the product certified as complying with this Specification and commercial product, the identification system must differentiate between USDA purchased and other commercial products. An alpha numeric code may be used for information that is in addition to USDA labeling requirements. Processor must maintain records to demonstrate the ability to trace the eggs to the production source (flocks). These records must be made available to the Grader and the Contracting Officer or agent thereof upon request.

Changes made to a processor's identification and record system must be submitted to the USDA Grader for approval prior to instituting such changes. USDA may select the commodity and audit the required product identification and record system for compliance purposes.

### **IV. FINAL EXAMINATION OF PACKAGED AND PACKED COMMODITY**

#### **A. Verification of Packaging and Packing Material**

The contractor must verify compliance with packaging, packing, and marking material requirements by furnishing the Grader the following certification on company stationery signed by a person authorized to do so by the contractor:

“(I)(We) certify that the packaging, packing, and marking materials used for any commodity presented for acceptance under the terms of the Commodity Specification for Shell Eggs dated April 2013 comply or will comply with the terms of the Commodity Specification.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_”

One certification is adequate for all production under this Specification.

**B. Examination of Packed and Packaged Commodity**

The shipping containers in a delivery unit will be examined for condition and for labeling and markings defects in accordance with the United States Standards for Condition of Food Containers (7 CFR part 42).

**C. Inspection and Checkloading**

1. Requirements. Inspection for contract compliance will be made by a USDA representative, in accordance with 7 CFR part 56, USDA regulatory requirements, and this Specification, at the site of processing, both during and after processing and packaging. The USDA representative may inspect the product at any point in transit and after delivery to the point of destination. Inspection records must be complete and made available to USDA/AMS as requested, to assure contract compliance.

2. Procedures. The inspection and checkloading must be performed by a USDA/AMS Grader. Procedures to be followed and a schedule of fees for these services may be obtained by contacting the appropriate USDA/AMS Regional Office. The quality, quantity, size/weight, packaging, packing, and checkloading of the commodity (including acceptance of the transport container for conveyance) will be evidenced by certificates issued by the USDA/AMS Grader. The contractor must not ship the commodity unless informed by the USDA/AMS Grader that the designated lot meets contract specifications.

3. Contract Compliance Stamp. Each shipping container must be identified with a USDA Contract Compliance stamp with the applicable certificate number. The Grader, or other authorized personnel under the supervision of the Grader, will stamp one end of each shipping container prior to shipment.

**V. UNITIZATION**

Each delivery unit of commodity must be unitized (palletized and stretch wrapped) and must comply with the following:

### A. Pallets

Pallets must be good quality, 48 inches x 40 inches, non-reversible, flush stringer, and partial four-way entry. Each pallet of shipping containers must be stretch-wrapped with plastic film in a manner that will secure each container and layer of containers on the pallet. Palletized product must be loaded in a way that will prevent shifting and damage to the containers of product. Pallet loads shall be stacked in a manner that minimizes the overhang of the shipping containers over the edges of the pallets and exposes the principle shipping container display panels to the extent possible to facilitate certification examinations. Eggs that are shipped immediately after packaging and packing must be stretch-wrapped to secure the cases in a manner that would allow cooling of the eggs during transport yet having secure containment for the egg cases on a pallet.

### B. Pallet Exchange

Contractors may arrange for pallet exchange with consignees; however, USDA is not responsible for such arrangements.

## **VI. SHIPMENT AND DELIVERY**

Shipment and delivery must be made in accordance with the AMS Master Solicitation, the Solicitation, and this Specification. In addition, the contractor must adhere to the following provisions:

### A. Grading Certificate

A copy of the original USDA Shell Egg Grading Certificate (PY-210S) must accompany each shipment.

The driver must, upon delivery, give the certificate to the warehouseman, or consignee, as applicable.

### B. Loading and Sealing of Vehicles

Loading must be in accordance with good commercial practices and the sealing with tamper-resistant, serially numbered seal provided by contractor, must be done at origin under the supervision of the USDA Grader. Thereafter, all delivery units--truck lot and less-than-truck lot (LTL) quantities--must be secured at all times prior to unloading with tamper resistant, serially numbered, high security seals. Suppliers of commodities, products and/or services shall be responsible for placing a seal(s) on all doors of each transportation conveyance upon completion of loading or servicing. Seals shall be serially numbered, barrier-type and meet the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards (F-1157-04). Seals shall be 1/8<sup>th</sup> inch diameter cable, high security bolt, or equivalent. The contractor must maintain a record of each seal number used for truck lot and LTL delivery units. Additionally, the contractor must ensure that the

applicable seal identification number is on each bill of lading, shipment manifest, certificate, or other delivery documents for each delivery destination. When LTL delivery units are transported on the same trailer and destined for multiple recipients, the trailer must be sealed after each delivery. The seal number must be recorded on the appropriate delivery documents and correspond with the applied seal at the time of arrival at the next destination. It will be the responsibility of the contractor to provide a sufficient number of tamper-resistant seals to the carrier service and to ensure that the trailer is sealed after each delivery destination. Failure to seal the trailer after each stop will result in rejection of the shipment by the recipient agency at the next scheduled stop and rejection of any subsequent deliveries on the trailer.

Truck shipments must be sealed at origin. Split deliveries require sealing after each drop in accordance with Section VI.B of this Specification.

C. Delivery Notification

The contractor must comply with the AMS Master Solicitation regarding Advance Shipping Notices (ASNs) and unloading appointments.

D. Split Deliveries

The contractor is responsible to deliver the quantity stated on each Sales Order/Item Number to each destination. Contractor must provide to the Grader, at the time of shipment, the number of cases for each destination.

At the option of the contractor, a purchase unit for multiple destinations (split deliveries) may be delivered on separate trucks provided each truck ships the total quantity stated on the Sales Order/Item Number. Any additional costs will accrue to the contractor's account.



Director, Food Safety and Commodity Specifications Division  
Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program