

Directive

9100.4

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CERTIFICATE ACCOUNTABILITY

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1. PURPOSE

This directive establishes the certificate accountability requirements for the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS), designated and delegated agencies, and cooperators. This same directive applies to certificates issued under the U.S. Grain Standards Act (USGSA) and the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (AMA).

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This directive supersedes FGIS Directive 420.2, Certificate Accountability, dated 1-12-80. This directive is updated to reflect organizational changes, new numbering system, and new format and does not revise policy.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Official certificates are important documents used in domestic and international marketing. They are also considered legal documents receivable by all officers and courts of the United States as prima facie evidence of the truth of the facts stated therein. Consequently, it is essential that all members of the official inspection system maintain an accountability program that ensures the proper use of official certificates. FGIS field offices, the Board of Appeals and Review, the Analytical, Reference, and Testing Services (ARTS), designated and delegated agencies, and cooperators are required to have an accountability system that includes maintaining a record on the receipt, issuance, and disposition of all official certificates.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY RECORDS

The format of certificates accountability records shall be at the discretion of the appropriate office manager. However, records shall be prepared and maintained in a manner that will facilitate the daily use and review of such records. Accountability records shall include:

- a. Title of certificate and/or form number;
- b. The beginning and ending serial numbers of the certificates received and serial numbers of certificates found missing. Record the amount of certificates received for certificates without serial numbers, such as divided-lot certificates;
- c. Serial numbers of the certificates issued and/or voided, when preprinted, or the amount when there is not a preprinted number;
- d. The date the certificates were received, issued, and/or voided; and
- e. Other information that is useful or needed by field office, agency, and cooperator managers.

5. SECURITY

The accountability system employed by official personnel must secure unused certificates and the accountability records. Unused certificates should be stored and used in numerical order when practical to do so. Certificates stored outside the main office, in such places as an elevator office, separate service point office, or those provided to a licensee or an applicant, must be accounted for by the main office as well as the receiving office. Those offices or persons receiving the unused certificates must record the location, certificate title and/or form number, serial numbers, and date the certificates are received.

Unused certificates shall be protected from theft and fraudulent or unauthorized use by storing them in a secured room, cabinet, locker, etc., when official personnel are not present. Certificates in rolls or fan folds that have been fed into computer tractor feeds may remain in place if the room is secured.