

Fresh Products Branch Directive

FPB 202
3/26/09

SERIALLY NUMBERED FORMS ACCOUNTABILITY

I. Purpose

This directive sets forth Branch policy regarding the accountability and security of official serially numbered forms (certificates and notesheets). This directive also establishes record keeping guidelines for book assignment, inventory control, and file maintenance in offices.

II. General Policy

All Federal and Federal-State offices shall maintain a Carton Log (Exhibit A) of all serially numbered forms. When a new order of serially numbered forms is received, those cartons shall be entered into the current inventory.

Cartons containing serially numbered forms must be kept in a locked storage room or locked cabinets. Only the Officer-In-Charge (OIC), Assistant Officer-in-Charge (AOIC), District Supervisor, Assistant District Supervisor or other delegated authorized personnel may have access to the storage area.

Only the OIC, AOIC, District Supervisor, Assistant District Supervisor or a delegated authorized person may open, remove or assign books from the cartons. Graders/inspectors are not authorized to remove books from opened cartons or to remove cartons from storage areas.

All books assigned must have a Record of Assignment and Completion of Serially Numbered Forms (Exhibit B) kept on file.

III. Accountability Procedures

Cartons Logs: When an order of official serially numbered forms is received assign a unique number to each carton. This is done by sequentially organizing the cartons by the serialized numbers (from lowest number to highest number) shown on the printer's label attached to the outside of the cartons. Then, in a clearly visible fashion on the outside of each carton, assign the unique

Distribution: HQ, FM, FPM, and FS
Originating Office: Field Operations Section
File Maintenance Instructions: File in Directives Binder. Replaces FPB-202 dated 12/27/93 which is now obsolete.

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number to each carton by writing the form number, a hyphen, and the sequential number of the carton (e.g., if an order of FV-300 certificates contains 5 cartons, the unique carton numbers would be “300-001,” “300-002,” “300-003,” etc. The next order received would start with the unique number “300-006”). No two cartons of the same form in an office should have the same number. Number carton up to “xxx-999,” and then start over with “xxx-001.” When a new order of serially numbered forms is received, the beginning and ending serial numbers shall be entered into the Carton Log.

Maintain a written Carton Log of carton numbers using the format noted above. At the top of each log page, designate the form number (certificate type) and record the unique number given to each carton received in the column marked “Carton Number.”

Log Entries: When a carton is first opened, the OIC or authorized person opening the carton shall immediately record the starting number of each serially numbered book into the log below the carton number. As each serially numbered book is removed from the carton, the person removing the book must initial the log beside the appropriate book number.

Carton Security: General Accountability Office regulations require that controlled documents (i.e., serially numbered forms) must be kept in a secure location accessible only by authorized personnel. After assigning a unique number to each carton, the opened and unopened cartons should be stored in a secure (locked) area accessible only by the OIC, Supervisor or other authorized personnel. If a separate storage room is not available or cannot be locked, then cartons may be stored in lockable office filing cabinets. If storage rooms and/or cabinets do not have locks, OICs and authorized personnel must properly obtain the hardware necessary to secure the rooms and/or cabinets.

NOTE: OICs, authorized personnel, and graders/inspectors are cautioned against leaving unused serially numbered forms and books unattended, such as on desktops, office mailboxes, at the worksite, in unlocked vehicles, or any other location that is not secure and under the control of the Inspection Service.

Record of Assignment and Completion of Serially Numbered Forms: When the serially numbered books are assigned to inspectors the unique carton number the book originates from, the beginning and ending serial numbers the book consists of and the date of assignment

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must be recorded and initialed by the OIC or authorized supervisor on the Record of Assignment and Completion of Serially Numbered Forms (Exhibit B). Exhibit B must accompany the serially numbered forms book at all times. As each form is issued the individual serialized number, applicant, inspector, and date of issuance must be recorded and initialed by the grader/inspector.

When assigned serially numbered books are returned but *not* completed, the date they are returned shall be entered in the record. When the book is reassigned the date of reassignment is placed below the original date. The acquiring grader/inspector will continue the record using the same method as described above utilizing his or her own information.

When a book of serially numbered forms is *fully* completed the completion date shall be recorded and initialed by the OIC or authorized personnel in the record.

The copies of each issued or voided serially numbered form shall be placed in a file. Forms should be filed in the same manner and number they are assigned. Each file shall also contain the corresponding Record of Assignment and Completion of Serially Numbered Forms (Exhibit B) affiliated with the copies. The file shall be checked for missing numbers and marked to indicate it is complete.

After the completion of a fiscal year, offices shall perform a physical inventory of all serially numbered forms. This inventory shall validate the accuracy of all serially numbered forms recorded on the Carton Log (Exhibit a) and Record of Assignment and Completion of Serially Numbered Forms (Exhibit B) with certificates and forms in the possession of graders/inspectors and inventory stored in the office.

Any missing books or incomplete series of forms shall be noted in the Carton Log. In addition, this information shall be immediately reported to the Field Operations Section (for Federal offices) or the Federal Program Manager/Federal Supervisor (for Federal-State offices).

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Offices Utilizing the Fresh Electronic Inspection

Reporting/Resource System (FEIRS): In addition to the above instructions each electronic FEIRS FV-301 used to bill a serially numbered paper certificate will include the paper certificate serialized number. This serialized number must be entered exactly as it appears on the serially numbered paper certificate and entered in the FORM NUMBER block located under the PAPER FORM heading in the SUMMARY tab of the FEIRS FV-301 certificate. This will ensure proper and complete tracking of all forms.

All exhibits are available in electronic format. Please contact Field Operations Section.



Leanne L. Skelton
Branch Chief

Exhibits

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Exhibit A

CARTON LOG

U. S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
Fruit and Vegetable Programs
Fresh Product Branch

Form Number	
Date Ctns Rec'vd	

Carton Number		Carton Number		Carton Number		Carton Number	
Date Opened:		Date Opened:		Date Opened:		Date Opened:	
Opened by:		Opened by:		Opened by:		Opened by:	
Book Starting No.	REMOVED BY						
		5		5		5	5
		10		10		10	10
		15		15		15	15
		20		20		20	20
		25		25		25	25
		30		30		30	30
		35		35		35	35

