
**USDA SPECIFICATION FOR CERTIFICATION OF BEEF CARCASS
QUALITY AND YIELD CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICIALLY GRADED BEEF**

This specification is for certification by an Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) agent of U.S. Prime and Choice carcasses which meet the following set of requirements:

1. Marbling score of Modest 00 or higher;
2. Overall A maturity in the U.S. grade it qualifies for;
3. Steer carcasses only;
4. Medium or fine marbling texture;
5. Practically free (not detracting from visual quality) of capillary rupture in the ribeye muscle;
6. Ribeye Area (REA) of at least 9.0 in²
7. Fat Thickness (FT) less than 1.0 inch;
8. No hump exceeding 2 inches in height; and
9. Free of “dark cutting” characteristics.

Items 1, 2 and 3 shall be determined in accordance with the “Official United States Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef.”

Item 4 shall be evaluated using the USDA-AMS-LS-SB-02 Marbling Texture card.

Item 6, REA allows for one side to meet the standard to consider both eligible for certification.

Item 7, FT, is to be determined at the 12th rib and represent solely an evaluation of subcutaneous fat over the ribeye at a point $\frac{3}{4}$ the lateral length of the eye muscle from the backbone. If the actual FT over the ribeye has been altered due to a hide pull, gouge, trim, or other irregularity, a predicted line shall be determined along the curvature of the ribeye to establish an accurate prediction of unaltered fat thickness at the 12th rib surface. FT may be determined on either side of the carcass with at least one side meeting the standard to consider both eligible for certification.

Item 8 shall be measured from a line formed by the extension of the top line (including the fat) and measuring the lean muscle (excluding the fat) perpendicular to that line in the center of the hump.

CERTIFICATION:

Carcasses to be examined for compliance with the requirements of this specification shall be clearly identified when presented to the AMS agent for certification. Procedures for identification, certification, the removal of preliminary identification marks (or other methods of control) from non-qualifying carcasses, and control of certified carcasses shall be in accordance with established Quality Assessment Division (QAD) procedures. The AMS agent shall certify acceptable carcasses and complete the appropriate sections in the Conformance

Assessment Management System (CAMS).

The costs of all grading and certification services performed by the AMS agent involving examinations, supervision, official documentation, and related services shall be borne by the person, group, or plant requesting the service.

LABELING:

Labeling of Dry Creek Top Choice products shall be in compliance with Food Safety and Inspection Service regulations and policy guidelines, Quality Assessment Division instructions and Livestock and Seed Program Policy Standardization Procedure 2 (LS Policy SP2).