

## Livestock and Poultry Program



# Remote Grading Program for Beef

## A Guide to Getting Started

### Step 1: Determine Eligibility- The following must be true to be eligible for USDA Meat Grading Service

1. I am a domestic business enterprise, physically located and operating in the U.S. or its territories.
2. I am a facility subject to the Federal Meat Inspection Act and [conducting beef slaughter under](#):
  - a. A Federal Grant of Inspection (USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, FSIS),
  - b. An FSIS-approved Cooperative Interstate Shipping Program (CIS),
  - c. An FSIS-State cross-utilization agreement (aka Talmadge-Aiken), or
  - d. A State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Program considered “at least equal to” Federal inspection.
3. None of the conditions set forth in [7 CFR § 54.11 Denial, conditional withdrawal, or suspension of service](#) apply to myself or my business entity.

### Step 2: Determine Readiness- It is strongly recommended that these conditions be met before submitting a Request for Service

1. My slaughter facility currently receives—or has arrangements to receive—product (livestock) meeting the eligibility requirements for quality grading according to the U.S. Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef.
2. I have reviewed the RGP Procedures and U.S. Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef, and understand how USDA grading and certification works, and what the requirements are to receive service.
  - a. [www.ams.usda.gov/remote-beef-grading](http://www.ams.usda.gov/remote-beef-grading)

- b. [www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/beef](http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards/beef)
3. I have a secure internet connection and an imaging capture device (e.g., a smart phone with a minimum 8-megapixel camera, f/2.0 or lower lens size and aperture, and optical image stabilization)

### Step 3: Contact the USDA, AMS Livestock and Poultry Program (AMS-LP)

Each packer has unique operations and capabilities, so it is important to consult with the Livestock and Poultry Program (AMS-LP) *before* applying for service. Please reach out to the AMS-LP at [AskLP@usda.gov](mailto:AskLP@usda.gov) to express your interest in the RGP.

### Step 4: Apply for Grading Service and Schedule an Initial On-Site Visit

1. An [Application for Service \(LP-109\)](#) and an Accounts Payable Information Request ([LP-109A](#)) must be submitted to AMS-LP. See also [How to Apply for Service](#) and [Service Fees](#). Applicant must indicate “Remote Grading” on the LP-109.
2. Once service is approved, AMS-LP will schedule an Initial Site Visit at the earliest available time.

**IMPORTANT:** It may take several weeks from the approval for service to the Initial Site Visit. The Applicant’s level of preparation before requesting service significantly reduces the timeline, making consultation with L&P an important part of the onboarding process.

### Step 5: Submit Product for Remote Grading

Once the Initial Site Visit is successfully completed, the Applicant may begin submitting product images and data for remote grading at any time, following the established RGP Procedures.

To maintain product and USDA grade mark integrity, AMS periodically reviews an Applicant’s internal documentation and controls and conducts on-site visits to ensure program compliance.

Grading and certification services and on-site surveillance and compliance visits under the RGP are charged to the Applicant at the current Unscheduled Grading Service Fee rates: [Service Fees](#).

## Have Questions?

Visit [www.ams.usda.gov/remote-beef-grading](http://www.ams.usda.gov/remote-beef-grading) or contact [AskLP@usda.gov](mailto:AskLP@usda.gov).