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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Livestock, Poultry and Seed
Division
Washington, D.C. 20250

SCHEDULE GLA--NOVEMBER 1996
USDA SPECIFICATION FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE ELIGIBLE
FOR APPROVED BEEF PROGRAMS CLAIMING ANGUS INFLUENCE

1. SCOPE

This specification sets forth the requirements for live cattle which qualify for certification in approved beef programs claiming Angus influence. Cattle may be qualified for these programs by meeting either the Genotype or Phenotype requirements specified below.

2. REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Genotype. Cattle eligible for Angus influence beef programs based on genotype must have positive identification (ear tags, tattoos, brands, etc.) and be traceable back to provable (e.g.; registration papers) Angus parentage. Qualifying cattle must be traceable to one registered parent or two registered grandparents. Programs which claim a specified percentage of Angus heritage must use this method.

2.2 Phenotype. Cattle eligible for certification in Angus influence beef programs based on phenotype (appearance) must be predominately (51 percent) solid black. Blue roan, gray, etc., are not considered to be black or a percentage of black. Such variations can qualify only when it occupies 49 percent, or less, of the body area with the remaining 51 percent, or greater, being solid black. ^{1/} Angus influence cattle may be either horned or polled. Carcasses of certified live animals which display certain non-Angus characteristics (e.g.; dairy conformation, Holsteins, Brahman humps) shall be excluded as specified in the carcass specifications for approved programs.

^{1/} At times, a black hair coat can become sun bleached and appear to be a shade of brown, particularly on the back. If the base of the hair close to the skin is black then that entire brown tipped area should be considered solid black. However, if the hair color is brown to the roots, it should be considered as brown in color and the area will not contribute to the 51 percent black requirement.

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3. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS

3.1 Genotype. Compliance with genotypic requirements shall be determined and controlled through a Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program approved quality management program.

3.2 Phenotype. Three options are available to ensure that live animals comply with the specified requirements. They are (1) continuous USDA supervision, (2) ante-mortem lot inspection, and (3) program monitoring. Under the first two options USDA personnel shall certify that the animals meet the specified requirements prior to slaughter. Procedures for these two options shall be developed on an individual plant basis and shall be approved by the local Quality Assessment Division (QAD) supervisor. Under option 3, the procedures described in 3.2.1 shall be followed.

3.2.1 Program Monitoring Procedures - Trained employees of the slaughter plant conducting the program shall identify the carcasses of cattle that meet the specified requirements with an approved stamp or other identifying mark approved by the local QAD supervisor. These employees must display program identification whenever they are performing live animal identification duties. QAD agents shall conduct unannounced, random checks of these employees= work as shown in Table I. QAD agents shall observe the work for a period of not less than 2 minutes, nor more than 5 minutes, each time. The QAD agent shall record any defects shown in Table II during each monitoring period. When the customer chooses to mark the carcasses with other identifying marks other than the "A" stamp, the customer will provide to QAD a written SOP identifying the designated area. This will be posted in each QAD office so that any QAD employee can have access to it.

TABLE I. MONITORING FREQUENCY

Slaughter Rate Number of cattle/shift	Frequency of monitoring periods ^{1/}
Up to 500	2
501 - 1,000	4
1,001 - 1,500	6
1,501 - 2,000	8
Over 2,000	10

^{1/} The QAD agent shall randomly determine the times of actual observation before the beginning of the slaughter shift based on the plant's expected slaughter rate.

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TABLE II. PROGRAM DEFECTS

Defect Categories		Defects
Major	Minor	
101		At least 51 percent of the hair coat is not black.
102		Untrained plant employee performing live animal identification.
	202	Trained plant employee performing live animal identification without displaying program identification.
	203	Carcasses offered to QAD grader for certification that does not have approved stamp or mark as meeting the requirements.
	204	Designated stamp not placed on approved area of carcass.

If no defects are observed under program monitoring the designated frequency of monitoring shall continue. However, an observation of any major defect, two minor defects within 5 days of program operation, or four minor defects within 15 days of operation shall result going to tightened level inspection numbers starting the next production day for whatever shift this incurred on. Under tightened level inspection numbers, the frequency of monitoring shall be the same. If no defects are observed during 10 days of operation under tightened inspection, the plant shall revert to the normal monitoring level. If a major defect or two minor defects are observed during the 10 days of tightened inspection, the identification program shall be placed under 100-percent QAD supervision for 10 days of program operation. After 10 days of operation under 100-percent supervision, the program will revert to tightened inspection before returning to regular monitoring as described in Table I. Each shift will stand on their own history. Meaning, a defect scored on night shift will not affect the level of inspection for day shift. You could be on normal inspection on dayshift and tightened inspection on night shift.

Note: The frequency of monitoring will always be the same no matter whether you are on tightened or normal inspection. The number of defects allowed changes from each level.

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3.2.2 Training and Licensing Plant Employees - QAD supervisors shall train and license individuals responsible for program integrity and operation at slaughter. These individuals will be responsible for training and supervising plant employees who conduct live animal identification, carcass stamping, and other duties. They shall be responsible for identifying employees to be trained and providing facilities and cattle for training purposes. Upon satisfactory completion of training, plant employees shall display visible identification when they are performing authorized duties. These visible identification tags may be designed by the plant as long as it is approved by the local QAD supervisor. In addition, a record designating that each trained employee has completed the approved training, signed by the trainer and trainee, shall be issued and must be on file at the slaughter plant. It shall be kept up to date and must be presented to any QAD agent upon request as well as a copy in each QAD office.

3.2.3 Equipment - Program stamps or other identifying marks used for identifying carcasses will be provided by the plant and must be approved by the local QAD supervisor. Only trained plant employees or QAD agents are authorized to use this equipment.

3.2.4 Charges for Providing Service - The applicable QAD hourly fee shall be charged for certifying this schedule under continuous 100% USDA supervision and ante-mortem lot inspection procedures when under tightened level inspection. The hourly cost along with travel cost, per diem, and other related charges shall be paid by the applicant.

Charges for training and licensing plant employees by QAD supervisors shall be based on the actual cost of providing training--hourly fee plus expenses. Hourly fees, including travel time, shall be based on the current non-commitment QAD rate. Travel, per diem, and other related charges shall be reimbursed on an actual cost basis.