

October 24, 2013

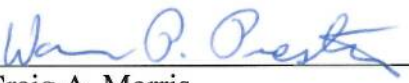
**NOTICE TO THE TRADE
PROPOSED ADDENDUM TO THE OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
USDA CERTIFICATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY OF TESTING MATERIALS
TENDERNESS MARKETING CLAIMS**

The Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Livestock, Poultry and Seed (LPS) Program will certify meat cuts for tenderness-marketing claims based on the applicable American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International tenderness standard.

To this end, AMS is proposing an addendum to its Operational Requirements for Certification of ASTM's Standard for Tenderness Marketing Claims Associated with Meat Cuts Derived from Beef. The addendum would allow the *infraspinatus* and *psaos major* to be considered as "safe harbors", and as such, be exempt from certain performance elements outlined in the AMS document with alternate requirements for certification taken into consideration .

The addendum is attached for your convenience, but is also available at the following web site address: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/TendernessMarketingClaim>

Please direct related comments and inquiries to Darin Doerscher, Marketing Specialist at 563-847-1550 or darin.doerscher@ams.usda.gov.


for Craig A. Morris
Deputy Administrator
Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program



ADDENDUM A - BEEF

Operational Requirements for the USDA Certification of ASTM International Tenderness Marketing Claims XXXX 2013

BACKGROUND

The Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Livestock, Poultry and Seed (LPS) Program will certify carcasses and/or meat cuts for tenderness-marketing claims based on the applicable American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International tenderness standard. The performance requirements of this addendum were established after consultation with an industry-working group convened by the LPS Program. The Industry Working Group was comprised of representatives of USDA, industry associations, processing companies, producers, technology providers, and academia.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document provides for additional opportunities for specific beef items to meet the requirements for USDA-certified program for tenderness based on the approved beef ASTM International tenderness standard. Parties who meet the requirements outlined in this addendum will be eligible to market their product (e.g., product labeling, advertisements, and/or promotions) as being USDA-certified very tender.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

1. Operational Requirements for the USDA Certification of ASTM Tenderness Marketing Claims. USDA LPS Program, December 2012.
2. Ranking of Beef Muscles for Tenderness. C. R. Calkins and G. Sullivan. National Cattlemen's Beef Association Beef Facts - Product Enhancement. 2007.
3. Relationship Between Shear Force and Trained Sensory Panel Tenderness Ratings of 10 Major Muscles from *Bos indicus* and *Bos taurus* Cattle. S. D. Shackelford, T. L. Wheeler, and M. Koohmaraie. J. Anim. Sci. 73:3333. 1995.
4. Standard Specification for Tenderness Marketing Claims Associated with Meat Cuts Derived from Beef. ASTM International Standard F2925.
5. Variation in palatability and biochemical traits within and among eleven beef muscles. M.S. Rhee, T.L. Wheeler, S.D. Shackelford, and M. Koohmaraie. J. Anim. Sci. 82:534. 2004

REQUIREMENTS

Two muscles listed in the ASTM International Standard Specification for Tenderness Marketing Claims Associated with Meat Cuts Derived from Beef, *infraspinatus* and *psoas major*, will be

considered as “safe harbors” based upon the reference documents of Calkins and Sullivan (2007), Shackelford et. al. (1995), and Rhee et al. (2004).

An individual or firm seeking USDA certification of a tenderness-marketing claim under this addendum shall be exempt from the required key performance elements number 2, 3 and 4 of the of the Operational Requirements for the USDA Certification of ASTM International Tenderness Marketing Claims. However, all items must be:

- Aged a minimum of 14 days;
- USDA quality grade Select or higher; and,
- Not be severed from their attachments pre-rigor.

All approved programs will be audited within the first year. Thereafter, approved programs are audited at least once per year. However, more frequent audits may be conducted (1) if either numerous minor non-conformances or a major non-conformance are identified during the audit; (2) if customer complaints indicate an ongoing problem; or (3) as directed by Quality Assessment Division management.

Safe Harbor Tenderness Beef Items

The beef item consisting of the *infraspinatus* shall consist of IMPS item 114D - Beef Chuck, Shoulder, Top Blade, Roast with purchaser specified option 01 (referred to as the Beef Shoulder, Flat Iron). Specific attention should be given to removal of the internal connective tissue (shoulder tendon).

The beef items consisting of the *psaos major* shall be the only meat component allowed. Items shall be intact muscle pieces or portioned from IMPS items: 188 – Beef Loin, Tenderloin, Bone-in; or, 189 - Beef Loin, Tenderloin, Full, and its subordinate cuts.

Questions or comments pertaining to these performance requirements should be submitted to:

David Bowden, Jr., Director, STD
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Room 2633 South Building
Washington, DC 20250
Phone: (202) 690-3148
Email: david.bowden@ams.usda.gov

Approved: _____
David Bowden, Director, STD

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