



**PUBLIC LAW 272 – 84th CONGRESS
CHAPTER 632 – 1st Session
S. 1757**

AN ACT

To amend the Act known as the “Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946”, approved August 14, 1946.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That subsection (h) of section 203 of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1622 (h)) is hereby amended by adding at the end thereof the following new sentence: “Whoever knowingly shall falsely make, issue, alter, forge, or counterfeit any official certificate, memorandum, mark, or other identification, or device for making such mark or identification, with respect to inspection, class, grade, quality, size, quantity, or condition, issued or authorized under this section or knowingly cause or procure, or aid, assist in, or be party to, such false making, issuing, altering, forging, or counterfeiting, or whoever knowingly shall possess, without promptly notifying the Secretary of Agriculture or his representative, utter, publish, or use as true, or cause to be uttered, published, or used as true, any such falsely made, altered, forged, or counterfeited official certificate, memorandum, mark, identification, or device, or whoever knowingly represents that an agricultural product has been officially inspected or graded (by an authorized inspector or grader) under the authority of this section when such commodity has in fact not been so graded or inspected shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.”

SEC. 2. The farm produce inspection clause contained in various appropriation Acts (7 U.S.C. 414) and the second, third, and fourth sentences of section 1 of the Produce Agency Act of March 3, 1927 (7 U.S.C. 492), are hereby repealed.

Approved August 9, 1955.

Official USDA Grade Terminology:

Beef:	Quality Grades	Prime, Choice, Select, Standard, Commercial, Utility, Cutter, Canner.
	Yield Grades	Yield Grade 1, Yield Grade 2, Yield Grade 3, Yield Grade 4, Yield Grade 5.
Chicken:	Quality Grades	U.S. Grade A, U.S. Grade B, U.S. Grade C
Duck:	Quality Grades	U.S. Grade A, U.S. Grade B, U.S. Grade C
Goose:	Quality Grades	U.S. Grade A, U.S. Grade B, U.S. Grade C
Lamb:	Quality Grades	Prime, Choice, Good, Utility, Cull.
	Yield Grades	Yield Grade 1, Yield Grade 2, Yield Grade 3, Yield Grade 4, Yield Grade 5.
*Pork:	U.S. No. 1, U.S. No. 2, U.S. No. 3, U.S. No. 4, U.S. Utility.	
Rabbit:	Quality Grades	U.S. Grade A, U.S. Grade B, U.S. Grade C
Turkey:	Quality Grades	U.S. Grade A, U.S. Grade B, U.S. Grade C
Veal/Calf:	Quality Grades Only	Prime, Choice, Good Standard, Utility.
*Currently pork is not officially graded by USDA and, therefore, may not be labeled or advertised by grade.		



Examples of Public Law 272 Noncompliance:

- Representing, verbally or written, meat or poultry as being USDA graded when it has not been graded.
- Misuse of official USDA shields or facsimiles thereof, (e.g., using USDA grade shields with a USDA grade on ungraded meat or poultry).
- Advertising “USDA” with unofficial grade terminology (e.g., “USDA” Heavy Western Beef).
- Labeling meat or poultry by-products (oxtails, liver, gizzards, hearts, etc.) with official USDA grade terminology.
- Advertising or labeling of ground or diced meat products with official USDA grade terminology, unless the establishment exclusively sells that specific grade or has a written quality control program in place to ensure correct grade usage.
- Labeling any graded meat with a different grade (e.g., graded Prime, labeled as Choice).
- Using improper grade terminology on other species (e.g., USDA Choice pork, USDA Select lamb, U.S. Grade AA chicken).
- Advertising a particular USDA grade and not having that grade available (e.g., restaurant menu states USDA Choice T-bone steak and USDA Choice is not available and the establishment is unable to prove that the advertised grade has been recently purchased).
- When advertising one USDA grade exclusively and having additional grades and/or ungraded available (e.g., “We sell only USDA Choice”, “We sell only U.S. Grade A”).
- Use of “USDA Certified” when the meat or poultry has not been officially certified by an AMS grader.

Examples of Official USDA Shields:

