



CERTIFICATION OF FURTHER PROCESSED COMMODITY MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTS

Purpose

The purpose of this Instruction is to set forth policies and procedures for the certification of further processed, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) donated commodity or approved specification requirements. These instructions for compliance of detail requirements, criteria, and procedures shall be used unless otherwise stated in the applicable product specification.

Policy

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regulations (CFR 7, Part 250, Section 30) require that the further processing of USDA donated commodity meat and poultry products be certified by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) for non-diversion and non-substitution. Certified USDA donated commodity meat and poultry products must be produced and further processed in federally (or state equivalent) inspected plants. In addition, it is the Quality Assessment Division's (QAD) policy that all products shall have been properly handled, frozen, and stored. QAD supervisors shall evaluate the processor's facilities and operations in order to establish the most efficient utilization of personnel while maintaining proper accountability and integrity of USDA donated commodity meat and poultry products.

Procedure

The QAD Series 600 Instructions referred to throughout this instruction cover all certification policy and procedures.

I. Production

A. General

- 1) USDA graders shall supervise processing activities to maintain proper accountability and integrity of USDA donated commodity meat and poultry products. Graders shall periodically check product and rework for acceptability prior to and during further processing to ensure that the product has been properly stored and handled. Frozen product that shows evidence of mishandling or deterioration shall be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined in QAD Instruction 613.
- 2) Rework shall be processed in accordance with Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regulations, not to exceed 90 days from date of production.



B. Meat

- 1) The USDA grader must be provided with a Certificate of Analysis (COA) prior to the use of Fresh Boneless Beef (combos) for further processing. Processors should assure their suppliers fax the COA to arrive at delivery. Provide the USDA grader evidence that fat analysis has been conducted and is within the acceptable range. This evidence may be provided from the supplier or an outside laboratory. A COA is not required for frozen coarse ground beef as the microbiological and fat analysis is known before shipment.
- 2) All USDA donated commodity meat products shall be closed in accordance with the approved technical proposal of each supplier.
- 3) Use of donated commodity meat product over 12 months of age requires a written waiver from the Recipient Agency (RA) prior to processing. Product over 12 months of age may not be commingled with any other product and must be segregated and processed separately. The finished product can only be returned to the RA from which it originated.
- 4) Unless otherwise specified in the National Processing Agreement (NPA) and/or End Product Data Schedule (EPDS), processors may commingle donated products that are 12 months of age or less from different States and/or RA's.
- 5) Damaged Cases - Cases with exposed product shall be identified and reviewed by the quality control personnel and the USDA grader. If both parties agree that acceptable product may be recovered from the damaged case(s), then reconditioning is permissible.

C. Poultry

Official destination test weights are to be completed on the original poultry product purchased by USDA with results recorded on the PY-210P as outlined in the current specification instructions. Substituted loads will also be test weighed, but the weight certification for substituted product will be documented on a PY-211 Memorandum and filed appropriately. If parts or deboned meat from USDA purchased commodity whole carcasses or parts are substituted, an official test weighing must be completed on the substituted product to ensure it is substituted in equal weights. The costs of the destination test weighing and condition examination for original product shall be charged to the contractor that delivered the origin load.

Carcasses and parts processed under the FPCP are subject to online or stationary lot sampling to determine compliance with applicable quality factors.

II. Certification

A. Quality Control System

The USDA grader is responsible for reviewing and maintaining a copy of the quality control system and approved forms used at their duty station. Graders must immediately notify their Supervisor of changes made to the quality control system by the plant that may affect monitoring responsibilities in the FPCP.

B. Plant QC Records Check

The USDA grader must assure that adequate samples are taken by the QC personnel, and that samples are properly identified, numbered, appropriately spaced and that adequate control of product is maintained by the plant. The Grader will verify these items through record checks of the worksheets prepared by the QC personnel for each requirement monitored by the plant. The Grader shall review a QC worksheet a minimum of once per hour for proper entry of information, compliance with tolerances, frequency of checks, and any retention information present. Additionally, the Grader shall conduct record checks of the equipment calibration records maintained by the processor on a quarterly basis. Results of the calibration record checks shall be recorded in the remarks section of the FPCP monitoring worksheet. Failure to calibrate equipment as outlined in the quality control system is considered a noncompliance.

C. Verification Checks

Verification checks will consist of the Grader monitoring quality/certification factors through an independent sampling of the product. These verification checks are to be made at random for each process throughout the shift and the results recorded. The Grader reserves the right to sample product for any of the applicable criteria at any time. A verification check is to be conducted each hour.

The National Processing Agreement Program allows processors to create a single set of contractual documents for commodity reprocessing that is recognized in all states. This agreement contains the provisions that permit processors to receive and utilize USDA donated food as an ingredient in the production of a finished end product. In turn, the processor agrees to pass the value of the donated food through to the recipient agency in the form of a lower cost of the product. As with any contractual agreement, the processing agreement is designed to protect the interest of all parties involved. This agreement includes an End Product Data Schedule (EPDS) which details the formulation, quantity of donated food needed to produce a specific number of units, packaging, and yield information. When a processor participates in this program, only one set of AMS-approved EPDS', recognized nationwide, are required regardless of the number of states product will be processed for.

Under the National Processing Agreement Program, all EPDS's must be approved by the National Office, whether they reflect GMR (EPDS 1 or 2) or Standard Yield case counts (EPDS 3). EPDS' prepared under this program will not contain and do not require state agency

approval. All EPDS' approved under this program are approved in perpetuity and will not require a new approval until it is revised. Copies of all approved EPDS' will be provided to the Regional Offices.

III. Substitution

Processors operating under an FNS approved substitution plan may substitute commercial meat and poultry for USDA donated commodity, as long as the commercial product conforms to all the requirements of the USDA donated commodity.

IV. Product Identification

A. USDA "Further Processing Certification Program"



B. Alternative Stamping Methods

Upon review and approval, packaging materials may be officially identified with computer generated official stamp imprints provided the official identification is legible and meets the size and shape requirements specified in the regulations. Graders will closely monitor and account for the use of computer generated stamp imprints.

Use of any computer generated official stamp imprint requires approval by the National Office. Graders may not authorize the shipment of poultry in packing material bearing the stamp imprints until they are approved. To obtain approval, plant management must submit established control procedures of the label to the National Office with an example of how it will be applied to the packaging material. Upon completion of the review of the established accountability procedures and approval, the approving official will provide a copy of the label and related information regarding its approval to the appropriate Regional Director who will forward the information to the applicable supervisor and grader. Prior to each use, plant management must advise the grader of their intention to use the labels and the amount of product to be labeled.

- 1) Meat They must contain, at a minimum, the production date, product name, product code, net weight, and donated commodity statement: **“Contains Commodities Donated by the USDA. This Product Shall Be Sold Only to Eligible Recipient Agencies.”** Product over 12 months of age is considered non-



substitutable and must be labeled for the RA. Commercial labels may be used, provided product labels meet the applicable FNS and FSIS requirements.

- 2) Ensure that all backhaul commodities are isolated, run separately from directly diverted commodities and are identified with a specific backhaul code and State/RA specific designation.
- 3) All shipping containers shall include the production date on the front panel. The production date shall be in a month-day-year format (e.g., Jun. 21, 2008 or 06/21/08).

V. Non-compliance

Any noncompliance noted during the Grader's verification checks shall be addressed immediately. Product failing to meet requirements shall be placed under retention until the product is brought into compliance or until applicable USDA markings and product identification have been removed. A follow-up sample shall be taken within one hour after QC advises the Grader that corrections have been made. If the follow-up sample is satisfactory, sampling will resume at the current monitoring frequency. If product is not in compliance, the Grader shall contact his/her Supervisor. The Supervisor will consult with the Regional Director and National Supervisor, to determine what additional corrective action is to be taken. Additionally, corrective action must be documented and performed by the plant to prevent any future occurrences. A copy of the corrective action is to be provided to the Grader, Supervisor and National Supervisor.

To allow for processing anomalies, the processor is limited to two separate occasions of noncompliance found in verification checks. If three separate occasions of noncompliance's are found through verification checks within a six-month period, the processor is no longer eligible for the FPCP program and full grading and certification duties will revert back to the resident USDA grader(s). The Grader shall document each noncompliance in writing to the National Supervisor. Information to include shall be the date and the descriptions of the noncompliance's with copies of the corrective action taken by the plant. This report is due within 10 working days after the third noncompliance takes place. The Grader shall advise the Supervisor and National Supervisor regarding any discrepancies that could compromise the integrity of the FPCP program.

VI. Meetings

The processor shall schedule and participate in FPCP meetings, a minimum of once a month; discuss program developments, proposed amendments, etc.; record meeting minutes and provide copies to the USDA grader; forward copies of meeting minutes to the USDA grader, FPCP coordinator, Supervisor, and all participants in the meeting.

VII. Documentation & Distribution

USDA record checks of QC worksheets and USDA verification checks shall be documented on the QAD FPCP Form. One worksheet will be used for each production shift.

A. Certificates

Production records shall be provided by the plant in order to issue official certification.

Certificate issuance for product processed under the FPCP will be accomplished according to the instructions applicable to that program. However, the certificate must contain the statement “Product represented by this certificate was processed under the AMS Further Processing Certification Program”