



USDA CARCASS GRADE DATA FACTORS

1 Purpose

This document explains the carcass data collection services that are provided by Quality Assessment Division (QAD) agents. It also prescribes the carcass grade data factors that can be provided and the associated fee-for-service costs that are assessed to users of the service.

2 Scope

The provisions of this Procedure apply to all applicants and customers of QAD carcass data collection services.

3 References

The following referenced documents are used for the application of this Procedure. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[QAD 100 Procedure: *QAD Application for Service*](#)

[QAD 500 Procedure: *Beef, Bullock, and Bull Grading Methods and Procedures*](#)

[QAD 501 Procedure: *Lamb, Yearling Mutton, and Mutton Grading Methods and Procedures*](#)

[QAD 502 Procedure: *Veal and Calf Grading Methods and Procedures*](#)

[QAD 510 Form: *Carcass Data Factors*](#)

4 Policy

Detailed information on carcass grade factors can be a valuable asset to livestock producers and feeders in making genetic improvement in their breeding herds or evaluating feeding and management programs. To encourage producers and feeders in these efforts, the QAD will provide official carcass grade information upon request.

5 Procedures

Financially interested parties desiring detailed carcass data should request service through the Business Operations Branch Chief in accordance with the procedures in QAD 100 Procedure: *QAD Application for Service*.

Business Operations Branch Chief
USDA, AMS, L&P, QAD
10809 Executive Center Dr. Suite 318
Little Rock, AR 72211
Phone: 501-312-2962

The types of quality and yield data that can be provided for beef, lamb, veal and calf carcasses include the following.



<u>Quality Grade</u>	<u>Yield Grade (Beef and Lamb)</u>
Bone maturity (sacral, lumbar, thoracic, rib, trotter) (10% of a maturity)	Hot carcass weight (pounds)
Lean maturity (10% of a maturity)	Fat thickness (tenths)
Final maturity (10% of a maturity)	Ribeye area (tenth of a square inch)
Marbling (beef, calf) (10% of a degree) Flank streakings (lamb, veal, calf) (10% of a degree) Rib feathering (veal, calf) (10% of a degree)	Percent kidney, pelvic and heart fat (1/2 percent)
Marbling type (fine, medium, coarse)	Adjusted preliminary yield grade (tenth of a YG)
Lean texture (degree)	Final yield grade (tenth of a YG)
Lean firmness (degree)	
Final quality grade (10% of a grade)	
Conformation (lamb, veal, calf) (degree of muscling grade)	
Dark cutting (10%)	

Applicants requesting official USDA carcass data will be billed \$0.50 per factor.

<u>Conformation and Quality Grade</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Prime	P
Choice	C
Select	SE
Good	G
Standard	S
Commercial	CM
Utility	U
Cutter	CU
Canner	CA
Cull	CL



<u>Degrees of Marbling, Streaking, and Feathering</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Extremely Abundant (veal/calf)	EB
Very Abundant	VA
Abundant	AB
Moderately Abundant	MDA
Slightly Abundant	SLA
Moderate	MD
Modest	MT
Small	SM
Slight	SL
Traces	T
Practically Devoid	PD
Practically None (veal/calf)	PN
Devoid (lamb)	D

<u>Lean Firmness</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Extremely Firm	EF
Tends to be Extremely Firm	TEF
Firm	F
Tends to be Firm	TF
Moderately Firm	MF
Tends to be Moderately Firm	TMF
Slightly Firm	SF
Tends to be Slightly Firm	TSF
Tends to be slightly Soft	TSS
Slightly Soft	SS
Tends to be Moderately Soft	TMS
Moderately Soft	MS
Soft	S
Very Soft	VS

<u>Maturity Group</u>		
Beef	Lamb	Veal and Calf
A	A	V
B	B	C
C	YM	
D	M	
E		



6 Change Record

The following changes were made to the 07/23/12 revision of this document:

1. Grading and Verification Division was changed to Quality Assessment Division

Mark Perigen, Director
Quality Assessment Division
Livestock and Poultry Program

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