

United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service

Specialty Crops Program

Specialty Crops Inspection Division

AIM Inspection Series

Terminal Market Inspection Training Manual

April 2023

"SCI moving forward in the 21st Century using technology, innovation, and old-fashioned hard work"

Non-Discrimination Policy: In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at <u>How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint</u> and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: <u>program.intake@usda.gov</u>.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Terminal Market Training Manual Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
GUIDE FOR ELECTRONIC USAGE	1
PURPOSE	2
RESPONSIBILITIES	2
Student	2
Qualified Training Provider (QTP)	3
Supervisor	
Federal Program Managers	
TRAINING DOCUMENTATION	
SC-340 TMI Probationary Evaluation Form	4
On-the-Job (OJT) Checklist	
Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACG)	
Federal-State Cooperative Market (Fed-State) Inspectors	
MIT COURSE I: FUNDAMENTALS OF MARKET INSPECTION (FOMI)	
Overview	
Pre-enrollment	
Required Office Resources	
Equipment	
Read and Review	
Enrollment	
Structure	
Blackboard Modules	
Knowledge Check Exams	
On-the-Job Activities	
Qualified Training Provider (QTP) for FOMI	
Course Progress	
Approximate Course Length	
Successful Completion of Course	
MIT COURSE II: CORE COMMODITY, INSPECTION & CERTIFICATION (CORE CIC)	
Overview	
Pre-enrollment	
Required Resources at Training Location	
Enrollment	
Qualified Training Provider (QTP) for Core CIC	
Structure	
Commodities Covered	
Blackboard Modules	
Knowledge Check Exams	
On-the-job (OJT) Commodity Training and Evaluation	
Qualification Evaluation, Affirmation and Attestation	
Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs)	
Federal-State Cooperative Market (Fed-State) Inspectors	
OJT Checklist.	
Course Progress	
0	-

Approximate Course Length	. 23
Successful Completion of Course	. 24
Student Commodity Grading and Additional Commodity Training	. 24
CONTINUATION OF TMI COMMODITY TRAINING	. 24
MIT ON-THE-JOB (OJT) TRAINING TIMETABLE FOR CONTINUED COMMODITY	
TRAINING FOR TERMINAL MARKET INSPECTION (TMI) AGRICULTURAL	
COMMODITY GRADERS (ACGS)	. 24
MIT OJT Continued Commodity Training for TMI ACGs Qualified Training Provider (QTP).	
Period I	. 25
Period II	. 26
Period III	. 27
MIT TRAINING PROGRAM COMPLETION	. 28
REFERENCE LINKS	. 29
APPENDIX I - MIT ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT) CHECKLIST	. 30
APPENDIX II - CORE CIC OJT TEACHING AND EVALUATION PLANS	. 31

Page 1 of 31

INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to provide guidance to Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division and Federal-State personnel of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), in terminal market inspection training of Agricultural Commodity Graders and Federal-State market licensees. If needed, contact your immediate supervisor for any situation not addressed in this manual.

Compliance with the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) guidelines does not excuse failure to comply with the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or any other applicable Federal or State laws or regulations. SCI Division of the Specialty Crops Programs (SCP), AMS is responsible for grading/inspecting, audits and standardization programs of fresh and/or processed fruits and vegetables and related products. The legal authority for grading, auditing and standardization activities are the Agricultural Marketing Acts of 1936 and 1946, as amended.

GUIDE FOR ELECTRONIC USAGE

The AIM system of instructional manuals is available electronically in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (PDF) at the following intranet address: <u>https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/ams/AMS-SCI/SitePages/Home.aspx</u>.

When accessed electronically, AIM materials have hyperlinks and hypertext (visible as underlined <u>blue text</u>) available to the PDF user. Clicking on a hyperlink takes the reader to a web site with information relating to the subject. Hypertext links the reader to a different page within the current manual, or a different manual, with information relating to the subject. For example, the hypertext in the Table of Contents allows a reader to go directly to the section of interest in the manual by clicking on the section title.

PDF offers a variety of tools depending on the Adobe version the reader has. The newer the version, the more tools available. PDF documents are easily searchable for content within a document or within multiple documents. To learn about the variety of PDF search options:

- Click on the "Help" tab on the top of any page in Adobe Acrobat,
- Then click on the "Adobe Acrobat Help" bar,
- Type the word "Search" in the "Search" box, and click on the "Search" button,
- A series of options will become available,
- Click on the "Access Search Features" link and follow the instructions for the type of search you are interested in.

Page 2 of 31

PURPOSE

Within this document, Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs) and Federal-State Cooperative Market (Fed-State) Inspectors will be collectively known as "ACGs" unless otherwise designated.

This policy is intended for full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status. For terminal market training policy regarding mixed-tour or intermittent ACGs, contact SCI National Programs Mission Support or for Fed-State ACGs seeking restricted market license status contact a Federal Program Manager.

The Market Inspector Training (MIT) program provides developing ACGs fundamental and comprehensive technical and professional skills training to ensure mission-critical performance. Within the MIT, critical areas of terminal market inspection are divided into courses and timetables of progressive development:

- MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI)
- MIT Course II: Core Commodity, Inspection & Certification (Core CIC)
- MIT On-the-Job (OJT) Training Timetable for Continued Commodity Training for Terminal Market Inspection (TMI) Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs)

MIT provides the training necessary to prepare an ACG to perform terminal market inspection tasks and commodity inspection without direct supervision. It does not authorize, certify or license the student to perform terminal market inspection, that responsibility rests with the student's supervisor or Federal Program Manager (FPM). Thus, students successfully completing any MIT commodity training course must still have their ability attested to by the supervisor and for Fed-State ACGs, also to be evaluated by the Federal Program Manager, to become qualified to perform market commodity inspections or to receive an unrestricted market license.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student

The student is the focal point of all training and must make every effort to become qualified to perform their inspection duties without direct supervision. The success of student training greatly depends on the relationship between the supervisor and student. Student responsibilities include:

- Actively participate in all scopes of the training.
- Comprehend the applicable task requirements.
- Obtain and maintain knowledge and appropriate skill level within all training courses.
- Budget on-duty time to complete assigned tasks within established time limits.
- Request assistance from the supervisor when having difficulty with any part of training.

Page 3 of 31

Qualified Training Provider (QTP)

While the supervisor is responsible for ensuring the student is fully trained in the performance of their assigned duties, MIT courses allow Qualified Training Providers to provide instruction, demonstration and evaluation of student ability and proficiency so that the supervisor can make an educated decision on student qualifications to perform inspection duties without direct supervision.

Qualified Training Providers include:

- GS-9 or Unrestricted Terminal Market ACGs
- Inspectors-in-Charge
- Officers-in-Charge, Assistant Officers-in-Charge and Sub-area Supervisors
- Federal-State Supervisors
- SCI and Federal-State Training Officers
- SCI Training and Development Branch Training Specialists and Training Contractors
- Federal Program Managers

QTPs must be fully trained in all aspects of terminal market inspection and maintain a fully successfully performance rating or unrestricted market license status. <u>See additional QTP qualifications per MIT course within this policy.</u>

Qualified Training Provider responsibilities include:

- Advise and assist supervisor in executing training responsibilities
- Conduct training in support of MIT course requirements
- Maintain a record of student progress
- Review student training documentation, provide instructional feedback and evaluation on student proficiency and ability
- Brief supervisor on student status, provide training updates and recommend training mitigation for non-proficiencies
- Assist supervisor in completion and documentation of mitigation corrective actions.
- Identify training resources in support of training activities

Supervisor

The student's supervisor has the single greatest impact on mission accomplishment. They must share their experiences and expertise to meet mission requirements and provide a quality training environment for student success.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring the student is qualified to perform inspection duties without direct supervision although they may utilize Qualified Training Providers to provide MIT training and evaluation. While Qualified Training Providers provide training, ultimately the supervisor will determine the student's qualifications in performing inspection duties without direct supervision. Supervisor responsibilities include:

Page 4 of 31

- Evaluate training results and documentation to ensure student is fully prepared for their mission responsibilities
- Ensure student performance deficiencies are addressed via effective corrective actions
- Ensure student training duties do not detract from primary duties
- Ensure training is planned and scheduled accordingly to meet office needs
- Ensure Qualified Training Providers are aware of the training requirements in support of the overall mission
- Budget and allocate resources to support training requirements, including training time and training providers
- For probationary students, ensure Division-required evaluations include a review of previously-certified tasks to ensure the student met duty position requirements

Federal Program Managers

Federal Program Managers (FPMs) are responsible for issuance of market licenses to Fed-State ACGs. MIT courses are designed to provide Fed-State ACGs sufficient training for license evaluation.

ACG MIT courses supplement, not replace, established USDA Fed-State ACG licensing requirements and procedures. For further information regarding Fed-State ACG licensing, contact a Federal Program Manager or the SCI Federal State Inspection Management Branch Chief or Assistant Branch Chief.

TRAINING DOCUMENTATION

Keeping records of the training provided, including critical milestone dates, is essential in maintaining the integrity of a training program. All documentation pertaining to an ACG's terminal market inspection training must be kept either as electronic files (i.e., in Blackboard, in computer server shared files, in supervisor's hard drive, etc.) or as hard copy documents (i.e., written exams and exercises in a secured file cabinet). All records will include the name of the ACG, and where applicable, dates, market office, scope and supervisor signature. Training documentation will fall under the general records retention policy and will be transferred accordingly during changes of an ACG's official duty station.

Each course of MIT has unique training documentation designed to support learning objectives. These include exercise worksheets, student evaluations and supervisor verifications. Refer to each course section in this manual to learn more about the documentation needed per course.

Documentation listed below will be utilized throughout all courses of MIT.

SC-340 TMI Probationary Evaluation Form

The <u>SC-340 TMI Probationary Evaluation Form</u> is to be used to document the performance of probationary SCI ACGs performing Terminal Market Inspections (TMI). <u>SC-340 is not required</u> for ACGs who are not in probationary status or for Fed-State ACGs. The Probationary

Page 5 of 31

Evaluation form needs to be completed until the ACG satisfactorily completes their first-year probationary period. However, in certain situations, it may be appropriate to utilize this form beyond the employee's probationary period; please consult with your supervisor concerning such a situation.

The evaluation needs to be completed bi-weekly, starting two weeks after the first day on duty until the ACG successfully completes MIT Course II: Core Commodity, Inspection and Certification (Core CIC) and has no unacceptable or deficient elements noted. Once those criteria are met, begin to incorporate performance reviews as outlined in the <u>Supervisory</u> <u>Reviews of Agricultural Commodity Graders</u> policy and reduce SC-340 completion to once per month for the duration of the probationary period. If at any time during the once per month evaluation period the ACG's performance becomes unacceptable or deficient, the frequency would revert to bi-weekly for the duration of the probationary period.

The SC-340 TMI Probationary Evaluation Form is available on the AMS Forms Catalog at the following intranet link: <u>https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/ams/AMSFormsCatalog/SC-340.pdf</u>

On-the-Job (OJT) Checklist

Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACG)

SCI ACG training progress will be tracked via the <u>OJT Checklist (Appendix I)</u>. It is intended to record critical training information related to commodity inspection and certification and other inspection-related tasks. Once the training for a task or for each commodity under MIT Course II: Core CIC is successfully completed, the supervisor will update the student's OJT Checklist with signature indicating that the employee is qualified to perform that task or inspect a commodity without direct supervision based on evaluated proficiency.

The OJT Checklist can be used as a quick reference guide by a dispatcher assigning daily inspection work to identify which commodities the ACG can inspect without direct supervision. The OJT Checklist will be maintained until the completion of the On-the-Job Training Timetable for New Terminal Market Inspection Agricultural Commodity Graders.

Federal-State Cooperative Market (Fed-State) Inspectors

Fed-State inspector training progress may utilize the <u>OJT Checklist (Appendix I)</u> to track training progress but is not a requirement as training may already be tracked via the cooperative market licensing process. Contact the Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief for additional guidance.

Page 6 of 31

MIT COURSE I: FUNDAMENTALS OF MARKET INSPECTION (FOMI)

Overview

The FOMI course is required for all full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status that perform terminal market inspections. ACGs are required to successfully complete the FOMI course prior to entrance into MIT Course II: Core Commodity, Inspection & Certification (Core CIC).

The FOMI course is a balanced delivery approach utilizing the Blackboard online learning system for remote virtual learning and on-the-job training activities, within an actual terminal market environment. A Certificate of Completion is issued with the successful completion of all FOMI requirements. Once the FOMI is successfully completed, commodity training according to the Timetable can commence.

FOMI must be successfully completed within six (6) weeks of beginning the course.

Pre-enrollment

Required Office Resources

- Hard copy of the current General Market Manual and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Certificate (FV-300) Manual
- Access to a computer with internet availability
- Computer access to a printer within the local office
- FV-300N notesheets
- Pen
- Notepad
- Calculator

Equipment

Prior to enrollment, the student will be assigned inspection equipment as outlined in the General Market Manual and Inspector Grading Equipment Inventory Sheet.

Read and Review

The supervisor will provide a hard copy of the current General Market Manual and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Certificate (FV-300) Manual and provide sufficient time for the student to read and review the sections as indicated below:

- A. General Market Manual:
 - Authority

Page 7 of 31

- Relationship with Industry
- Prohibited Activities
- Requesting Inspections
- Inspection Equipment
- Carrier, Load, Lot
- Determining Type of Inspection
- Performing the Inspection
- Federal Marketing Orders and Section 8e Requirements
- Certificate
- Fees
- Re-inspections and Appeals
- PACA
- B. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Certificate (FV-300) Manual:
 - General Instructions
 - Identifying the Inspection
 - Describing the Product

Enrollment

The FOMI course is required for all full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status. These ACGs are required to successfully complete the FOMI course prior to proceeding to MIT Course II: Core Commodity, Inspection & Certification (Core CIC) and the MIT On-the-Job Training Timetable for New Terminal Market Inspection Agricultural Commodity Graders (Timetable).

A. SCI

The front-line supervisor will submit an enrollment request email to their respective Regional Branch Chief (RBC) or Assistant Regional Branch Chief (ARBC) that provides:

- Student name and USDA email address
- Front-line supervisor name and USDA email address
- Officer-in-Charge and Assistant Officer-in-Charge name and USDA email address
- Market office or inspection point name
- Name of course to be enrolled in
- Acknowledgment that all pre-enrollment requirements have been met.

The RBC or ARBC will review the request and, if approved, forward the email to the SCI Training and Development Branch via <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> stating that the

Page 8 of 31

request to enroll is approved. RBC or ARBC will contact the SCI Associate Director of Field Operations for additional guidance if approval is denied.

The Training and Development Branch will respond with further enrollment information and instructions.

B. Fed-State

The Fed-State front-line supervisor will submit an enrollment request email to their respective Federal Program Manager (FPM) that provides:

- Student name and State government email address
- Fed-State front-line supervisor name and State government email address
- Market office or inspection point name
- Name of course to be enrolled in
- Acknowledgment that all pre-enrollment requirements have been met.

The FPM will review the request and, if approved, forward the email to the SCI Training and Development Branch via <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> stating that the request to enroll is approved. FPM will contact the Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief for additional guidance if approval is denied.

The Training and Development Branch will respond with further enrollment information and instructions.

Structure

FOMI course structure consists of Blackboard modules, knowledge check exams, and on-the-job activities.

Blackboard Modules

FOMI Blackboard modules cover fundamental inspection policies, procedures, concepts, and terms as outlined within the General Market Manual, FV-300 Certificate Manual, Sanitation Manual, Section 8e & Marketing Manual, and 7 CFR, Part 51. Modules must be taken within the order established as this generally follows the normal flow of the inspection process. Modules do not need to be taken all at one sitting and it is encouraged that the supervisor has the student accompany Qualified Training Providers during live inspections to break up sittings and provide exposure relevant to topics covered whenever practical.

Knowledge Check Exams

Each module has a knowledge check exam requiring a minimum score of 70% to advance to the next module. If an exam score is less than 70% on the first attempt, the student will have an

Page 9 of 31

additional attempt to successfully pass the exam. If, after two attempts, the student has not successfully passed the exam:

Student will:

- Notify their supervisor that they have exceeded their allowable attempts
- Provide a copy of incorrect exam questions and answers from Blackboard to their supervisor:
 - o Go to <u>www.usda.blackboard.com</u>
 - Go to the MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection course
 - Click on Gradebook from the left-panel course menu
 - Click the link for the failed item
 - In the Calculated Result list, click on the score for any failed attempt to view the missed questions
 - Print the page from this window

Supervisor will:

- Review, or assign review to a Qualified Training Provider, the incorrect questions and answers with the student for clear understanding of the nature and subject matter of the question
- Once the student has a clear understanding regarding the incorrect questions and answers, forward a request for a third attempt to the Training and Development Branch via email at <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> detailing that the review is complete, and that the student is prepared for the third attempt to successfully complete the exam

The third Exam will be released to the student to complete. If the student does not successfully complete the exam on the third attempt:

Supervisor will:

- Provide additional localized mitigation training and subject-matter review to ensure the student has retained the appropriate knowledge and demonstrates the relative ability; Qualified Training Providers may be utilized to provide mitigation training
- Ensure all mitigation training provided is documented via the student's local training record
- Contact the Chief of the Training and Development Branch (TDC) for further instruction when mitigation training is completed
- The TDC Chief, in collaboration with the Area Officer in Charge and the Regional Branch Chief or the Federal Program Manager and Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief will evaluate and determine next steps. If desired by either party, the Associate Directors for Field Operations or Business Management Services may be requested to concur.

Page 10 of 31

On-the-Job Activities

FOMI on-the-job activities will be completed within the local office or at another market location if sufficient live inspection availability is not feasible. Activities are listed within Blackboard for certain modules and are taken once the module is successfully completed. Many activities require the student to accompany a Qualified Training Provider for on-the-job exposure to live inspections. While more than one activity may be completed during a single live inspection, it is recommended that supervisors provide as much exposure to the live TMI environment as possible by utilizing multiple live inspections in completion of activities. Further guidance per activity is listed within each activity worksheet in Blackboard.

Activity worksheets require a Qualified Training Provider or supervisor review for accurate student responses. Answer keys will be provided for efficient and uniform reviews. Activity worksheets must be complete, accurate, legible and be in accordance with established Division policy and instructions. Errors must be addressed, and effective corrective actions noted. Once an activity worksheet is reviewed and necessary corrective actions are complete, the supervisor will:

- Sign the activity worksheet acknowledging that student responses are successfully completed and are in accordance with established Division policy and instructions
- Complete the FOMI activity attestation record in Blackboard once all FOMI activities are successfully completed
- Keep completed activity worksheets in the student's local training file

Qualified Training Provider (QTP) for FOMI

The following qualifications must be met to be a QTP assisting in FOMI training:

- Qualified to perform <u>all</u> fresh commodity inspections without direct supervision
- Maintain a fully successful performance rating or unrestricted market license status.

Course Progress

Student FOMI progress can be accessed in Blackboard by the designated supervisor, Officer-in-Charge/Assistant Officer-in-Charge/Sub-area Supervisor, Federal Program Manager, Regional Branch Chief or Assistant Regional Branch Chief as indicated on the FOMI enrollment email.

Approximate Course Length

FOMI must be successfully completed within six (6) weeks of beginning the course.

Average time to complete all requirements of the FOMI course is 32 hours (12 hours of Blackboard virtual training and testing, and 20 hours of activities). As many OJT activities require the student to accompany another inspector during a live inspection, local workload and staffing may impact the time it takes to complete on-site activities.

Page 11 of 31

Successful Completion of Course

FOMI is successfully completed when:

- All modules have been viewed
- All knowledge check exams passed
- All OJT activity completion is attested to by the supervisor in Blackboard

When the FOMI course has been successfully completed, a certificate of completion will be issued to the student. For SCI ACGs the supervisor will record course name and date successfully completed on the student's office file MIT <u>On-the-Job Training (OJT) Checklist</u> with signature and date.

FOMI must be successfully completed within six (6) weeks of beginning the course. Exceptions can only be granted with Associate Director approval.

MIT COURSE II: CORE COMMODITY, INSPECTION & CERTIFICATION (CORE CIC)

Overview

The Core CIC course is required for all full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status. ACGs are required to successfully complete MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI) prior to enrollment of Core CIC.

The Core CIC course is a balanced delivery approach utilizing the Blackboard online learning system for remote virtual learning, on-the-job teaching and hands-on learning of commodity inspection and certification policy and procedures. The on-the-job component is delivered by a Qualified Training Provider (QTP) at a terminal market location and reinforces fundamental TMI procedures while providing in-depth instruction, demonstration, and evaluation of inspection processes for five selected commodities.

A Certificate of Completion is issued with the successful completion of all Core CIC requirements. Once Core CIC is successfully completed, the student will be sufficiently trained and has demonstrated proficiency in the inspection of five (5) commodities or commodity groupings (i.e., Berries, Oranges, Melons, etc.) without direct supervision.

The student's supervisor or Federal Program Manager (FPM) will ensure the student is qualified to perform inspection on the five (5) commodities without direct supervision. Additionally, the Fed-State student's FPM will evaluate the student for an unrestricted market license. As needed, additional commodity training will commence following <u>Continuation of TMI Commodity</u> <u>Training</u> section within this manual.

Page 12 of 31

The entire Core CIC course must be successfully completed within ten (10) weeks of assignment within Blackboard. Supervisor and Qualified Training Provider will coordinate schedules to ensure OJT commodity training is provided in a mutually agreeable timeframe within the required 10-week window for course completion. Timeframe may be dependent on student ability and performance, Qualified Training Provider travel status or a selected commodity's availability. Average time to complete all course requirements is eight weeks and can be completed in one period of time or over a series of weekly periods.

Student training progress can be accessed in Blackboard by the designated supervisor, Officerin-Charge/Assistant Officer-in-Charge/Sub-area Supervisor, Federal Program Manager, Regional Branch Chief or Assistant Regional Branch Chief as indicated on the Core CIC enrollment email.

Pre-enrollment

Student must have successfully completed MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI).

Required Resources at Training Location

The supervisor will coordinate with the Qualified Training Provider (QTP) to ensure the following resources are in place prior to training:

- Hard copies of General Market Manual (GMM), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Certificate (FV-300) Manual, Sanitation Manual, U.S. Grade Standards and Market Inspection Instructions. All references are found at <u>www.ams.usda.gov</u>
- Access to all commodity-specific official and unofficial aides and references
- Issuance of all TMI Inspector Grading Equipment to student
- Pad of FV-300N notesheets
- SC-300 mock or serialized certificates.
- Teaching and learning space
- QTP access to office printer
- Access to commodities covered; this can be via actual service requests, prearranged access via local applicants or via official purchase order produce buy.

Enrollment

The Core CIC course is required for all full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status. ACGs are required to successfully complete the FoMI course within six months prior to enrollment of Core CIC.

A. SCI

The front-line supervisor will submit an enrollment request email to their respective Regional Branch Chief (RBC) or Assistant Regional Branch Chief (ARBC) that provides:

Page 13 of 31

- Student name and USDA email address
- Front-line supervisor name and USDA email address
- Officer-in-Charge and Assistant Officer-in-Charge name and USDA email address
- Market office or inspection point name
- Name of course to be enrolled in
- Names of the elective commodities or commodity groupings to be taught

The RBC or ARBC will review the request and, if approved, forward the email to the SCI Training and Development Branch via <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> stating that the request to enroll is approved. RBC or ARBC will contact the SCI Associate Director of Field Operations for additional guidance if approval is denied.

The Training and Development Branch will respond with further enrollment information and instructions.

B. Fed-State

The Fed-State front-line supervisor will submit an enrollment request email to their respective Federal Program Manager (FPM) that provides:

- Student name and State government email address
- Fed-State front-line supervisor name and State government email address
- Market office or inspection point name
- Name of course to be enrolled in
- Names of the elective commodities or commodity groupings to be taught

The FPM will review the request and, if approved, forward the email to the SCI Training and Development Branch via <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> stating that the request to enroll is approved. The FPM will be given the same Blackboard permissions as the assigned supervisor. FPM will contact the Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief for additional guidance if approval is denied.

The Training and Development Branch will respond with further enrollment information and instructions and provide the FPM with the same Blackboard permissions as the assigned supervisor.

Qualified Training Provider (QTP) for Core CIC

OJT commodity training will be conducted by an approved Core CIC Qualified Training Provider (QTP). Approval to be a QTP for Core CIC is determined by qualifications based on position status, subject-matter knowledge and teaching ability. A Blackboard learning program is used to validate a candidate's qualifications.

Page 14 of 31

To be recommended as a QTP for the Core CIC program, Regional Branch Chiefs (RBCs) or Federal Program Managers (FPMs) will submit an ACG, Training Officer, Sub-Area Supervisor, or Fed-State inspector who meets the following prerequisites as a candidate for a QTP.

- Fully Successful GS-9 or higher (for SCI)
- Unrestricted Market Licensee (for Fed-State)
- Qualified to perform all fresh commodity inspections without direct supervision

For those that meet these prerequisites, the RBC or FPM will submit an enrollment email to the SCI Training and Development Branch (TDB) via <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> requesting enrollment for the candidate into the Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development learning program in Blackboard.

Email must include:

- ✓ Candidate name and USDA or Fed-State email address
- ✓ Front-line supervisor name and email address
- ✓ Officer-in-Charge and Assistant Officer-in-Charge name and USDA email address (SCI only)
- ✓ Market office or inspection point name
- ✓ Name of program to be enrolled in (Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development)

The TDB will assign the Blackboard Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development learning program to the candidate. Program must be completed within 60 days of assignment within Blackboard.

A. Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development Program

The Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development learning program will evaluate a candidate's subject-matter knowledge and develop specific teaching ability. It consists of three courses that must be successfully completed to be an approved QTP for Core CIC.

- Evaluation of Knowledge
- Adult Learning Development
- Core CIC OJT Teaching Development
- 1. Evaluation of Knowledge Course

Two parts of the course are used to evaluate a candidate's knowledge of material that will be taught within the Core CIC.

a. Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FOMI) Evaluation

The FOMI Evaluation consists of a 30-question exam based on the existing MIT: FOMI program. Evaluation is successfully completed with a

Page 15 of 31

minimum exam passing score of 80%. If not successfully completed, candidate will be required to review the MIT: FOMI modules from the failed questions and re-take the module exam requiring a passing score of 80%. If candidate fails to successfully complete the retest, they have failed the evaluation of knowledge and will not be approved as a Core CIC QTP at this time. See Successful Completion below for further details.

b. Core CIC Commodity Grading Evaluation

After successfully completing the FOMI Evaluation, the candidate will complete the Core CIC Commodity Grading Evaluation. Core CIC commodity knowledge tested will consist of these commodity groupings:

Peppers (Sweet and Other Than) Avocados (incl. Section 8e) Berries (Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackberries) Tomatoes (incl. Section 8e and Tomato Suspension Agreement) Table Grapes (incl. Section 8e) Oranges (FL/CA/TX) (incl. Section 8e) Potatoes (incl. Section 8e) Onions (incl. Section 8e) Summer Squash Asparagus Cucumbers Watermelon Lemons & Limes Mangos Kiwifruit (incl. Section 8e) Melons (Honeydew & Cantaloupe) Blueberries

The Evaluation consists of 17 exams, with each consisting of five (5) questions, covering the 17-commodity grouping above. Evaluation is successfully completed with a minimum passing score of 80% for each exam. If not successfully completed, candidate will be required to review the Core CIC module(s) for <u>each failed commodity grouping</u> and take the associate module exam(s) requiring a passing score of 80%. If candidate fails to successfully complete the module exam(s) after the re-test, they have failed the evaluation of knowledge and will not be approved as a Core CIC QTP at this time. Candidate must successfully complete the requirements of mitigation training before re-enrollment in the Core CIC QTP course.

See Successful Completion below for further details.

Page 16 of 31

After successfully completing the Evaluation of Knowledge course, the candidate will attend the Adult Learning Development course. Sessions will be live, virtual, and instructor-presented to develop proper demonstration, psycho-motor, communication and questioning techniques and abilities. To evaluate successful development, candidates will prepare a presentation on a Core CIC training scenario applying the adult learning techniques covered within the sessions. The Adult Learning Development course is successfully completed when the presentation is satisfactorily prepared and presented. Candidate will then move on to the Core CIC OJT Teaching Procedures and Tools Development course.

3. Core CIC OJT Teaching Development Course

After successfully completing the Adult Learning Developmental course, the candidate will attend the Core CIC OJT Teaching Development course. Sessions will be live, virtual, and instructor-presented to develop functional awareness of the Core CIC OJT teaching plans, student evaluations, documentation, and communication methods that they will be responsible for as Core CIC QTPs. Core CIC OJT Teaching Development is successfully completed when the candidate attends all sessions.

The Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development program is successfully completed when the candidate has successfully completed its three courses:

- Evaluation of Knowledge
- Adult Learning Development
- Core CIC OJT Teaching Development

Once successfully completed, the candidate is qualified and is an approved Core CIC OJT Qualified Training Provider. The SCI Training and Development Branch will maintain the list of approved Core CIC QTPs. **Only approved QTPs may deliver final Core CIC training and evaluate students.**

If a candidate fails to successfully complete any part of the course, they will not be approved as a Core CIC QTP and must complete mitigation training to address deficiencies. Mitigation training will be coordinated via candidate's supervisor.

Candidates that complete mitigation training must wait a period of five (5) days before being resubmitted for Core CIC QTP consideration. When resubmitting a candidate who has completed mitigation training, the RBC or FPM will include a brief report of the mitigation with the re-enrollment email sent to the SCI Training and Development Branch. Final determination of re-enrollment will be handled on case-by-case basis and made by the SCI Training and Development Branch Chief in consultation with candidate's supervisor and Regional Operations Branch Chief, or FISM Branch Chief as applicable.

Page 17 of 31

Candidates that are approved to be re-enrolled will complete the part of the course that was failed. For Evaluation of Knowledge exams, the re-enrolled candidate would re-take the five (5) question commodity exam(s) initially failed. Evaluation is successfully completed with a minimum passing score of 80%. Then, the candidate may proceed to the next course in the Program. If candidate fails to successfully complete the re-enrollment commodity exam(s), they have failed the Evaluation course and will not be approved as a Core CIC QTP at this time; their status will be determined on a case-by-case basis by Regional and senior Division management.

Structure

Core CIC course structure consists of Blackboard modules, knowledge check exams, and on-thejob commodity training and evaluation.

Commodities Covered

Core CIC will cover the two required core commodities and three elective core commodities as determined by the supervisor at time of enrollment. This allows flexibility to develop an ACG that meets SCI's mission and local office service needs.

Commodities include commodity groupings such as "Berries" to cover material from several commodities within a single Market Inspection Instruction, or from several commodities within multiple Instructions such as "Oranges." While elective core commodities are designed to be flexible, they may have limited seasonal availability (i.e., Melons).

"Peppers" and "Avocados" are required for all Core CIC students. In addition, three of fifteen elective Core commodities must be selected from below:

Required Core Commodities (Both are required):

- Peppers (Sweet and Other Than)
- Avocados (incl. Section 8e)

Elective Core Commodities (Select three):

- Berries (Strawberry, Raspberries, Blackberries)
- Tomatoes (Fresh, Tomatoes on the Vine, Greenhouse) (incl. Section 8e and Tomato Suspension Agreement)
- Table Grapes (incl. Section 8e)
- Oranges (FL/CA/TX) (incl. Section 8e)
- Potatoes (incl. Section 8e)
- Onions (BGG and Other than BGG) (incl. Section 8e)
- Summer Squash
- Asparagus
- Cucumbers (Field Grown, Greenhouse, Pickling)

Page 18 of 31

- Watermelon
- Lemons & Limes
- Mangos
- Kiwifruit (incl. Section 8e)
- Melons (Honeydew & Cantaloup)
- Blueberries

Blackboard Modules

Core CIC commodity Blackboard modules cover material within the commodity's Market Inspection Instruction manual, Section 8e & Marketing Order manual, and the FV-300 Certificate manual. A module on service efficiency and customer service techniques is also required.

Commodity module objectives include:

- Recognizing the different grading criteria within the commodity grade standard and official inspection instructions
- Explaining the growing and harvesting process to understand how defects form
- Identifying defect names and scoring guides for uniform grading
- Discuss the critical grading criteria needed to accurately certify inspection results

Modules assigned do not need to be taken all at one sitting and it is encouraged that the supervisor have the student accompany Qualified Training Providers during live inspections to break up sittings and provide exposure relevant to topics covered whenever practical.

If student must travel to complete the on-the-job training and evaluation portion of Core CIC Blackboard modules, knowledge check exams may be completed in their local office prior to the travel.

Knowledge Check Exams

Each commodity module has a knowledge check exam requiring a minimum score of 70%. If an exam score is less than 70% on the first attempt the student will have an additional attempt to successfully pass the exam. If, after two attempts, the student has not successfully passed the exam:

Student will:

- Notify their supervisor that they have exceeded their allowable attempts
- Provide a copy of incorrect exam questions and answers from Blackboard to their supervisor:
 - o Go to <u>www.usda.blackboard.com</u>

Page 19 of 31

- Go to the MIT Course II: Core Commodity, Inspection & Certification (CORE CIC) course
- Click on Gradebook from the left-panel course menu
- Click the link for the failed item
- In the Calculated Result list, click on the score for any failed attempt to view the missed questions
- Print the page from this window

Supervisor will:

- Review, or assign review to a Qualified Training Provider, the incorrect questions and answers with the student for clear understanding of the nature and subject matter of the question.
- Once the student has a clear understanding regarding the incorrect questions and answers, forward a request for a third attempt to the Training and Development Branch via email at <u>SCITrainingBranch@usda.gov</u> detailing that the review is complete, and that the student is prepared for the third attempt to successfully complete the exam.

The third Exam will be released to the student to complete. If the student does not successfully complete the exam on the third attempt:

Supervisor will:

- Provide additional localized mitigation training and subject-matter review to ensure the student has retained the appropriate knowledge and demonstrates the relative ability. Qualified Training Providers may be utilized to provide mitigation training
- Ensure all mitigation training provided is documented via the student's local training record
- Contact the Chief of the Training and Development Branch for further instruction when mitigation training is completed
- The TDC Chief, in collaboration with the Area Officer in Charge and the Regional Branch Chief or the Federal Program Manager and Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief will evaluate and determine next steps. If desired by either party, the Associate Directors for Field Operations or Business Management Services may be requested to concur.

On-the-job (OJT) Commodity Training and Evaluation

After the commodity Blackboard module and knowledge check exam is successfully completed, on-the-job training (OJT) and evaluation should begin to further support commodity grading knowledge and ability.

OJT commodity training for five (5) selected commodities is delivered in-person by a Core CIC Qualified Training Provider (QTP) and includes the use of market inspection locations and

Page 20 of 31

product samples to provide practical and comprehensive instruction, demonstration, and evaluation on the following scopes:

- Basic inspection responsibilities
- Efficiency and customer service techniques
- Grading criteria within grade standards and instructions
- Use of references, resources, and equipment
- Identifying defects, scoring guides and/or factors that affect U.S. Grade.
- Applying critical elements of Section 8e inspection for imports (as per applicable commodity).
- Applying the critical elements needed to accurately certify inspection results on a Federal notesheet and certificate.

Throughout the OJT commodity training, the student will be required to successfully demonstrate proficient performance of the above scopes.

A. OJT Location and Learning Space

On-the-job commodity training will be conducted at one of these locations:

- Student's local office when provided by a local Qualified Training Provider (QTP) or when an out-of-market QTP can be arranged. Travel would need to be arranged by the student's supervisor.
- SCI Training office (e.g., Philadelphia, PA, New York, NY, Chicago, IL, Los Angeles, CA, Fredericksburg, VA) when a QTP can be arranged. Travel would need to be arranged by the student's supervisor.

Student's inspection point/sub-office/area office is responsible for all travel costs, regardless of training location. Contact the SCI Training and Development Branch for a list of approved QTPs and contact information. Student's supervisor will contact the approved QTP directly to make scheduling and travel arrangements for the training.

Fed-State supervisors are to contact the Federal-State Inspection Management Branch Chief prior to enrollment for policy related to any training costs not related to travel expenses.

For OJT commodity training, the supervisor will coordinate with the QTP so that live inspection requests and inspection worksites will be utilized when practical. When not practical, or when a learning-centric environment is more beneficial, the supervisor will coordinate with the QTP for a suitable alternative learning space. Alternative learning space will be quiet, free from distractions and have network connectivity as needed.

B. OJT Product and Specimens

Page 21 of 31

The supervisor will coordinate with the QTP to ensure that sufficient commodity product and specimens are available. Whenever practical, live inspection requests and inspection product will be utilized. When not practical, the QTP will procure sufficient samples from a local source and utilize a suitable learning space.

C. OJT Teaching and Evaluation Plans

To assist the Qualified Training Provider (QTP) in the delivery of on-the-job commodity training, a structured teaching and evaluation plan for basic inspection responsibilities and for each commodity will be used. Plans provide unique instructional and demonstrational guidance with tips on teaching the various scopes of the commodity to meet objectives. Plans also provide guidance on the evaluation and use of the <u>SC-369</u> Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form. Further details are located within each plan. Plans for each Core CIC commodity are found in <u>Appendix II – Core CIC OJT Teaching and Evaluation</u> Plans.

Teaching and Evaluation Plans are only intended to be used by the Core CIC QTP. Using these plans to train students by personnel other than the QTP or by the QTP within this course is prohibited.

D. OJT Teaching and Evaluation Scope Completion Progress Documentation

QTPs will utilize the <u>SC-359 MIT Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC)</u> <u>Commodity OJT Progress</u> form to track completion of all scopes within each OJT Teaching and Evaluation plan. The form will consist of the scope number, name, signature of the QTP performing the training, the date scope was completed, and any applicable comments or remarks. Students will be made aware of their progress throughout the entire teaching process. If multiple QTP's are utilized to teach scopes, the student's supervisor will be responsible for sharing the started SC-359 form with each QTP until all scopes are completed.

QTPs will ensure updated or fully completed SC-359 forms are forwarded to the student's supervisor for local filing within the student's training file.

E. OJT Commodity Training Evaluation

Once all scopes for a commodity Teaching and Evaluation plan are completed, the QTP evaluation process for that taught commodity will take place. To evaluate performance, the student will independently complete live or mock evaluation inspections for each of their five (5) commodities. Details of these inspection scenarios to be evaluated will be determined by the complexity and scope of the commodity; see individual commodity OJT Teaching & Evaluation Plans for further guidance.

The Qualified Training Provider will complete the <u>SC-369 Market Inspector Training</u> (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form for each

Page 22 of 31

evaluation inspection scenario. The SC-369 will indicate if the student has demonstrated proficient or deficient level of performance regarding the commodity scopes.

Deficient performance will be addressed via mitigation training involving subject-matter review to ensure the student has retained the appropriate knowledge and demonstrates the relative ability. Qualified Training Providers may be utilized to provide mitigation training. All mitigation training is documented on the SC-369 form.

The SC-369 form requires a Qualified Training Provider name and title and student signature. Form must be complete, accurate, and legible.

F. Distribution of Completed Forms

The Qualified Training Provider will forward all completed SC-359 Progress and SC-369 Evaluation forms to the student's front-line supervisor for further evaluation and filing within the student's training file.

Qualification Evaluation, Affirmation and Attestation

Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs)

For each Core CIC OJT commodity, the front-line supervisor will evaluate the student to affirm demonstrated proficiency regarding inspection and certification of the commodity. The evaluation may be based on information within each SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form, discussion with the Qualified Training Provider or personal observations of the student. The front-line supervisor will complete the Front-Line Supervisor Core CIC OJT Commodity Training Affirmation record in Blackboard for each Core CIC commodity and submit the student's SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation forms to the Officer-in-Charge (OIC).

The OIC will evaluate the student to attest demonstrated proficiency and that the ACG is qualified in performing an inspection on the commodity without direct supervision. The evaluation may be based on information within each SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form, discussion with the front-line supervisor or Qualified Training Provider or personal observations of the student. The OIC will complete the OIC/FPM Core CIC OJT Commodity Training Attestation record in Blackboard to indicate the student has successfully completed the Core CIC course requirements and is qualified in performing an inspection on Core CIC commodities without direct supervision.

Page 23 of 31

Federal-State Cooperative Market (Fed-State) Inspectors

For each Core CIC OJT commodity, the front-line supervisor will evaluate the student to affirm demonstrated proficiency regarding inspection and certification of the commodity. The evaluation may be based on information within each SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form, discussion with the Qualified Training Provider or personal observations of the student. The front-line supervisor will complete the Front-Line Supervisor Core CIC OJT Commodity Training Affirmation record in Blackboard for each Core CIC commodity and submit the student's SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation forms to the Federal Program Manager (FPM).

In coordination with the Fed-State unrestricted licensing process, the FPM will evaluate the student for licensing. The evaluation may be based on information within each SC-369 Market Inspector Training (MIT) Core Commodity Inspection Certification (CIC) Training Evaluation form, discussion with the front-line supervisor or Qualified Training Provider or personal observations of the student. The FPM will complete the OIC/FPM Core CIC OJT Commodity Training Attestation record in Blackboard to indicate the student has successfully completed the Core CIC course requirements. The FPM will complete remaining requirements for licensing. Contact the Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief for additional guidance.

OJT Checklist

For SCI ACGs, the front-line supervisor will record the Core CIC commodity name, the Qualified Training Provider name, the date commodity training for the commodity was successfully completed (which is the date of OIC attestation), front-line supervisor signature and date on the student's office file <u>OJT Checklist (Appendix I)</u> with signature and date.

As use of the OJT Checklist is not required for Fed-State inspectors, contact the Federal State Inspection Management (FSIM) Branch Chief for additional guidance if being used for a Fed-State student.

Course Progress

Student Core CIC progress can be accessed in Blackboard by the designated supervisor, Officerin-Charge/Assistant Officer-in-Charge/Sub-area Supervisor, Federal Program Manager, Regional Branch Chief or Assistant Regional Branch Chief as indicated on the Core CIC enrollment email.

Approximate Course Length

The entire Core CIC course must be successfully completed within ten (10) weeks of assignment within Blackboard. Timeframe may be dependent on student ability and performance, Qualified Training Provider travel status or a selected commodity's availability. Average time to complete all course requirements is eight weeks and can be completed in one period of time or over a series of weekly periods.

Page 24 of 31

Successful Completion of Course

Core CIC is successfully completed when the OIC or FPM has completed the OIC/FPM Core CIC OJT Commodity Training Attestation record for all five commodities in Blackboard. A certificate of completion will be issued to the student.

Student Commodity Grading and Additional Commodity Training

For SCI ACGs, the student is only authorized to inspect without direct supervision commodities qualified by the Core CIC course <u>and</u> listed on the student's OJT Checklist. Students may participate in other commodity inspections under direct supervision.

For Fed-State inspectors, the student is not authorized to inspect commodities qualified by the Core CIC course until licensed by the Federal Program Manager.

As needed, additional commodity training will continue as listed below.

CONTINUATION OF TMI COMMODITY TRAINING

Until such time that the MIT Course III: Comprehensive Commodity, Inspection and Certification course is established, ACGs who require training on additional commodities will follow the guidance under MIT On-the-Job (OJT) Training Timetable for Continued Commodity Training for Terminal Market Inspection (TMI) Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs). Additional commodity-specific training is not authorized without successfully completing the MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI) and MIT Course II: Core Commodity Inspection and Certification courses.

MIT On-the-Job (OJT) Training Timetable for Continued Commodity Training for Terminal Market Inspection (TMI) Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs)

The Timetable is structured for ACGs who have completed MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI) and MIT Course II: Core Commodity Inspection and Certification (Core CIC) courses and is required for all full-time, not mixed-tour or intermittent, SCI ACGs providing TMI services and full-time/non-seasonal Fed-State ACGs seeking unrestricted market licensee status. Completion of all time periods is approximately four months. Qualified Training Providers and supervisors will work together to ensure that the student is properly trained at an appropriate pace, in accordance with field office needs.

The process requires close communication and coordination between the Qualified Training Provider and supervisor. Where the local market is not an active market daily, it may be financially advisable to have the student go to an active market, especially for Fed-State students from Shipping Point areas.

Page 25 of 31

MIT OJT Continued Commodity Training for TMI ACGs Qualified Training Provider (QTP)

The on-the-job component is delivered by a Qualified Training Provider (QTP) at a terminal market location and reinforces fundamental TMI procedures while providing in-depth instruction, demonstration, and evaluation of inspection processes for selected commodities.

Only qualified and approved Core CIC QTPs may deliver continued commodity training and evaluate students. See Core CIC QTP Evaluation and Development Program section under <u>MIT</u> <u>COURSE II: CORE COMMODITY, INSPECTION & CERTIFICATION (CORE CIC)</u> for QTP requirements.

Period I

- A. Approximate length is two months
- B. Continuation of Commodity Specific Training:
 - Increase frequency and level of independent grading on commodities covered in Core CIC
 - Provide hard copies or electronic versions of standards and handbooks for **four** additional commodities inspected at the locally-assigned market
 - Gradually increase the complexity of commodities covered
 - Provide sufficient time for the student to read the entire handbook of each additional commodity prior to being taught
 - Administer corresponding Commodity Questionnaires, grade, and review with student
 - Utilize live or mock inspections as needed to demonstrate, review and knowledge check all commodity-related scopes and procedures
 - Increase student's level of independent grading as knowledge and skills continue to develop
- C. Efficiency and Customer Service:
 - Ensure that dedicated independent grading and timely delivery of services is occurring
 - Ensure that best practices are being followed in providing expedient and attentive service to all customers
- D. Documentation:
 - Throughout this period, maintain and update employee's training record
 - For SCI ACGs, the TMI ACG Probationary Evaluation form (SC-340) must be completed once per month as the student follows the normal schedule for Supervisory Reviews of Agricultural Commodity Graders

Page 26 of 31

- If at any time during the once per month timing the student's performance shows more than one Unacceptable or Deficient element, the frequency would revert to bi-weekly and seek guidance from the Regional Field Operations Branch office or Federal Program Manager regarding how long the bi-weekly timing will continue
- Review and critique all independently-graded inspection notesheets and certificates. Complete a <u>SCI Records Review form (SC-383)</u> documenting reviews
- For SCI ACGs, continue to update student's OJT Checklist with each completed and evaluated task or commodity

Period II

- A. Approximate length is one month
- B. Continuation of Commodity Specific Training:
 - Monitor independent grading on commodities taught in first four months, take corrective actions as needed
 - Continue to increase the complexity and number of commodities covered
 - Rotate student into more complex assignments
 - Administer corresponding Commodity Questionnaires on new commodities as needed
 - Based on abilities and individual development **steadily increase the complexity of commodities taught**, building toward the most complex Standards such as potatoes, tomatoes, and table grapes

Utilize live or mock inspections as needed to demonstrate, review and knowledge check all commodity-related scopes and procedures

- Independent grading should be occurring regularly on all commodities previously covered
- C. Efficiency and Customer Service:
 - Ensure that timely, expedient, and attentive delivery of services is occurring to all customers
- D. Documentation:
 - Throughout this period, maintain and update employee's training record
 - Throughout this period, the TMI ACG Probationary Evaluation form (SC-340) must be completed as outlined in Period I
 - Review and critique all independently-graded inspection notesheets and certificates. Complete a <u>SCI Records Review form (SC-383)</u> documenting reviews
 - For SCI ACGs. continue to update student's OJT Checklist with each completed and evaluated commodity

Page 27 of 31

Period III

- A. Approximate length is one month
- B. Continuation of Commodity Specific Training:
 - Monitor independent grading on commodities taught in first six months, take corrective actions as needed
 - Continue to increase the complexity and number of commodities covered
 - Continue to rotate student into more complex assignments as warranted
 - Independent grading should be occurring regularly on all commodities previously covered
- C. FEIRS (where applicable):
 - Once the minimum ACG performance, experience, and activity requirements within the <u>Requesting Deployment of the Fresh Electronic Inspection</u> <u>Reporting/Resource System (FEIRS) Program and Related Equipment</u> policy are reached, a request for FEIRS deployment can be made
 - Once FEIRS basic training is complete, all inspections are to be completed via FEIRS
 - Monitor issued FEIRS certificates for accuracy
- D. Digital Imaging:
 - Provide guidance on camera operation and General Market Manual guidance for taking and processing of digital images
- E. Efficiency and Customer Service:
 - Ensure that timely, expedient, and attentive delivery of services is occurring to all customers
- E. Documentation:
 - Throughout this period, maintain and update employee's training record
 - Throughout this period, the TMI ACG Probationary Evaluation form (SC-340) must be completed as outlined in Period I
 - Review and critique 25 independently-graded inspection FEIRS or paper certificates per month. Complete a <u>SCI Records Review form (SC-383)</u> documenting reviews
 - For SCI ACGs, continue to update student's OJT Checklist with each completed and evaluated commodity and with completed FEIRS basic training

Page 28 of 31

MIT TRAINING PROGRAM COMPLETION

The MIT program is considered complete when the student has:

- Successfully completed MIT Course I: Fundamentals of Market Inspection (FoMI)
- Successfully completed MIT Course II: Core Commodity Inspection and Certification (Core CIC)
- Successfully completed MIT On-the-Job (OJT) Training Timetable for Continued Commodity Training for Terminal Market Inspection (TMI) Agricultural Commodity Graders (ACGs)
- Demonstrated sufficient knowledge, skill, and ability toward inspection of commodities not covered and without direct supervision

Page 29 of 31

REFERENCE LINKS

 SC-340 TMI Probationary Evaluation Form: https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/ams/AMSFormsCatalog/SC-340.pdf
Supervisory Reviews of Agricultural Commodity Graders: https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/Supervisory%20Reviews%20of%20ACGs%20-%20May%202016.pdf
Requesting Deployment of the Fresh Electronic Inspection Reporting/Resource System (FEIRS) Program and Related Equipment: https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/FEIRSDeploymentProcedures.pdf

SCI Records Review form (SC-383): https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/ams/AMSFormsCatalog/SC-383.pdf?csf=1&web=1

Checked Materials have been printed from the links in this manual and included for reference.

Page 30 of 31

APPENDIX I - MIT ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT) CHECKLIST

STUDENT: _____

MARKET OFFICE: _____

FRONT-LINE SUPERVISOR: _____

Task or Commodity	Qualified Training Provider	Date Successfully Completed	Supervisor Signature*	Signature Date

* Supervisor signature indicates that student is qualified to perform task or commodity inspection without direct supervision based on demonstrated proficiency.

Additional Comments

Page 31 of 31

APPENDIX II - CORE CIC OJT TEACHING AND EVALUATION PLANS

The following Teaching and Evaluation plans are available to Qualified Training Providers, students, supervisors, and Federal Program Managers via the Document Library in Blackboard upon enrollment of the Core CIC course.

Asparagus

Avocados (incl. Section 8e)

Basic Inspection Responsibilities

Berries (Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackberries)

Blueberries

Cucumbers

Kiwifruit (incl. Section 8e)

Lemons & Limes

Mangos

Melons (Honeydew & Cantaloupe)

Onions (incl. Section 8e)

Oranges (FL/CA/TX) (incl. Section 8e)

Peppers (Sweet and Other Than)

Potatoes (incl. Section 8e)

Summer Squash

Table Grapes (incl. Section 8e)

Tomatoes (incl. Section 8e and Tomato Suspension Agreement)

Watermelon