

Administrative Directive

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PROFICIENCY EVALUATION FOR GRAIN UNDER THE USGSA AND RICE UNDER THE AMA

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1. PURPOSE

This Instruction outlines the procedures to be followed for the Proficiency Evaluation required by FGIS Instruction 302-2, "Grading Proficiency Required for Promotion to GS-9."

2. GENERAL

The Board of Appeals and Review (BAR) will prepare, upon request of the Field Office Supervisor (FOS), a Proficiency Evaluation for wheat and other graded commodities routinely processed in the Field Office in which the Agricultural Commodity Grader (ACG) is located. It is imperative that all FOS's and ACG trainees have a complete understanding of the material covered in the evaluation and the methods used for scoring it.

3. PROFICIENCY EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

a. The Proficiency Evaluation administered by the BAR for grains covered by the U.S. Grain Standards Act will be given as follows:

(1) The Grain Proficiency Evaluation consists of three parts:

- (a) ITEM 1 - written questions on the appropriate chapter from the Grain Inspection Manual, GR-918-6. The use of reference material during the evaluation is not permitted.
- (b) ITEM 2 - assignment of correct grades for a series of inspection results. The use of the Official U.S. Standards for Grain during the evaluation is permitted.
- (c) ITEM 3 - grading of samples. The use of the Official U.S. Standards for Grain; the Grain Inspection Manual, GR-918-6; the Interpretive Line Slides; Personal Reference Material; and Visual Aids as references during the evaluation is permitted.

(2) Grading of Samples

- (a) The ACG shall use the "Grain Sample Ticket" (GR-189) included with each sample to record portion sizes, factor results, and final grade. The GR-189 must be filled out according to GR-Instruction 929-2, Rev. 4, "Grain Sample Ticket, Form GR-189." The ACG must be familiar with the correct standard abbreviations of grading factors for the grain being evaluated.
- (b) All factors listed in Section 26.60(a)(1) through (4) of the regulations for the applicable grain must be analyzed and the results recorded on the GR-189. For factors other than those listed in Section 26.60(a)(1) through (4); e.g., stones, garlic, etc., for which a determination was made, the appropriate standard abbreviations and the results shall be recorded on the GR-189.

- (c) The percentage of Dark, Hard, and Vitreous kernels (DHV); hard and vitreous kernels of amber color (hvac); and hard kernels (hard) shall be determined for each sample of Hard Red Spring wheat, Durum wheat, or White wheat, respectively.
 - (d) The ACG shall analyze the prescribed portion sizes outlined in the Grain Inspection Manual, GR-918-6. Multiple or double portion plans will not be accepted.
- (3) Time Limits
- (a) The maximum time allowed for ITEM 1, written questions, and ITEM 2, assignment of grades, combined, is one hour per grain (no exceptions).
 - (b) The maximum time allowed for ITEM 3, grading of samples, will depend on the number of samples being evaluated. One sample per hour shall be used to determine the maximum time allowed for this item. Example: There are three corn samples in the evaluation, so the maximum time allowed for corn grading is 3 hours. The ACG may spend more than 1 hour on a sample, but it is the FOS's responsibility to stop the ACG at the end of the total maximum allotted time.
 - (c) The BAR will not grade the part of the evaluation on which the time limit has been exceeded. The value of the portions of the evaluation not completed will be deducted from the ACG score.
- a, The Proficiency Evaluation for Rice will be given as follows:
- (1) The Rice Proficiency Evaluation consists of three parts:
 - (a) ITEM 1 - written questions on the appropriate chapter from the Rice Inspection Handbook HB 918-11. The use of reference material during the evaluation is not permitted.
 - (b) ITEM 2 - assignment of correct grades for a series of inspection results. The use of U.S. Standards for Rice is permitted during the evaluation.
 - (c) ITEM 3 - grading of samples. The use of the U.S. Standards for Rice, the Rice Inspection Handbook HB 918-11, the Interpretive Line Slides, and Visual Aids as reference is permitted during the evaluation.
 - (2) Grading of Samples. The ACG shall:
 - (a) Use the "Rice Sample Ticket" (IN-185) included with each sample to record portion sizes, color, milling degree, factor results, and final grade. The IN-185 must be filled out according to instructions contained in Rice Inspection Handbook HB 918-11.

The ACG must be familiar with the correct standard abbreviations for the type of rice being evaluated.

- (b) Analyze all grading factors on every sample using the prescribed portion sizes outlined in the Rice Inspection Handbook HB 918-11.

(3) Time Limits

- (a) The maximum time allowed for ITEM 1, written questions, and ITEM 2, assignment of grades, combined, is one hour per ITEM (no exceptions).
- (b) The maximum time allowed for ITEM 3, grading of samples, will depend on the number of samples being evaluated. One sample per hour will be used to determine the maximum time. Example: There are three milled rice samples in the evaluation, so the maximum time allowed for grading the milled rice samples is 3 hours. An ACG may spend more than one hour on an individual sample, but it is the Field Office Supervisor's responsibility to stop the ACG at the end of the total allotted time.
- (c) The BAR will not grade that part of the evaluation for which the time limit has been exceeded. The value of the portions of the evaluation not completed will be deducted from the ACG score.

4. THE SCORING SYSTEM FOR GRAIN AND RICE PROFICIENCY EVALUATIONS

- a. The samples will be scored on a factor-by-factor basis. Each factor, for every grain, has been assigned a point value (Exhibit A (Grain) and Exhibit B (Rice)). A standard formula is used to calculate the amount of points earned by the ACG on each factor being reviewed.
- b. The BAR will review all factors determined by the ACG in order to score the ACG's accuracy. To determine the score for a factor, the material removed from the portion being worked and the material remaining in the portion after separation will be reviewed and corrected if necessary. The corrections to both parts of the portion are totaled to determine the total change for a factor.
- c. Points earned for each factor are calculated as follows:

$$\text{STEP 1: } \frac{\text{Total Change (BAR)}}{\text{ACG Results}} = \text{Percent Error}$$

$$\text{STEP 2: } 100\% - \text{Percent Error} = \text{Percent Correct}$$

$$\text{STEP 3: } \text{Percent Correct} \times \text{Factor Value} = \text{Score}$$

ILLUSTRATION: Scoring of DKT in wheat or RR & DK in rice is worth 5 possible points:

1.	ACG's Percentage Shown	2.7%
2.	BAR Correction(+ or -)	<u>-1.0%</u>
3.	ACG's Adjusted Percentage	1.7%
4.	BAR Correction(+ or -)	<u>+1.2%</u>
5.	BAR DKT	2.9%
6.	Total Correction	2.2%

The Total Change in STEP 1 of the formula represents the corrections to the ACG's separation (1.0% + 1.2%) The BAR Results in STEP 1 of the formula includes all corrections made to the ACG's separation (1.7% + 1.2% = 2.9%). The amount of points earned by the ACG using the standard formula is calculated as follows:

$$\text{STEP 1: } \frac{2.2\% \text{ (Total Change) (BAR)}}{2.7\% \text{ (ACG Results)}} = 81.0\% \text{ (Percent Error)}$$

$$\text{STEP 2: } 100\% - 81.0\% \text{ (Percent Error)} = 19.0\% \text{ (Percent Correct)}$$

$$\text{STEP 3: } 19.0\% \text{ (Percent Correct)} \times 5 \text{ (Factor Value)} = 0.95 = 1.0\% \text{ Score}$$

The score for any factor may not be less than zero.

d. Penalty Deductions

(1) Five percent of the total possible points for a sample will be deducted from the ACG's score for improper procedures such as:

- a. Showing the wrong grade on the grade line.
- b. Using improper portion sizes.
- c. Failure to follow written instructions.

(2) Not more than 5% of the total possible points for a sample may be deducted from the ACG's score for wrong grade or failing to follow instructions.

e. The ACG must have a combined score of 70%. or better on both ITEM 1, written questions, and ITEM 2, assignment of grades, to be rated proficient on this part of the evaluation.

f. ITEM 3 (Grain), grading of samples, has two scores: Total Score and Interpretive Score.

- (1) The “Total Score” is based on the ACG’s overall performance on the samples being evaluated. This score is calculated by adding up all the points the ACG scored for every sample and dividing it by the total possible points.
 - (2) The “Interpretive Factor Score” reflects the ACG’s ability to make accurate separations on the specific interpretive factors designated by an asterisk in Exhibit A. “The Interpretive Factor Score” is calculated by adding up all points the ACG scored on the interpretive factors in every sample and dividing it by the total possible points for the interpretive factors.
 - (3) To be rated proficient on ITEM 3, grading of samples, the ACG must score 70% or better on each of these two scores.
- g. ITEM 3 (Rice), grading of samples, has one score: Total Score.
- (1) The “Total Score” is based on the ACG’s overall performance on the samples being evaluated. This score is calculated by adding up all the points the ACG scored for every sample and dividing it by the total possible points.
 - (2) To be rated proficient on ITEM 3, grading of samples, the ACG must score 70% or better.

5. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL GRADED COMMODITIES

- a. The FOS is responsible for assuring that:
- (1) The ACG is administered the Proficiency Evaluation as soon as possible after receiving it. If delays occur, contact the BAR for instructions.
 - (2) The ACG does not receive assistance from anyone and uses only authorized reference materials.
 - (3) Time is monitored closely and the ACG is stopped when the maximum time for each part has expired.
 - (4) Evaluation papers are not duplicated or reviewed by Field Office personnel or FOS.
 - (5) All samples and papers are returned to the BAR immediately after completion of the evaluation. Specific mailing instructions will be included with each set of samples and must be followed.
 - (6) All instructions sent with every set of samples are read prior to administering the evaluation.
 - (7) Any questions concerning these instructions should be cleared up before starting the evaluation.

- (8) If questions arise that cannot be answered, the BAR shall be contacted for assistance.
- b. The following procedures shall be in effect in the event of an ACG's failure to successfully complete the evaluation:
- (1) One more attempt during the following 4-month period will be allowed.
 - (2) If ITEMS 1 and 2 for grain or rice are failed, the ACG must be reevaluated for these items.
 - (3) If any part of ITEM 3 (Grain) is failed--"Total Score" or "Interpretive Factor Score"--a new set of samples will be completely analyzed and reevaluated for both scores.
 - (4) If ITEM 3 (Rice) is failed, a new set of samples will be completely analyzed and reevaluated.
 - (5) If a reevaluation is not requested within 4 months, the ACG will be required to be reevaluated on all items involved with the Proficiency Evaluation in question.
- c. Results of the evaluation and any comments the BAR might have will be furnished to the ACG and FOS as soon as possible.

POSSIBLE POINTS-GRAIN

<u>WHEAT</u>		<u>SOYBEANS</u>		<u>CORN</u>	
CL	5	CL	3	CL	4
DHV,HVAC, HARD*	5	TW	1	TW	1
TW	1	M	1	M	1
HD*	3	ODK*	5	DKT*	5
DKT*	5	SKD*	5	HD*	5
FM	1	HD*	3	BCFM	4
SHBN	1	DKT*	5	OCL*	2
DEF	2	COARSE FM	4	DLQ	5
CCL*	5	FINE FM	4	SPECIAL GRADES	5
WOCL*	7	FM	4	OTHER FACTORS	3
SPECIAL GRADES	3	SPL*	3	ODOR (If applicable)	5
DKG	3	BBB	1		
OTHER FACTORS	5	DLQ	5	<u>2-ROW MALTING BARLEY</u>	
ODOR (If applicable)	5	SPECIAL GRADES	4	CL	3
		OTHER FACTORS	4	TW	1
		ODOR (If applicable)	5	SMT*	1
				SD	5
<u>SORGHUM</u>		<u>BARLEY</u>		WO	1
CL	3	CL	3	FM	1
TW	1	TW	1	SKBN*	5
M	1	SD	4	THIN	1
DKT*	5	DKT*	5	BL	1
HT*	2	HT*	4	PLUMP	1
MSFM	2	FM	1	OTHER FACTORS	3
HPFM	2	BN*	2		
BNFM	2	THIN	1		
OCL*	3	BL	1		
DKG	1	PLUMP	1		
DLQ	3	OTHER FACTORS	3		
SPECIAL GRADES	3	SPECIAL GRADES	3		
ODOR (If applicable)	5	ODOR (If applicable)	5		
<u>OATS</u>		<u>6-ROW MALTING BARLEY</u>			
CL	1	CL	3		
TW	1	TW	1		
SD*	5	SMT*	1		
HT*	4	SD	4		
FM	2	DKT*	5		
WO*	2	FM	1		
DLQ	3	OG	1		
SPECIAL GRADES	3	SKBN*	5		
ODOR (If applicable)	5	THIN	1		
		BL	1		
		PLUMP	1		
		OTHER FACTORS	5		

ROUGH RICE

MY	5
RR & DK	5
OBS & HT	5
TS	4
OT	4
C	4
OTHER FACTORS	3

BROWN RICE FOR PROCESSING

MY	5
RR & DK	5
HT	5
P	4
OBS	3
TSHTP	3
OT	3
BK REMOVED BY A 6 P OR 6 1/2 S	3
WM	2
CH	2
OTHER FACTORS	3

MILLED RICE

TB.K 5/ 6 P I 6 S	4
RR & DK	5
OBS & HT	4
TS	3
OT	4
MR.EQ	5
C	5
CH	3
OTHER FACTORS	3