

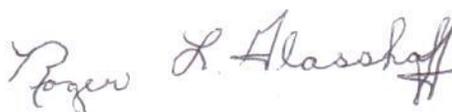
Poultry Programs

June 21, 2012

To: Regional Directors
Federal-State Supervisors
Shell Egg Graders

From: Roger L. Glasshoff
National Supervisor, Shell Egg Staff

Subject: Export Certification of Class B Shell Eggs Destined for the European Union



The following instructions outline the certification and shipping requirements for shell eggs eligible for import for breaking and further processing purposes into the European Union (EU). The eggs are classified by the European Commission (EC) Regulations and Marketing Standards as "Class B Shell Eggs" destined for breaking and further processing in the EU. The import requirements for Class B Shell Eggs are not harmonized (consistent agreement) under a single EC Regulation. Therefore, each Member State of the EU may require additional import requirements.

I. List of Plants Eligible to Export Class B Shell Eggs to a Member State of the European Union

- A. EC Regulations require that third (foreign) countries exporting to the EU must assure that egg processing and packaging plants have implemented Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles. The HACCP Plan and implementation at the egg processing plant must be verified by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) or another third party food safety certifying agent. Shell egg processing plants operating in accordance with the Regulations Governing the Voluntary Grading of Shell Eggs with a verified HACCP Plan that has been implemented are eligible to request certification of shell eggs destined for a Member State in the EU.

The USDA grader will confirm the processing plant is certified by one of the auditing organizations listed below:

1. Safe Quality Food (SQF) Level II - (annual certification)
2. British Retail Consortium (BRC) Best Practices - Global Standard Food Issues food safety - (annual certification)

3. AMS Plant Systems Audit acceptable implementation of HACCP - (within the past year).
- B. Only official shell egg plants (resident or temporary grading service) certified as operating under HACCP principles are authorized to be placed on the List of Plants Eligible to Export Class B Shell Eggs to Member States of the EU. Poultry Programs will maintain the subject list and provide the current list to officials of Member States of the EU upon request. We suggest that the consignee/importer be prepared to present the U.S. List of Plants Eligible to Export Class B Shell Eggs to Member States in the EU when providing the export certification documents to foreign government officials at a Border Inspection Point to the EU.

Official shell egg plants meeting the criteria stated above may be added to the list by contacting the National Supervisor, Shell Egg Staff, Grading Division, Poultry Programs, located in Washington D.C. at (202) 720-3271. This list is accessible on the Poultry Programs website, located at:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/getfile?dDocName=stelprdc50983948>

US Plants eligible For Export to the EU

A copy of this list prepared at the time of the issuance of these certification instructions is included for reference purposes as Exhibit I.

II. Producer Requirements

The EC regulations state that eggs imported from the U.S. must be produced in accordance with applicable Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations including feed and any substances (nutrient supplements and any veterinary drugs) used. Recognizing that FDA and State officials maintain jurisdiction for monitoring continued conformance with regulations applicable to egg production, USDA will require each producer to provide a certificate of conformance (CoC-Exhibit II) for each lot processed for export to a Member State of the EU. The egg processor/packer must provide a written description to the USDA grader identifying the source flock location(s) and procedures employed (labeling and inventory and processing records) to maintain the identity of the shell eggs from the time of production through transport, storage, and processing. The egg producer must provide a signed CoC prior to USDA certification of the product. The USDA grader will attach the CoC for each production lot certified to the applicable certification documents(s) for each export shipment.

The producer is responsible for maintaining records of the source of the feed, nutrient supplements, and any substances (including veterinary drugs) used in the production of the certified shell eggs for a period of 2 years. These records and the production operation are subject to an audit by officials of a Member State receiving Class B Shell Eggs from the U.S. or from Foreign Veterinary Officials of the EU.

III. Product Requirements

- A. Shell eggs are not eligible for certification as destined for a Member State of the EU following the detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus in poultry in the United States. The National Office staff will notify field operations staff of any confirmed case of highly pathogenic avian influenza in the United States.
- B. All eggs must originate from layer flocks in the United States. Each production lot of shell eggs from a producer must be accompanied by the CoC referenced in item II above.
- C. Only eggs processed and packaged under the supervision of a USDA grader at an official shell egg processing plant (temporary or resident grading service) appearing on the list referenced above (I.B) are eligible to be presented for export certification.

IV. Grade Requirements - Class B Shell Eggs

- A. The shell eggs must be graded for a quality certification as U.S. Grade A or better as outlined in the United States Standards, Grades, and Weight Classes for Shell Eggs (AMS 56).

V. Net Weight Declaration

Although an egg processor may request certification to a specific weight class (declared on the quality certificate, Form PY-210S – Exhibit VII), the model certificate for the EU (Member State Certificate – Exhibit VI) requires the declaration of the total net weight of the shipment of Class B Shell Eggs. In the remarks section of the Form PY-210S, the following statement and the calculated net weight must be recorded:

The declared net weight of the lot is based upon the average weight of the samples examined multiplied by the total number of shipping cases.

Example: 49.8 pounds (average net weight) X 800 cases = 39,840 pounds total net weight

The calculated total net weight will be transferred from the Form PY-210S to the Member State Certificate issued (Member State Certificate field I.28).

VI. Processing Requirements

- A. Class B washed shell eggs destined for a Member State of the EU must be processed in accordance with the Regulations Governing the Voluntary Grading of Shell Eggs (7 CFR 56).
- B. The shell eggs must be processed under the supervision of a USDA grader.
- C. Eggs certified for export are subject to FDA and USDA regulatory ambient storage and transport temperature regulations (45° F or less).

VII. Identification of Individual Eggs

- A. Each egg must be marked using one of the options stated below:
 - 1. A “circle” 12 millimeters in diameter surrounding the letter “B” that must be a minimum 5 millimeters in height.
 - 2. The egg shall be marked with a circular mark at least 5 millimeters in diameter.
- B. Any color of a USDA-approved marking ink may be used.
- C. The marked shell eggs shall be placed in the cells of the filler flat with the mark on the portion of the individual egg exposed for inspection purposes. Class B washed shell eggs will be subject to examination at the time of packing and may be examined at the Border Inspection Point (BIP) when presented for entry to the EU.

VIII. Packing / Packaging

- A. Packing and packaging materials (filler flats and fiber corrugated cases) must be new, showing no evidence of adhering foreign material or previous use. The bursting strength of the fiber corrugated case selected by the packer shall be sufficient to withstand the export shipping conditions.
- B. Pallets must be new or good used condition, free of visible evidence of adhering foreign material and structural damage.

IX. Packing Case Labeling

- A. The labeling information outlined in Exhibit III must be placed in a central location on the end of each shipping case. Stenciling, printing directly on the case panel, or the application of a printed adhesive label may be used to legibly declare the required information. Handwritten labels are not permitted.

- B. An expiration date cannot be declared on the label or certificate as AMS cannot certify to EU officials the quality of shell eggs in global commerce. The egg processor can issue, on company letterhead, a company declaration regarding the duration of quality of the shipment of Class B shell eggs destined for the EU.
- C. The words, “Keep Refrigerated” or similar terminology must be declared on each shipping case.
- D. The “Safe Handling” statements must be printed on each case, or the statements may accompany the shipping invoice.
- E. **The “USDA Graded for Export” stamp must be applied directly to the shipping case using blue ink. Incorporating the stamp in the format of a computer generated label is not acceptable.**
- F. When palletized for shipment, the labeling (adhesive label, stencil, stamp, etc.) on the shipping case shall be exposed, when possible, for inspection purposes.

X. Certification of Class B Shell Eggs for Export to Member States of the EU

- A. Washed Class B Shell Eggs destined for a Member State of the EU will be certified as meeting U.S. Grade A Standards or better based on examination of a full-size sample. The quality percentages will be declared on the Shell Egg Grading Certificate, Form PY-210S. The remarks section of Form PY-210S will include the following statements typed in bold print:
 - **The eggs covered by this certificate meet the requirements for Class B Shell Eggs for Further Processing destined for (complete with name of Member State of the European Union).**
 - **The declared net weight of the lot is based upon the average weight of the samples examined multiplied by the total number of shipping cases.** If the shipment contains numerous lots, the net weight shall be calculated and recorded for each lot. We suggest that a shipment consist of one production lot, if possible, considering the Member State Certificate is very limited in space to document information relative to individual production lots.
- B. The processor/packer is responsible for providing the detailed information necessary to complete export certificates. For example, name and address of consignor and consignee, destination, etc. The USDA certificate covering quality and the Member State Certificate for Class B Shell Eggs for Further Processing cannot be issued until the necessary information is provided.

- C. Normally, Form PY-210S and the issued Disease Free Statements accompany shell eggs certified for export. However, as stated above, the EU requires a harmonized certificate covering the import of shell eggs that includes the required public and animal health attestations. EC regulations require that the certificate be issued in the language of the Member State of the EU identified as the destination of the Class B Shell Eggs. The attestation statements on the Member State Certificate have been reviewed by appropriate U.S. government agencies to authorize the USDA shell egg grader to sign the Member State Certificate.

The USDA Grader will select the Member State Certificate for Class B Shell Eggs based upon the destination country address of the egg products further processing facility provided by plant management. The individual Member States of the EU and each corresponding International Standard Organization (ISO) Code (recorded in field I.9 on the Member State Certificate) are provided in Exhibit IV.

The list of Member States acknowledging acceptance of USDA certification of Class B Shell Eggs for Further Processing will be updated upon receipt of official information. Each Member State Certificate is identified with the country name at the bottom of page I of the bilingual document (for example, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, etc.).

Any additional translation of the information on Form PY-210S or the Member State Certificate for presentation to foreign government officials at the BIP for entry to the EU is the responsibility of the consignee/importer.

XI. Transport Unit Condition Inspection

- A. The USDA grader shall inspect the transport container prior to loading to assure the unit is clean and acceptable for the transport of food for human consumption.
- B. Graders are to visibly examine and document on Form PY-211, as applicable, the cleanliness of the transport container and determine that the refrigeration unit on the container will function to provide ambient refrigerated conditions during transport.
- C. Transport containers without a functional refrigeration unit(s) are not eligible for use in the shipment of Class B shell eggs for further processing to Member States of the EU.
- D. When unsanitary conditions are observed in a transport container or when a refrigeration unit is not present or functional, the grader will notify a responsible plant management official of the conditions. Product is not to be loaded on the transport container until the unacceptable conditions have been corrected.

- E. When such conditions are observed upon examining a transport container at the processing plant, the USDA grader will document detailed observations, including the name of the plant official notified, on the applicable shell egg grading worksheet.
- F. The USDA grader must be present during loading to verify the required labeling and the quantity of product certified for export to the member state of the EU identified by the egg processor. The transport container must be sealed with the processing plant's shipping seal prior to departure from the official plant.

The applicant/consignor is responsible for the shipping conditions of transport container, including refrigeration, subsequent to sealing the final transport unit for export.

- G. If plant management elects to trans-load the Class B shell eggs to a shipping container at an alternate location, the USDA grader shall follow the instructions stated in the policy memorandum titled "Trans-Loading of Shell Eggs Certified for Export" filed in E-01b, Exports, in the Shell Egg Graders Index.

XII. Certificate Preparation (Form PY-210S and the Member State Certificate)

- A. Caution must be exercised when completing the certificates covering the export of Class B Shell Eggs destined for Member States of the EU. Errors on the documents (even though initialed in blue ink), information that is not legible, and the failure to complete a certificate field has been cited by BIP inspectors as reasons for refused entry of agricultural commodities of animal origin. The USDA grader shall select the correct Member State Certificate based upon the destination country of the egg products processing facility as provided by plant management. The documents shall be typed, when possible, for legibility purposes.
- B. Form PY-210S, Shell Egg Grading Certificate, shall be issued as outlined in the Shell Egg Graders Handbook. **To assure consistency between Form PY-210S and the Member State Certificate, the name and address of the shipper or seller on Form PY-210S and the consignor on the Member State Certificate shall be the same. The name and address of the receiver or buyer on the Form PY-210S may reference the consignee or the name and address of the destination egg products processing facility in the destination Member State of the EU. However, the consignee's name and address must be declared on the Member State Certificate (refer to Exhibit V, explaining the completion of the fields on the Member State Certificate). The Member State Certificate Reference Number in field I.2 on Page I and field II.a on Page II shows the serial number of the issued PY-210S.**
- C. Attached to these export certification instructions are several exhibits to assist the USDA shell egg grader in selection of the Member State Certificate for the

destination country accepting Class B Shell Eggs imported from the U.S. (refer to Exhibit I); identification of the appropriate ISO Code (refer to Exhibit IV) declared on the Member State Certificate; and guidance for completion of each field of the Member State Certificate (refer to Exhibit V). If you have any questions regarding the Member State Certificate, contact supervisory personnel prior to issuing the certificate.

D. Also attached is a copy of the Member State Certificate for the Netherlands (Exhibit VI) that shows the general location of the USDA Graded for Export stamp on Page I and Page II. Caution must be employed when applying the stamp to assure that the stamping ink of the stamp impression does not interfere with legibility of the information on the document (excess ink bleeds through the document paper). The USDA shell egg grader must sign (blue ink) and place an imprint of the stamp (using blue marking ink) on the each page of the Member State Certificate. The general area of the USDA stamp on the Member State Certificate has been identified on the exhibit to prevent covering of any required information.

E. A supply of the Member State Certificate for a specific country in the EU accepting Class B Shell Eggs imported from the U.S. can be requested through the Regional Office. If a Member State of the EU has not officially accepted the USDA certification procedures for the import of Class B Shell Eggs, the certificate for that member state will not be available. Poultry Programs will publish the Member State Certificate (bilingual) and specific certification requirements upon confirmation of the acceptance of U.S. certification procedures from a representative of that Member State of the EU. Detailed information on those member states that have acknowledged USDA certification of Class B Shell Eggs can be found on the AMS Poultry Programs website in the Export Library for Shell Eggs:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/PYEggExportRequirements>.

F. The original certificates issued (Form PY-210S and the Member State Certificate with official blue seal) shall be provided to plant management. The consignee or importer is responsible for presenting the original USDA certificates issued to foreign government officials at the Border Inspection Point to the EU.

XIII. Disposition of Completed Certificates

A. The original certificates issued (Form PY-210S and the Member State Certificate with official blue seal) will be provided to plant management. The USDA grader will retain a copy of the PY-210S and a photocopy of the Member State Certificate covering the shipment for the files. Plant management will receive the remaining copies of the Form PY-210S.

As stated above, plant management/consignor is responsible for providing the original certificates to the consignee or importer to present to foreign government officials at the Border Inspection Point to the EU. Any additional translation of the information on Form PY-210S or the Member State Certificate for presentation to foreign government officials at the BIP for entry to the EU is the responsibility of the consignee/importer.

XIV. Retention of Documents Relative To Certification of Class B Shell Eggs

- A. As stated above, all relative production, processing, and the certification records and documents covering a shipment(s) of Class B Shell Eggs exported to a Member State of the EU must be retained for a minimum period of 2 years. The USDA completed records and certificates issued will be maintained as a consolidated file. The resident USDA grader shall cross-reference the location in the filing system of this consolidated file for future reference purposes when it includes the only copy of an accountable document such as the Form PY-210S.**

These certification procedures and the completion of the required certificates covering Class B Shell Eggs destined for Member States of the EU are extensive. Please review the export certification process with plant management to assure a thorough understanding of the requirements and necessary export documents. If you have questions upon completion of a review of these certification instructions, please contact supervisory staff or this office for guidance.

Attachments: Exhibits I through VII.

File these instructions as E-20, Exports, in the Supervisors/Resident Graders Shell Egg Index.