

SHELL EGG GRADERS HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

	<u>Page Number</u>
Section 01 Introduction – Shell Egg Graders Handbook	
I. Purpose	1
II. Authority	1
III. Policy	1
IV. Basis of Service	1
Section 02 Graders and Facility Requirements	
I. Definition of Graders	1-2
A. Resident Federal-State Grader	1
B. Fee Grader	1
C. Grader-in-Charge (GIC).	1
D. Mechanical Segregation Systems	1-2
E. Designated Company Official Letter.	2
II. Duties of a Shell Egg Grader.	3-5
A. Biosecurity Requirements.	3
B. Company Quality Assurance Standards.	3-4
C. Safety.	4-5
D. Utilization of Stand-by Time.	5
III. Facilities and Equipment Required for Resident, Federal-State Graders.	5-8
A. To be furnished by the Plant	5-7
B. To be furnished by the Federal-State Supervisor.	7
C. Surveys.	7-8
Exhibit I Request Form to Utilize Mechanical Segregation Systems	
Exhibit II Form PY-158, Plant Survey for Shell Egg Grading	

Section 03 Shell Eggs Eligible for Grading

I. Eggs of Current Production. 1

II. Eggs Identified as Wholesome. 1

III. Eggs Eligible for Identification with the USDA Grademark. 1-4

 A. Monitoring the Handling of Eggs Originating from Egg-Laying Flocks in an Environment Testing Positive for the Presence of Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) or Eggs from a Layer Flock Testing SE-Positive. 2-3

 B. Diversion. 3

 C. Company Notification of Egg Testing. 3-4

 D. Positive-Egg Test Results. 4

IV. Cooperation with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Representatives or Other Government Agencies. 4-6

 A. Plant Management’s Responsibility. 5

 B. Procedures to Follow When Product is Suspected of Being Adulterated Through Contaminated or Evident Tampering. . . . 5

 C. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Between the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). 5

 D. Reporting Tampering or Intentional Contamination. 6

V. Refrigeration of Shell Eggs from Production to Processing in Accordance with FDA Regulations. 6-7

 A. Eggs Washed and Packaged for the Ultimate Consumer or Further Processed. 6-7

VI. Avian Disease Restrictions. 7

 Exhibit I PY-32, Application for Service

 Exhibit II Wholesomeness Certification

 Exhibit III Interagency Referral Report, Report of Alleged Violation of the Federal Food Drug and Cosmetic Act-Shell Eggs

Section 04 Egg Packing and Packaging Materials

I. Case and Container Examination. 1

II. Definition of Packing Materials. 1-2

 A. Fiber Cases. 1

 B. Baskets. 1-2

C.	Portable Racks (Bossies).	2
D.	Palletized Primary Containers with Reinforced Corrugated Materials, Overwrapped with Film.	2
III.	Standard Case Requirements.	2-3
IV.	Definitions of Packaging Materials.	3
A.	Filler Flats.	3
B.	Cartons.	3

Exhibit I Case Strength Requirements

Section 05 Resident and Temporary Plant Grading Requirements

I.	General.	1
II.	Quality Assurance Inspector.	1
III.	Extent of Examination of Daily Production Required.	1-3
A.	Grade Labeled Product.	1
B.	Lot Numbering Consumer Packages.	1
C.	Expiration Dating (Domestic Market Policy).	1-2
D.	USDA Plant Number, Lot Number, and Expiration Date Application.	2-3
IV.	Use of the “Produced From” Labeling	3-5
A.	Approval.	3-4
B.	Verification Visits.	4
C.	Record-Keeping.	4
D.	Misuse of “Produced From” Labeling.	4-5
E.	Cost.	5
V.	Shell Egg Washing.	5-15
A.	Procedures for Washing Eggs.	5-6
B.	Alternative Shell Egg Washer Inspections.	6-8
C.	Heat Exchanger.	8-9
D.	Egg Oiler.	9-10
E.	Water Potability Certification.	10-11
F.	Iron Content Analysis.	11-12
G.	Shell Egg Sanitizing.	12-13
H.	Ultra-Violet Light for Disinfecting Shell Eggs.	13-14
I.	Ozone Use as an Antimicrobial Agent.	14-15
VI.	Approval of Compounds.	15-17

VII.	Plant Sanitation.	17-21
	A. Responsibility for Plant Sanitation.	17
	B. Sanitation Inspection Standards.	17-18
	C. Pre-Operative Sanitation Inspections.	18-20
	D. Packaging Material Storage Areas.	20
	E. Sanitation and Ambient Refrigeration of Transport Vehicles.	20-21
VIII.	Cooling Facility Requirements.	21-23
	A. Cooler Verification.	21
	B. Thermometer Certification.	21-22
	C. Refrigeration of Product.	22-23
IX.	Surveillance Responsibilities – Resident, Temporary, and Fee Graders.	23-26
X.	Shipping of Non-Denatured Inedible Egg Products.	26
	A. Responsibilities of Plant Management.	26
	B. Origin Inspector Responsibilities.	26
	Exhibit I	Day of the Year Chart
	Exhibit II	Water Potability and Iron Certification Log
	Exhibit III	Notice of Guarantee for Approval of Compounds
	Exhibit IV	Chemical Compound Log
	Exhibit V	Pre-Operative Shell Egg Plant Sanitation Report
	Exhibit VI	Pre-Operative Shell Egg Plant Sanitation Report (Example)
	Exhibit VII	Guidance for Completing the Form PY-74, Sanitation Report
	Exhibit VIII	Shell Egg Surveillance Labeling

Section 06 Basics of Grading

I.	Placement of Container.	1
II.	Eggs to Grade	1-2
III.	Items to Observe Continuously.	2
IV.	Segregation of Eggs While Grading.	3
V.	How to Replace Graded Eggs in the Sample Case.	3
VI.	Weighing.	3-5
VII.	Assignment of Grades.	5-8
	A. Examples of Correct Grade Terminology.	5
	B. Assigning a Consumer Grade.	6
	C. Assigning a Nest Run Class.	6-8

- Exhibit I Individual Egg Weight Table
- Exhibit II Minimum Net Weight for Various Egg Containers

Section 07 Stationary Lot Grading Procedures

- I. Lot Identification. 1
- II. Size of Sample. 1
- III. Reworking a Stationary Lot of Eggs. 1-2
- IV. Consolidated Lot Grading – Institutional Gradings
(Includes Military Consignments). 2
- V. Official Identification of Cases. 2-6
 - A. How and What to Stamp. 2
 - B. Types of Stamps to Use. 3-5
 - C. Computer Generated Stamps. 5-6
 - D. Eggs Not Processed Under USDA Supervision. 6
 - E. Eggs Processed Under USDA Supervision. 6
- VI. Obliteration of Official Identification. 6
- VII. Sealing Cases. 6-7
- VIII. Identifying Lots of Improperly Labeled Eggs. 7
- IX. Marking Individual Eggs. 7-8
 - A. Stamping Eggs. 7
 - B. Laser Etching (Marking Eggs). 7-8
- X. Cooler Samples. 8-9
- XI. Random Sample Selection – Stationary Lot Gradings. 9
- XII. Repackaging Eggs Shipped from another Official Plant. 9-10
- XIII. Consumer Grade-Labeled Product Which was not Officially Graded. . . 10-11
 - A. Protect the Consumer. 11
 - B. Notice of Verbal Request. 11
 - C. Complete Inventory. 11
 - D. Request Letter from Firm. 11
 - E. Notification of Resistance. 11
 - F. Form PY-518-1. 11

XIV.	Sampling and Grading Over-Wrap / Shrink-Wrap Product.	11-12
XV.	Previously Graded Product Received and Held in Official Plant.	12
XVI.	Handling of Officially Identified Eggs Rejected by USDA at Locations Other than Where Packed.	12-13
	A. Eggs Rejected for Quality and/or Size.	12
	B. Documentation of Rejection.	13
	C. Product Re-handled at Location Other than Point of Rejection.	13
	D. Supervisory Follow-up of Unsatisfactory Product.	13
XVII.	Completion of Sample Selection Worksheet.	13-14
XVIII.	Selecting the Sample.	14
XIX.	Identifying Designated Samples.	14-21
	A. Product on Pallets.	14-18
	B. Product on Racks (“Bossies”).	19
	C. Sampling Partial Pallets or “Racks”.	20
	D. Combining Different Types (Sizes) of Packing or Shipping Containers.	21
	Exhibit I Cooler Sample Worksheet Worksheets 1-19	

Section 08 On-line Sampling of Shell Eggs

I.	General	1
II.	Line Identity	1-2
III.	Product Control	2-5
	A. Designated Plant Employee	2
	B. Sampling Intervals	2
	C. Measurement	3
	D. Identification System for Samples.	3-4
	E. Overlapping.	4
	F. Stacking Product.	4-5
IV.	Sampling Frequency.	5-7
	A. Determination Primarily by Volume.	5-6
	B. Sampling Following a Retention.	6-7
	C. Sampling Frequency Adjustments.	7
	D. Assuring That Minimum Sampling Requirements are Met.	7

V.	Recording and Evaluation of Sampling Results.	7-24
A.	Forms.	7-8
B.	Tolerances.	8-12
C.	Carryover.	12-15
D.	Completing Forms – Recording Results.	16-21
E.	Totaling Results.	21
F.	Completing the Reverse of Form PY-75.	22-24
VI.	Retention Action.	24-32
A.	Cumulative Sampling Results.	24-27
B.	Use of Rejected or Retained Tag – Form PY-36.	27-29
C.	Handling Retained Product.	29-30
D.	Sampling Retained Product.	30-32
VII.	Certificate Issuance for On-Line Sampled Shell Eggs (Form PY-210S).	32-35
A.	Option 1 – Certification with No Quality Percentages or Net Weight.	32-33
B.	Option 2 – Certification with Quality Percentages and/or Net Weight.	33-35
VIII.	Official Identification of Online Product	35
	Exhibit I Form PY-75, Shell Egg Online Candling Record	
	Exhibit II Form PY-75A, Shell Egg Online Candling Record	
	Exhibit III Form PY-516, Product Retention Log	
	Exhibit IV Retained Product Transfer / Release Memorandum	

Section 09 Special Gradings

I.	Partial Gradings	1
II.	Institutional Gradings – Contract Acceptance.	1
III.	Specification Gradings	1-3
A.	Specification Review and Approval Process	2
B.	Certification of Specification Requirements	2-3
IV.	Military or Other Special Gradings	3
V.	Condition Inspection of Shell Eggs	3-4
A.	Certification Covering Truck Damage	3
B.	Certification Covering Frozen Egg Damage	4
C.	Certification Covering Off-Odor Eggs or Otherwise	

	Contaminated Eggs.	4
VI.	U.S. Grade A or AA Interior Quality for Egg Products.	4-5
VII.	Kosher Certification of Shell Eggs	5-6
VIII.	Certification of Shell Eggs as Fit for Human Consumption	6
IX.	Certification of Organic Shell Eggs.	6-8
	A. Examination of Accreditation and Certification Documents.	7
	B. Responsibility.	7
	C. Product Labeling Requirements.	7-8
	D. Verification and Control.	8
	E. Official Certification.	8
X.	United Egg Producers (UEP) Certified.	8-9
XI.	Recognized Organizations Certifying Animal Husbandry Practices for Egg-Laying Flocks.	9
XII.	Cage-Free or Free-Range Egg Production Verification Procedures.	9-11
XIII.	Appeal Gradings.	11-12
	A. Who Shall Perform the Appeal Grading.	11
	B. Procedures for Appeal Grading.	11-12
XIV.	Export Certification.	12
	Exhibit I Form PY-33, Application for Specification Approval	
	Exhibit II Semi-Annual Cage-Free Layer Flock Verification Worksheet (Example)	
	Exhibit III Semi-Annual Cage-Free Layer Flock Verification Worksheet	
	Exhibit IV Recognized Certification Standards for Cage-Free Layer Flocks	

Section 10 Certificate and Memorandum Preparation

I.	Preparation and Distribution of Worksheets.	1-5
	A. Guidelines Regarding Use.	1
	B. Entries Required.	1
	C. Egg Oiling.	1
	D. Temperature.	2
	E. Egg Color.	2
	F. Defects.	2
	G. Shortages.	2-3
	H. Labeling.	3
	I. Underweight Eggs.	3

J.	Case Temperature.	3
K.	B and B* Quality.	3-4
L.	Dirties and Checks.	4
M.	Leakers.	4
N.	Damaged Containers.	4
O.	Recording Results.	4
P.	Conversion of Small Units.	4-5
II.	Distribution	5
III.	Preparation of Certificates.	5-7
A.	Preparation of Form PY-210S, Shell Egg Grading Certificate.	5
B.	General Information Concerning Certificates.	5-6
C.	“Void” Certificates.	6
D.	Certificate Amendments.	6
E.	Superseded Certificates.	6-7
IV.	Certificate Distribution.	7
	Exhibit I Shell Egg Grading Certificate Amendment	
	Exhibit II Example - Superseded Certificate	
Section 11	Shell Egg Volume Report (Form PY-240S)	
I.	Purpose.	1
II.	Responsibility.	1
III.	Completion of Report.	1-5
A.	General Information Section.	1-2
B.	Administrative Volume Section (Resident Plants Only).	2
C.	Acceptance Service Section.	2-5
D.	Certification Statements Section.	5
IV.	Distribution.	5
	Exhibit I Form PY-240S	
	Exhibit II Country Groups	
Section 12	Filing System, Forms, and Equipment	
I.	Shell Egg Graders Filing System	1-2
II.	Additional Equipment, Unused Forms, and Instruction Storage	2-3
III.	Disposition Schedule for Grading Program Records	3