



USDA Beef Tenderness Marketing Claim Standard

USDA/AMS/LPS/STD
October 2012



Initiative History



- Industry request/interest in developing a Tenderness Marketing Claim Standard
- AMS published proposed Marketing Claims rule
 - December 30, 2002
 - Comments received prompted the need for further discussion with stakeholders



Initiative History (cont'd)



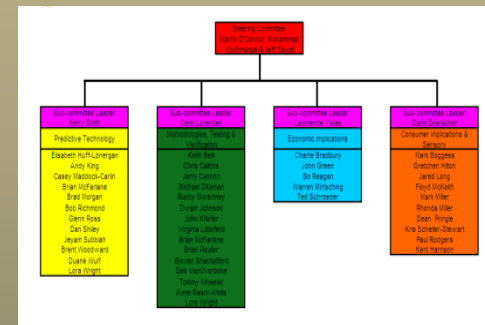
- AMS Tenderness forum
 - March 27, 2007
 - Kansas City, Missouri
- Forum Focus - Glean insight from:
 - Academia
 - Industry
 - Trade Associations



Initiative History (cont'd)



- Multi-dynamic sub-committees were formed to focus on tenderness
 - Predictive Technology
 - Methodologies, Testing & Verification
 - Economic Implications
 - Consumer Implications & Sensory



Initiative History (cont'd)



- AMS Tenderness Forum at the Reciprocal Meats Conference
 - June 22, 2008
 - University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
- Key outcomes
 - Focus on Beef Initially
 - Minimum Tenderness Threshold Value
 - Qualifying Muscles/Cuts
 - Inherent vs. Enhanced Tender



Initiative History (cont'd)



- In 2009, draft standard was ready for comment through the Federal Register **BUT...**
- The *National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act* of 1995 (Public Law 104-113)
 - government agencies must consult with voluntary standards bodies to develop consensus standards
 - OMB Circular A-119



Initiative History (cont'd)



- Several standards organizations considered.
- Ultimately, ASTM International was chosen.
 - Experience with livestock and meat standards.
 - E.g. Instrument grading



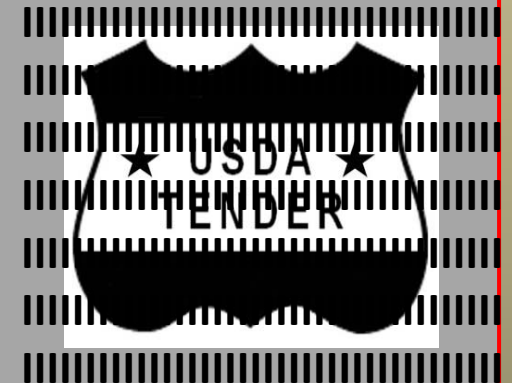
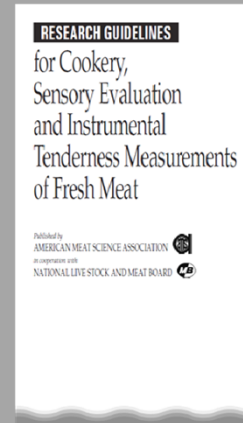
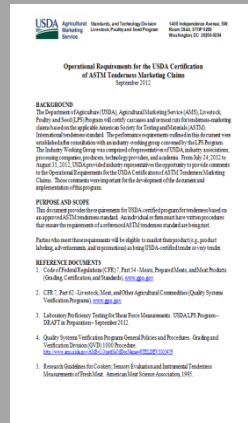
ASTM Standard Specification



- Standard Specification was approved through the full F10 committee and published in August 2011.
- *F 2925-11 Standard Specification for Tenderness Marketing Claims Associated with Meat Cuts Derived from Beef.*
- Proposed Claim (two options)
 - ***Tender***: Meets the MTTV of 4.4 kg for WBSF or 20.0 kg for SSF
 - ***Very Tender***: Meets the MTTV of 3.9 kg for WBSF or 15.3 kg for SSF



Systematic, Multi-Standard Approach – USDA & ASTM



Changing the AMS Approach



- Industry comments suggested that more versatility was needed within a tenderness certification program
 - All players could use this marketing tool.
 - Packer, Purveyor, Retailer, etc.
- Replaced the Standard Practice Document Approach
 - Performance-based rather than Prescriptive-Based



AMS Operational Requirements



- USDA-certified programs for tenderness based on an approved ASTM tenderness standard.
- Written procedures that meet the requirements of a referenced ASTM tenderness standard.



AMS Operational Requirements Document



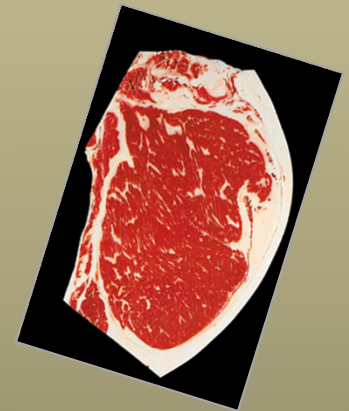
- A documented quality management system (QMS) must describe the meat cuts and how the USDA tenderness certification may apply
- The QMS will be considered acceptable when it is statistically verified ($P < 0.05$) to meet the specifications of the referenced ASTM International tenderness standard



Key Performance Elements



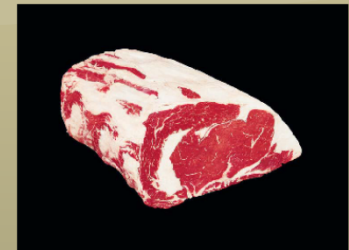
- The ASTM tenderness standard must be current and referenced.
- Tenderness will be measured using a USDA-approved and validated technology capable of assessing or predicting shear force.
- Testing instrument systems shall be used, operated, inspected, and maintained as described in ASTM International Standard F 2341.



Key Performance Elements (cont'd)



- The sampling plan must be described.
 - Random sampling approach
- Production and product must be documented to allow for the history, application or location to be traced
 - Items or activities traceable through product identification, records and procedures



Key Performance Elements (cont'd)



- A QMS must, at a minimum, specifically address the following:
 - Organizational structure
 - Use of quality control records
 - Control of documents, records and changes
 - Control and calibration of measuring and test equipment
 - Control of related purchased material, including incoming inspection



Approval Process



- Case-by-case Basis by LPS Program per GVD 1000
- LPS Program Desk Audit
- LPS Program Onsite Capability Assessment
- Ongoing Audit Frequency: At least 2/FY per GVD 1002
- A firm may make changes to their QMS but they must be approved by the LPS Program prior to implementation



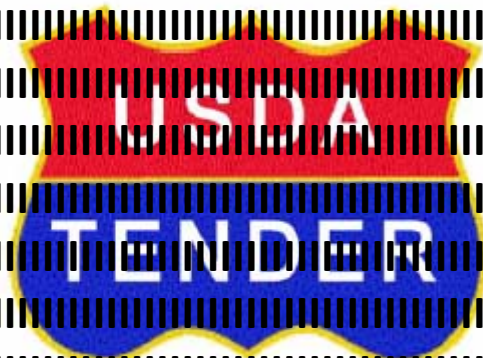
Marketing and Promotional Materials



- The use of the “USDA Tender” or “USDA Very Tender” Shields will be granted to those parties that have products certified according to these requirements
- All marketing and promotional materials must be reviewed by the LPS Program prior to final use by the approved program
- Misuse and Misrepresentation of USDA Grade Names, GVD Procedure 108
- FSIS/OPPD/LPDD Approval too!



Proposed USDA Shields



Shear Force Proficiency Testing



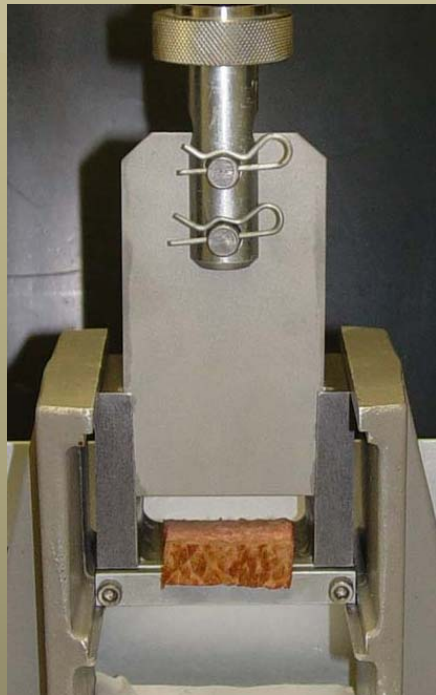
- Ensure tenderness measurements, i.e. shear force measurements, are equivalent between testing facilities



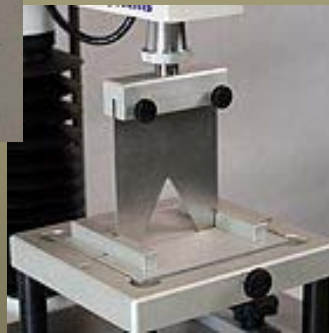
- USDA Meat Animal Research Center to serve as the reference laboratory



Shear Force Proficiency Testing (cont'd)



- Four steaks from 30 strip-loins tested by both the testing facility and the reference laboratory
- Approval based on accuracy, precision and repeatability elements



Shear Force Proficiency Testing (cont'd)



- Facilities must have procedures that ensure consistent tenderness measurements day-to-day
- Equipment validated daily
- Yearly assessment of accuracy, precision and repeatability



Discussion

