USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 1 of 9

AMS Auditor Criteria

EX- 104

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 2 of 9

1   Scope
This document provides the requirements for AMS Auditors who conduct audits and/or assessments under the AMS Industry Services Audit and Accreditation Programs (AMS ISAAP).

2   References
The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

2.1   Performance and Training Evaluation for AMS Auditors (AMS 1C1)
2.2   ISO 19011:2002 Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing
2.3   Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions, Group Coverage Qualification Standards for Administrative and Management Positions.

3   Definitions
3.1   AMS Approved Course: A training course that is approved by AMS ISAAP top management.

3.2   AMS Auditor: An employee who has met all of the Fundamental Requirements and Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program (either a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program).

3.3   AMS Auditor-in-Training: (1) An employee who has met the Fundamental Requirements for an AMS Auditor, but has not met all the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program (either a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program); or (2) An AMS Auditor who has successfully met the Fundamental Requirements and the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Program is considered an AMS Auditor-in-Training when he/she is training to meet the Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for another Specific Program. In this instance, the AMS Auditor must also successfully complete the Specific Program Training as defined by the AMS Branch.

3.4   Assessment: A systematic, independent, and documented process for evaluating the adequacy of program or system documentation, or the evaluation of the completeness of implementation of a documented program or system. The evaluation determines an applicant's ability to meet a Specific Accreditation Program.

3.5   Audit: A systematic, independent, and documented process for obtaining evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the criteria are fulfilled. The evaluation determines an applicant's ability to meet a Specific Audit Program.

3.6 Evaluator: A person knowledgeable of the policies and procedures applicable to the Specific Audit Program or the Specific Accreditation Program for which the audit or assessment is conducted. An evaluator usually is a Team Leader, but may be a supervisor, trainer, or a program manager.

3.7 Observer: A person who may accompany the audit team but is not a part of it. They should not influence or interfere with the conduct or outcome of the audit.

3.8 Personal Attributes: The traits that help ensure audits and assessments are effective and reliable include: ethical, open-minded, diplomatic, observant, perceptive, versatile, tenacious, decisive, and self-reliant.

3.9 Specific Audit Program Training: Training for a Specific Audit Program that is defined by the AMS Branch.

3.10 Specific Accreditation Program Training: Training for a Specific Accreditation Program that is defined by the AMS Branch.
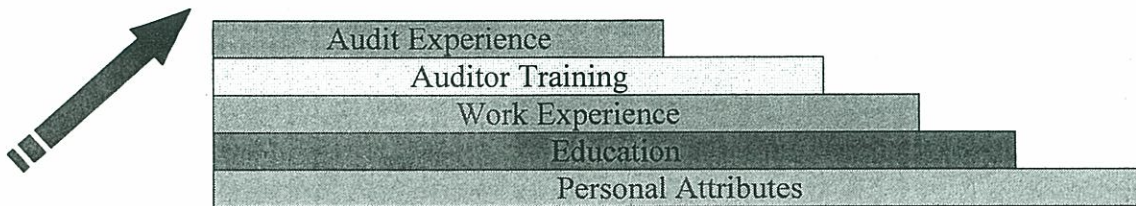
3.11 Team Leader: An employee who is competent to assume responsibility for all phases of the audit or assessment. For the purpose of this document, Team Leader is used instead of "Lead Auditor" however, the terms are interchangeable.

3.12 Technical Expert: A person who provides specific knowledge or expertise to the audit team, but who does not act as an auditor on the audit team.

3.13 Witness Appraisal: An evaluation where an evaluator attends an audit or assessment as an observer for the purpose for evaluating the AMS Auditor's performance in conducting the audit or assessment.

4   AMS Auditor Criteria
The AMS Auditor Criteria are based on 5 core requirements: personal attributes, education, work experience, auditor training, and audit experience. The requirements for the AMS Auditor are outlined below.

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 4 of 9

4.1 Fundamental Requirements

4.1.1 AMS Auditors, including Auditors-in-Training, shall meet all of the following Fundamental Requirements:

a) Possess personal attributes important in the performance of auditing activities.

b) Have a high school diploma or equivalent.

c) Have completed a minimum of 36 months experience post-high school which shall be in an agricultural related field, such as: (1) an Agricultural Commodity Grader (ACG), (2) an Agricultural Marketing Specialist, (3) quality assurance, (4) food processing, (5) applicable farm experience, (6) auditing, (7) process control application, or (8) ISO application.

- Education may be substituted for experience: a 4 year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree in a related field (agriculture, statistics, science or business) will meet the experience requirement.

- A combination of education and experience may be substituted for the 36 months of experience: Combinations of successfully completed post-high school education and experience may be used to meet total qualification requirements for the 36 months experience. Combinations may be computed by (1) determining the total qualifying experience as a percentage of the 36 months experience required; (2) determining the education as a percentage of the education required for the grade level; and (3) adding the two percentages. The total percentage must equal at least 100 percent to qualify. (For examples of how to calculate the percentage see the OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standards for Administrative and Management Positions.)

d) Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing.

e) Have successfully completed an AMS approved course for ISO 19011 Section 4 Principles of Auditing and Section 6 Audit Activities.

f) Have successfully completed Specific Audit Program Training and/or Specific Accreditation Program Training as defined by the AMS Branch.

4.1.2 An employee who meets the Fundamental Requirements may participate as an AMS Auditor-in-Training.

4.1.3 An employee who does not meet the Fundamental Requirements may participate only as an observer.

4.2 Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements

4.2.1 An AMS Auditor who meets all of the Fundamental Requirements shall also meet the following Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements:

a) Demonstrate the ability to manage and coordinate audits and/or assessments.

b) Meet the training requirements based on the type of audit or accreditation program:

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 5 of 9

1) Client Developed Service Program – successfully completed an AMS approved course for process-based auditing when the applicant requests an AMS auditor for the service requested.

2) USDA Process Audit Program – successfully completed an AMS approved course for process-based auditing.

3) USDA Quality Management System (QMS) Program - successfully completed ISO 9001:2000 Lead Auditor training course.

4) USDA Process Verified Program - successfully completed ISO 9001:2000 Lead Auditor training course.

5) USDA Environmental Management System (EMS) Program - successfully completed ISO 14001:2004 Lead Auditor training course.

6) USDA HACCP Audit Program - successfully completed an AMS approved HACCP training course.

7) USDA Testing and/or Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Program - successfully completed an ISO/IEC 17025:2005 Lead Auditor training course; and/or an AMS approved training course for calibrations and/or tests performed, as applicable.

8) USDA Certification Body Accreditation Program - successfully completed an AMS approved ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996 training course, if applicable.

c) Participated in a minimum of 3 complete audits and/or assessments. (A complete audit or assessment is one which evaluates the entire program or system.)

1) 2 of the 3 complete audits and/or assessments shall be for the Specific Audit Program or the Specific Accreditation Program. The employee shall be acting in the capacity of a team leader under the supervision of an evaluator for these audits and/or assessments. An AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation Worksheet must be completed for each of these audits and/or assessments

2) The result of the 2nd evaluation must be a "Satisfactory" rating for the AMS Auditor-in-Training to be considered qualified as an AMS Auditor to perform the audit for the Specific Audit Program or the assessment for the Specific Accreditation Program (see Section 5).

4.2.2 An AMS Auditor who meets all of the Fundamental Requirements and Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements for a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program is considered "qualified" for the Specific Program and may act in the capacity of a team leader without the supervision of a qualified AMS Auditor.

4.3 Advanced Training Recommendation
4.3.1 AMS Auditors are encouraged to become certified as American Society for Quality, Certified Quality Auditors (ASQ CQA).

5 Performance and Training Evaluation Procedure for AMS Auditors (AMS 1C1)

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 6 of 9

5.1 Training Evaluations

An AMS Auditor-in-Training shall have an AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation for each of the completed audits as a record of completion.

An AMS Auditor who receives training for a Specific Audit Program or a Specific Accreditation Program shall have an AMS Auditor-in-Training Evaluation for each of the completed audits as a record of completion.

Refer to the Performance and Training Evaluation Procedure for AMS Auditors.

5.2 Performance Evaluations

An AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation shall be prepared at least annually (one of them must be concurrent with the annual employee performance appraisal) for an AMS Auditor performing audits or assessments. An AMS Auditor Performance Evaluation shall be prepared for each Specific Audit Program and/or Specific Accreditation Program in which the AMS Branch considers the AMS Auditor qualified. The AMS Auditor is required to perform at an overall "Satisfactory" rating for each Specific Program.

Refer to the Performance and Training Evaluation Procedure for AMS Auditors.

6 Continual Professional Development

6.1 To maintain AMS Auditor status, AMS Auditors shall

   a)   Participate in at least two audits or assessments each calendar year, acting in the capacity as a team leader; and
   b)   Refresh their knowledge and skills (see 6.2).

NOTE: A Program Manager who participates in at least two audits or assessments each calendar year, regardless of capacity, meets the requirement outlined in 6.1a).

6.2 AMS Auditors who refresh their knowledge and skills shall have a combined total of 80 hours, excluding travel and social time, during a 3 year period in any of the following areas:

   a)   Attend AMS approved conferences, seminars or workshops related to audit and/or accreditation services;
   b)   Teach AMS approved courses that apply to audit and/or accreditation services;
   c)   Attend AMS approved courses that apply to audit and/or accreditation services;
   d)   Attend AMS approved meetings related to audit and/or accreditation services such as monthly membership meetings for ASQ or other technical societies that are technically or professionally based; or
   e)   Participate on AMS approved committees related to audit and/or accreditation services, ASQ, or other professional associations that contribute to the advancement of the quality profession which may be on a section, division, technical, or national level.

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service   1400 Independence Avenue SW   AMS 1C
Industry Services Audit and   Washington, DC 20250   Page 7 of 9
Accreditation Programs

f)   Certification as American Society for Quality, Certified Quality Auditor (ASQ CQA), Certified Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Auditor, or Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence (CMQ/OE) is considered as meeting the requirement to refresh knowledge and skills for a combined total of 80 hours.

7   AMS ISAAP Internal Auditor Criteria

7.1   An AMS ISAAP Internal Auditor shall meet all of the following requirements:

a)   Have successfully met the AMS Auditor requirements for at least one of the Specific Audit Program or Specific Accreditation Program, and

b)   Have successfully completed an AMS approved Internal Auditor course.

7.2   An AMS ISAAP Internal Auditor is qualified to conduct internal audits for the AMS ISAAP.

NOTE: An AMS Branch shall identify its own internal auditor criteria based on its AMS Branch Audit Management Program (see Section 4.7.1 of that management program) or it's AMS Branch Accreditation Management Program (see Section 5.7 of that management program).

8   Technical Expert Criteria

8.1   A technical expert shall meet all of the following fundamental requirements:

a)   Possess personal attributes important in the performance of auditing activities.

b)   Have a high school diploma or equivalent.

c)   Have completed a minimum of 3-years experience post-high school in the specific field of knowledge or expertise.

- Education may be substituted for experience: a 4-year course of study leading to a bachelor's degree in the specific field of knowledge or expertise will meet the experience requirement.
- A combination of education and experience may be substituted for the 3-years of experience: Combinations of successfully completed post-high school education and experience may be used to meet total qualification requirements for the 3-years experience. Combinations may be computed by (1) determining the total qualifying experience as a percentage of the 3-years experience required; (2) determining the education as a percentage of the education required for the grade level; and (3) adding the two percentages. The total percentage must equal at least 100 percent to qualify. (For examples of how to calculate the percentage see the OPM's Group Coverage Qualification Standards for Administrative and Management Positions.)

d)   Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing

Date Approved: 12/10/07   Date Revised: N/A   Approved by_____

Table A – AMS Auditor Criteria:

Requirement	AMS Auditor-in-Training	AMS Auditor
Fundamental Requirements:		
Personal Attributes	Possess	Possess
Education	High School Diploma or Equivalent	High School Diploma or Equivalent
Work Experience (See Section 3.1)	Minimum of 36 months	Minimum of 36 months
Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing	Yes	Yes
ISO 19011 Sections 4&6 Training Course	Yes	Yes
Specific Audit Program Training or Specific Accreditation Program Training Defined by the AMS Branch	Yes	Yes
Standard Training and Audit Experience Requirements		
Demonstrate the ability to manage and coordinate audit activities	No	Yes
Training Requirement Based on the Type of Program	No	Yes (See 4.2.1 and Table B)
Audit Experience	No	Participate in a minimum of 3 audits; where 2 of the audits shall be for the Specific Audit Program or Specific Accreditation Program acting in the capacity of a team leader under the supervision of an evaluator. (See 4.2.1)
Advanced Training Recommendation		
ASQ CQA Certification	No	Strongly Recommended

*   AMS ISAAP Internal Auditor Criteria are outlined in Section 9.

USDA

Agricultural Marketing Service
Industry Services Audit and
Accreditation Programs

1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250

AMS 1C
Page 9 of 9

Table B – Training Requirement Based on the Type of Audit or Accreditation Program

Program	Training Requirement
Client Developed Service Program	Successfully completed an AMS approved course for process-based auditing when the applicant requests an AMS auditor for the service requested (see note below)
USDA Process Audit Program	Successfully completed an AMS approved course for process-based auditing (see note below)
USDA Quality Management System (QMS) Program	Successfully completed ISO 9001 Lead Auditor training course
USDA Process Verified Program	Successfully completed ISO 9001 Lead Auditor training course
USDA Environmental Management System (EMS) Program	Successfully completed ISO 14001 Lead Auditor training course
USDA HACCP Audit Program	Successfully completed an AMS approved HACCP training course
USDA Testing and/or Calibration Laboratory Accreditation Program	Successfully completed ISO/IEC 17025 Lead Auditor training course; and/or an AMS approved training course for calibrations and/or tests performed, as applicable
USDA Certification Body Accreditation Program	Successfully completed an AMS approved course for ISO/IEC Guide 65 training course, if applicable
AMS ISAAP Internal Audit Program	Successfully completed an AMS approved Internal Auditor training course and be a current AMS Auditor

*   AMS approved courses for process-based auditing includes:
  - ISO 9001:2000
  - ISO 14001:2004
  - ISO 17025:2005
  - ASQ CQA certification
  - ASQ HACCP certification
  - CMQ/OE certification