



United States Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Agricultural Marketing Service
Livestock and Seed Program
Meat Grading & Certification Branch

Instruction 504
June 13, 1997
Page 1 of 1

PROCEDURES FOR IMPORT GRADING

Purpose

This Instruction defines Meat Grading and Certification (MGC) Branch procedures for grading imported meat.

Required Marks on Meat of Foreign Origin

1. Imported meat must be marked as prescribed in Section 54.5 of the AMS regulations.
2. Identify quarters so that hindquarters can be matched to forequarters and presented as carcasses or sides.
3. Plant must obtain exemption to Section 54.13 of the AMS regulations, which states:
"Meat of all eligible species shall be graded only in the establishments where the animal was slaughtered or initially chilled..."

EXCEPTION: Canada, which has a "blanket exemption" to grade (beef carcasses, sides, or quarters) which are imported (See MGC Instruction 106).

4. Area supervisors are authorized to approve marks of foreign origin. Files of these marks are to be retained in the area office with a copy sent to OFO.
 - a. As long as the product remains in carcass, side, or quarter form, the country of origin must remain.
 - b. If the carcass is fabricated at the same plant, the country of origin can be removed.
5. Foreign meats bearing grademarks and/or terms determined to be similar to those of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are not eligible for Federal grading until such marks or terms have been removed.
6. Meat graders who have questions regarding the grading of imported meat or suspect that carcasses offered for grading may be of foreign origin, although not represented as such by the applicant, shall contact their supervisor before applying any grademarks.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.