

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Livestock and Seed Program
Washington, D.C. 20250**

SCHEDULE GL46 – APRIL 2001

**RIDGEFIELD FARMS SPECIFICATION FOR CHARACTERISTICS OF CATTLE
ELIGIBLE FOR RIDGEFIELD FARMS HEREFORD BEEF PROGRAMS**

1. SCOPE

This specification sets forth the requirements for live cattle that qualify for certification in Ridgefield Farms approved beef programs claiming Hereford influence. Cattle may be qualified for these programs by meeting either the genotype or phenotype requirements specified below.

2. REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Genotype. Cattle eligible for Ridgefield Farms Hereford influenced beef programs based on genotype must be based on a cattle-producer signed affidavit and be traceable back to provable Hereford parentage (e.g., registration papers) and British bred (Angus, Red Angus, Shorthorn, Hereford, or South Devon). Qualifying cattle must be traceable to one or two purebred Hereford parents.

2.2 Phenotype. Steers and heifers eligible for phenotype (appearance) certification in Ridgefield Farms Hereford beef program must be of British beef type breeding. Cattle must be red, black, or roan with at least 51 percent of the head being white (bald, blaze, and/or brockle or motley markings are acceptable as long as they meet the 51% white head requirements). If cattle offered for qualification are other than solid red, solid black, or roan with a predominately (51%) white head, such as yellow or smoke, then the cattle must exhibit markings of a traditional Hereford (white head as well as white on the brisket, belly, and pasterns or legs). Cattle may be either horned or polled.

Live animals which display dairy or continental characteristics (e.g., dairy conformation, excessive or double muscling, or continental-type head) shall be excluded. Bulls or cows shall also be excluded. Excessive hump (greater than three inches above the top-line) or long downward facing ears, both characteristics of Brahman influence, shall exclude cattle from certification.

3. QUALITY ASSURANCE PROVISIONS

3.1 Genotype. Compliance with genotypic requirements shall be determined and controlled through a Livestock and Seed Program approved quality management program.

3.2 Phenotype. Three options are available to ensure that live animals comply with the specified requirements. They are (1) continuous USDA supervision, (2) ante-mortem lot inspection, and (3) program monitoring. Under the first two options USDA personnel shall certify that the animals meet the specified requirements prior to slaughter. Procedures for these two options shall be developed on an individual plant basis and shall be approved by the local Meat Grading and Certification Branch (MGCB) area office. Under option 3, the procedures described in 3.2.1 shall be followed.

3.2.1 Program Monitoring Procedures - Trained employees of the slaughter plant conducting the program shall identify the carcasses of cattle that meet the specified requirements under the direction of Ridgefield Farms personnel with an approved stamp. These employees must display program identification whenever they are performing live animal identification duties. MGCB agents shall conduct unannounced, random checks of these employees' work as shown in Table I. MGCB agents shall observe the work for a period of not less than 2 minutes, nor more than 5 minutes, each time. The MGCB agent shall record any defects shown in Table II during each monitoring period.

TABLE I. MONITORING FREQUENCY

Slaughter Rate Number of cattle/shift	Frequency of monitoring periods <u>1/</u>
Up to 500	2
501 – 1,000	4
1,001 - 1,500	6
1,501 - 2,000	8
Over 2,000	10

1/ The MGCB agent shall determine the times of actual observation before the beginning of the slaughter shift based on the plant's expected slaughter rate.

TABLE II. PROGRAM DEFECTS

Defect Categories		Defects
Major	Minor	
101		30 percent or less of the head is white.
	201	31 percent to 50 percent of the head is white.
102		Cattle other than red or black color are not marked as traditional Hereford (white face as well as white on the brisket, belly, and pasterns or legs).
	202	Cattle other than red or black color are marked in only one anatomical location other than the face.
103		Animal qualified having predominant dairy or continental characteristics.
	203	Animal qualified having noticeable but not predominant dairy, continental characteristics, or a bull, bullock or cow.
104		Presence of hump is more than four inches above the top line and/or long downward facing ears.
	204	Presence of hump is more than three inches, but not more than four inches above the top line.
105		Untrained plant employee performing live animal identification.
	205	Trained plant employee performing live animal identification without displaying program identification.
106*		Carcass in cooler that does not have a designated live animal identification stamp and has USDA "Accepted as Specified" stamp over the approved carcass specification marking.
	206	Designated stamp not placed on approved area of carcass.

* The finding of this defect in the cooler at any time shall result in accelerated monitoring or 100 percent USDA supervision, as appropriate.

If no defects are observed under program monitoring the designated frequency of monitoring shall continue. However, an observation of any major defect, two minor defects within 5 days of program operation, or three minor defects within 20 days of operation, shall immediately result in accelerated monitoring. Under accelerated monitoring, the frequency of monitoring shall be doubled. If no defects are observed during 10 days of operation under accelerated monitoring, the plant shall revert to the normal monitoring level. If a major defect or two minor defects are observed during the 10 days of accelerated monitoring the identification program shall be placed under 100-percent MGCB supervision for 20 days of program operation. After 20 days of operation under 100-percent supervision, the program will revert to accelerated monitoring before returning to regular monitoring as described in Table I.

3.2.2 Training and Licensing Plant Employees - Ridgefield Farms Production Coordinator shall train and license individuals responsible for program integrity and operation at slaughter. These individuals will be responsible for training and supervising Ridgefield Farms or plant employees who conduct live animal identification, carcass stamping, and other duties. They shall be responsible for identifying employees to be trained and providing facilities and cattle for training purposes. Upon satisfactory completion of training, Ridgefield Farms and plant employees shall display visible identification when they are performing authorized duties. In addition, a record designating that each trained employee has completed the approved training, signed by the trainer and trainee, shall be issued and must be on file at the slaughter plant.

3.2.3 Equipment - Program stamps used for identifying carcasses will be provided by Ridgefield Farms. Program stamps will be secured by USDA employees when not in use. Only trained plant employees or MGCB agents are authorized to use this equipment.

3.2.4 Charges for Providing Service - The applicable MGCB hourly fee shall be charged for certifying this schedule under continuous USDA supervision and ante-mortem lot inspection procedures. For program monitoring, appropriate charges shall be determined by the local supervisors on a case-by-case basis.