

**USDA SPECIFICATION FOR CERTIFICATION OF BEEF CARCASS
QUALITY AND YIELD CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFICIALLY GRADED BEEF**

This specification is for certification by an Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) agent of U.S. Prime, Choice and Select steer and heifer beef carcasses which: (a) are derived from cattle that meet the phenotypic or genotypic (AngusSource®) requirements of the USDA Specification for Characteristics of Cattle Eligible for Approved Beef Programs Claiming Angus Influence (GLA), (b) are derived from cattle that are 30 months of age or less, and (c) meet the following set of requirements:

- 1) Depending upon the specific product label, a marbling score of:
 - a. Platinum – Modest 00 or higher;
 - b. Blue Ribbon – Slight 00 to Small 99;
- 2) Moderately thick or thicker muscling and tend to be at least moderately wide and thick in relation to their length;
- 3) No hump exceeding 2 inches in height; and
- 4) Free of “dark cutting” characteristics.

*Age of the animal shall be determined in accordance with the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Directive 6100.4 *Verification Instructions Related to Specified Risk Materials* (Chapter 2, II *Verification Activities for Age Determination*) or through an approved USDA Quality Systems Assessment (QSA) Program or USDA Process Verified Program.

Items 1 shall be determined in accordance with the “Official United States Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef.”

Item 2, muscle thickness, is evaluated by averaging the thickness of the various parts, considering not only the proportion (%) each part is of the carcass but also the general value of each part. Superior muscle thickness implies a high proportion of meat to bone and a high proportion of the weight of the carcass in the more valuable parts.

Item 3 shall be measured from a line formed by the extension of the top line (including the fat) and measuring the lean muscle (excluding the fat) perpendicular to that line in the center of the hump.

CARCASS CERTIFICATION

Carcasses to be examined for compliance with the requirements of this specification shall be clearly identified when presented to the AMS agent for certification. Procedures for identification, certification, the removal of preliminary identification marks (or other methods of control) from non-qualifying carcasses, and control of certified carcasses shall be in accordance with established Grading and Verification (GV) Division procedures. The AMS agent shall certify acceptable carcasses and complete the appropriate sections in the Conformance Assessment Management System (CAMS).

The costs of all grading and certification services performed by the AMS agent involving examinations, supervision, official documentation, and related services shall be borne by the person, group, or plant requesting the service.

LABELING

Labeling of Hartley Ranch Angus Beef products shall be in compliance with Food Safety and Inspection Service regulations and policy guidelines, GV Division instructions and Livestock and Seed Program Policy Standardization Procedure 2.