

Fresh Products Branch Directive

**FPB 620
4/1/2009**

Follow-Up Inspections, Supervisory Reviews and Inspection Teams

I. Purpose

This directive establishes standard requirements and responsibilities for Fresh Products Branch employees and licensees when performing unannounced follow-up inspections on Terminal Market Graders and for taking corrective actions when deficiencies are noted. It also sets forth Branch policy regarding the requirements that all Supervisors perform reviews on all Graders under their supervision on a regular basis and that Inspection Teams be used whenever feasible.

II. Objective

The objective of this Directive is to ensure the integrity and uniformity of the Terminal Market Inspection Program by: providing written procedures for follow-up inspections and supervisory reviews of inspector performance; ensuring that inspections are performed and documented in accordance with Branch policies; ensuring that corrective action is taken and documented whenever necessary; and requiring the use of Inspection Teams whenever feasible.

III. Definitions

A. Grader: An Agricultural Commodity Grader or Supervisory Agricultural Commodity Grader employed by the Fresh Products Branch or any employee of a state agency, college or university or industry association licensed by the Fresh Products Branch for the purpose of conducting or supervising terminal market inspections.

B. Follow-Up Inspection: An event in which a Supervisor arrives unannounced while a Grader is performing an inspection to review the samples run by the Grader and to inspect additional independently drawn samples in order to either validate or invalidate the Grader's findings.

C. Supervisory Review: An event in which a Supervisor accompanies a Grader on one or more inspections and works with/observes the Grader in order to evaluate whether the Grader is following proper inspection procedures, scoring defects in accordance with prevailing guidelines and properly completing the inspection notesheets and certificates.

D. Inspection Team: A group consisting of two or more Graders.

Distribution:	HQ, FM, CM, FPM/S
Originating Office:	Field Operations Section
File Maintenance Instructions:	File in Directive Binder. Replace FPB-620 dated 02/25/02 which is now obsolete.

IV. Policy

A. Unannounced Follow-Up Inspections Performed by Headquarters Staff and Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers. At the direction of the Head of the Field Operations Section (FOS), headquarters staff and/or Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers shall perform unannounced follow-up inspections on Graders. Written reports of all follow-up inspections shall be completed immediately after the completion of the follow-ups and reported on the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A). Copies shall be provided to the Officer-In-Charge (OIC)/Assistant Officer-In-Charge (AOIC)/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor and to the Grader. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall also keep detailed records of these follow-up inspections on the Report for Documenting Follow-Ups and Reviews of Graders (Exhibit C) for submission to the appropriate officials.

B. Unannounced Follow-Up Inspections Performed by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisors/Assistant District Supervisors on Graders. Unannounced follow-up inspections on each Grader shall be conducted by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor. Written reports of all follow-up inspections shall be completed immediately after the completion of the follow-ups and reported on the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A) and a copy issued to the Grader. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall also keep detailed records of these follow-up inspections on the Report for Documenting Follow-Ups and Reviews of Graders (Exhibit C) for submission to the appropriate officials.

C. Supervisory Reviews of Graders. The OICs/AOICs/ District Supervisors/Assistant District Supervisors shall periodically accompany each Grader on inspections in order to evaluate inspector performance. Each review shall be recorded on the Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B) and a copy issued to the Grader. Supervisors shall also keep detailed records of these reviews on the Report for Documenting Follow-Ups and Reviews of Graders (Exhibit C) for submission to the appropriate officials.

D. Corrective Actions. All deficiencies noted by headquarters staff, Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers/OICs/AOICs/ District Supervisors/Assistant District Supervisors shall be promptly corrected and reported to the appropriate official(s) in writing on the Checklist for Follow-up Inspections (Exhibit A), Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B) or in memorandum form as applicable.

IV. Policy, continued

E. Inspection Teams. All OICs/AOICs/District Supervisors/Assistant District Supervisors shall ensure that Inspection Teams consisting of two or more Graders are used to perform inspections whenever feasible. All Graders working on an inspection must sign both the notesheet(s) and certificate(s). The OICs/AOICs/District Supervisors/Assistant District Supervisors shall document the use of Inspection Teams on the Report of Fresh Products Branch Use of Inspection Teams (Exhibit D).

V. Responsibilities

A. Unannounced Follow-Up Inspections Performed by Headquarters Staff and/or Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers.

1. The responsibilities of the headquarters personnel and Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers in performing follow-up inspections are as follows:
 - a. Every Grader located at a Federal or Federal-State terminal market office shall receive an unannounced follow-up inspection at least once per year. If unforeseen circumstances make it unfeasible to perform an annual follow-up inspection on one or more Graders in a given office, these situations should be discussed with the Head of FOS who will decide how to handle the situation.
 - b. By October 1 of each year, the Head of FOS shall submit to the Branch Chief a plan outlining the reviews that will be conducted at all Federal and Federal-State terminal market offices during the upcoming fiscal year.
 - c. The individuals performing the follow-ups shall arrive at the market office unannounced and notify the on-site supervisor before teaming up with them to perform follow-ups on the remaining Graders.
 - d. The follow-up team shall arrive at pre-selected inspection sites prior to the completion of the inspections. Each member of the team shall identify and enter their scoring of defects and reporting of other pertinent factors for their randomly pulled samples on the Grader's notesheet. If discrepancies arise between the follow-up team and the Grader, the samples scored by the Grader should be scored again jointly, and any discrepancies shall be corrected immediately to prevent the inspection from being reported incorrectly. The headquarters personnel or Federal Supervisor/Federal Program Manager shall document their findings, along with any corresponding corrective actions, on the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A).

V. Responsibilities, continued

e. A copy of the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A) shall be provided to and kept by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor in a locked file cabinet with an additional copy being provided to the Grader. The original report on Federal employees shall be maintained on file by FOS. The original report on Federal-State market licensees shall be maintained on file by the appropriate Federal Supervisor/Federal Program Manager(s). In addition, the Federal Supervisor/Federal Program Manager(s) shall submit a consolidated report of follow-up inspection activity, including deficiencies and subsequent corrective actions, to FOS headquarters on a monthly basis. This monthly report will be maintained by FOS headquarters. All reports shall be maintained in a well-organized system of records.

2. Additional follow-up inspections shall be performed to ensure that all deficiencies found during the initial follow-up inspections were brought into compliance. These follow-ups will be performed at the discretion of the Head of FOS.

B. Unannounced Follow-Up Inspections Performed by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor on Graders.

1. The responsibilities of the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor in performing follow-up inspections are as follows:

a. Each OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall conduct at least one unannounced follow-up inspection per Grader per quarter.

b. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall arrive at the inspection site prior to the completion of the inspection. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall identify and enter their scoring of defects and reporting of other pertinent factors for their randomly pulled samples on the Grader's notesheet. If discrepancies arise between the Supervisor and the Grader, the samples analyzed by the Grader should be analyzed again jointly, and any discrepancies shall be corrected immediately to prevent the inspection from being reported incorrectly. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall document their findings, along with any corresponding corrective actions, on the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A).

V. Responsibilities, continued

c. The OIC/AOIC/ District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall keep records of all follow-up inspections on the Report for Documenting Follow-Ups and Reviews of Graders (Exhibit C).

d. A copy of the completed Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A) shall be supplied to the Grader with the original kept by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor on file in alphabetical order, by Grader, in a secure file cabinet. Originals of Exhibit C shall be kept on file by date, in a secure file cabinet. A copy of Exhibit C must be forwarded to FOS monthly. However, the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A) will only be forwarded to FOS if deficiencies are noted on the corresponding monthly Exhibit C.

e. Copies of the Checklist for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A) on Federal-State market licensees will only be forwarded to the appropriate Federal Supervisor/Federal Program Manager(s) if deficiencies are noted. All reports shall be maintained in a well-organized system of records.

2. The Federal market supervisory personnel shall submit a memorandum to the Head of FOS within two weeks after the completion of the follow-up inspections, listing any deficiencies not corrected during the follow-up inspection as noted on the Checklist(s) for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A). This memorandum shall indicate: (a) what corrective action has been taken; (b) the status of any ongoing corrective actions; and (c) a statement that the deficiency has been corrected, or an explanation as to why the deficiency has not been corrected and the target date for completing the corrective action.

3. Federal-State office supervisory personnel shall submit a memorandum to their Federal Program Managers/Federal Supervisor within two weeks after the completion of the follow-up inspections, listing any deficiencies not corrected during the follow-up inspection as noted on the Checklist(s) for Follow-Up Inspections (Exhibit A). This memorandum shall indicate: (a) what corrective action has been taken; (b) the status of any ongoing corrective actions; and (c) a statement that the deficiency has been corrected, or an explanation as to why the deficiency has not been corrected and the target date for completing the corrective action.

V. Responsibilities, continued

4. Additional follow-up inspections shall be performed to ensure that all deficiencies found during the initial follow-up inspections were brought into compliance. These follow-ups will be performed at the discretion of the Head of FOS.

C. Supervisory Reviews of Graders.

1. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall make every effort to review each of their Graders on a weekly basis (but no less than monthly), with an Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B) completed each time. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall keep records of these reviews on the Report for Documenting Follow-Ups and Reviews of Graders (Exhibit C).

2. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall, while performing these reviews, verify that the Graders are performing inspection and certification services in accordance with established Branch instruction and policies. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor is there to observe, but not to lead the inspection. They shall answer questions if necessary. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/ Assistant District Supervisor shall ensure that the product has been properly inspected before the certificate is issued. Inspections performed with Graders shall bear the initials and/or signatures of the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor and the Grader.

3. Deficiencies found during the supervisory review inspection shall be clearly noted, along with the corresponding corrective actions, in the remarks section of the Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B).

4. A copy of the completed Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B) shall be supplied to the Grader with the original kept by the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor. Original copies of Exhibit B shall be kept on file in alphabetical order, by Grader, in a secure file cabinet. Original copies of Exhibit C shall be kept on file by date, in a secure file cabinet. A copy of Exhibit C must be forwarded to FOS monthly. Evaluation of Inspector Performance (Exhibit B) will only be forwarded to FOS if deficiencies are noted on the corresponding monthly Exhibit C.

V. Responsibilities, continued

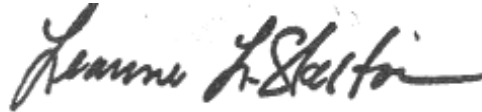
D. Inspection Teams.

1. Offices with two or more full-time Graders, including supervisory personnel, shall use Inspection Teams whenever and wherever feasible.
2. It is important that the use of Inspection Teams does not disrupt the timeliness of service provided, so the OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall use judgment in determining when it is appropriate to use teams.
3. When teams are used, all inspectors performing the inspections must place either their initials next to their respective samples to the left of the PLI Number column on paper notesheets or select the proper Inspector ID in the sample navigator on FEIRS notesheets and sign the notesheet(s) and/or certificate(s).
4. The inspectors signing the certificates must be in agreement with the findings. If there is a disagreement with regard to the findings, the inspectors shall contact their OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor before issuing the certificate. If a local supervisor is not available, the inspectors shall contact FOS headquarters before issuing the certificate.
5. The supervisory personnel shall ensure that all Graders are rotated so that everyone works together and that the different teams are rotated among the different applicants.
6. The OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall document the use of Inspection Teams on the Report of Fresh Products Branch Use of Inspection Teams (Exhibit D). These forms shall be kept on file in the inspection office.
7. A review of the use and rotation of inspection teams shall be completed during unannounced office checks conducted by headquarters personnel and/or Federal Supervisors/Federal Program Managers.

V. Responsibilities, continued

Questions concerning this directive should be directed to FOS on (202) 720-2482 or 800-811-2373.

All Exhibits associated with this directive are available in electronic format through the Field Operations Section.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leanne L. Skelton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "L".

Leanne L. Skelton
Branch Chief

CHECKLIST FOR FOLLOW-UP INSPECTIONS

FPB-620 Exhibit A

Each OIC/AOIC/District Supervisor/Assistant District Supervisor shall conduct at least one unannounced follow-up inspection per Grader per quarter.

Office

Grader

Date

Applicant

Commodity

Time

Certificate

Paper Certificate

Electronic (FEIRS) Certificate

- 1) Request/Start/Completed times are accurately reported?
- 2) Proper verification of number of containers?
- 3) Required number of temperatures, recordings?
- 4) Representative sampling?
- 5) Adequate number of samples?
- 6) Proper sample size? (including entire container, etc... when necessary?)
- 7) Proper defect identification and scoring?
- 8) Efficient use of time completing inspection?
- 9) Grader is knowledgeable of tolerances/applications/allowances of the inspected commodity?
- 10) Grade statement is properly expressed?
- 11) Notesheet properly completed as per instructions?
- 12) Certificate properly completed as per instructions?

- 13) If Electronic FEIRS Certificates then also check for the following:
 - a) Is a stylus being used to perform all touchscreen functions?
 - b) Is the computer in good condition? (kept reasonably clean, no parts missing or broken, touchscreen shows normal wear, etc.?)
 - c) Does any auxiliary equipment (cables, powercord, batteries) show excessive wear or misuse?
 - d) Is the official USDA FEIRS desktop image selected?
 - e) Is the computer lock available for use at this current location if needed?
 - f) Has the inspector been running system updates (WSUS) according to latest Branch instructions and at proper frequency?

Remarks/Deficiencies/Corrective Actions:

Reviewer's Signature

Disposition: Original on file; copy to Grader; copy to FOS or Federal Supervisor/FPM (Fed-State only) if deficiencies are noted

EVALUATION OF INSPECTOR PERFORMANCE

FPB-620
Exhibit B

United States Department of Agriculture
AMS Fruit Vegetable Programs
Fresh Products Branch

Employee Name	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Office	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Date	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>

INSTRUCTIONS: Use boxes below to note observations during the evaluation period, and assess each element at the close of the evaluation. Remarks and corrective actions are required to support assessments of Unacceptable or Deficient. Review each Grader on a weekly (but no less than monthly) basis.

U- UNACCEPTABLE D- DEFICIENT P- PROFICIENT S- SUPERIOR

INSPECTIONS OBSERVED	1	2	3	4
Commodity:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Date:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Certificate Number:	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>

A. EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES (equipment available and checked for accuracy)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
B. VERIFICATION OF LOT INFORMATION	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
C. THERMOMETER/TEMPERATURE PROCEDURES	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
D. SAMPLING PROCEDURES	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
E. SAMPLE UNIT (appropriate count/weight/volume basis)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
F. SAMPLING DOCUMENTATION	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
G. DEFECT IDENTIFICATION	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
H. DEFECT SCORING	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
I. RESTRICTION ACCURACY (if applicable)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
J. EFFECTIVE USE OF TIME	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
K. DOCUMENT/ EQUIPMENT RESPONSIBILITY (losses, breakage)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
L. CONDITION OF FEIRS EQUIPMENT (if applicable)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
M. THOROUGHNESS OF NOTESHEETS	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
N. THOROUGHNESS OF CERTIFICATES	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
O. PLI NUMBERS ON NOTESHEET	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
P. PLI NUMBERS ON CERTIFICATE	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Q. ACCURACY OF GRADE STATEMENT	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
R. INSTRUCTIONS, STANDARDS, MEMORANDA, ETC	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
S. CONDITION OF LOAD AND CONTAINERS (if applicable)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
T. TOLERANCE/APPLICATIONS/ALLOWANCES (verbal testing)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
U. LEGIBILITY OF NOTESHEETS & CERTIFICATES (if applicable)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
W. MATH ACCURACY (if applicable)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
X. NOTESHEETS SUBSTANTIATE CERTIFICATES	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>

Remarks/ Deficiencies & Corrective Actions	<input style="width: 100%; height: 100%;" type="text"/>
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Reviewer's Signature	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Date	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Employee; Signature (certifies receipt only)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Date	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>

Disposition: original on file; copy to Grader , copy to FOS if deficiencies are noted

Report of Fresh Products Branch Use of Inspection Teams

FPB-620
Exhibit D

Office:

	Date:	Team Members	Applicant	Certificate
1)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
6)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Disposition: original on file