



Interim Guidance for Certifying Shell Eggs Destined for Arizona (Non-Grading Certifications)

Purpose

This instruction defines procedures for certifying shell eggs destined for Arizona. These procedures should also be used as needed to accommodate other certification activities producers may request to meet other state requirements.

Background

The State of Arizona amended its animal husbandry laws effective October 1, 2022. The new laws in-part require all eggs and egg products produced or sold in Arizona to originate from hens housed with 1 square foot of floor space beginning October 1, 2022, and to originate from cage-free hens beginning January 1, 2025. As part of the compliance verification, the law requires all eggs to be packed under continuous oversight by a third-party certifier (government or private). Because Arizona is requiring this for all eggs, and AMS may be used as a certifier, procedures need to be established for certifying animal husbandry practices when the eggs are not graded for quality or marketed with USDA grademarks.

Procedures

- I. As compliance with any state egg law is more complex than quality grade or process certifications alone, USDA AMS will not certify product as meeting the requirements of state laws. Graders must not make reference to meeting state laws on official certificates. For example, certificates should not include remarks like “Arizona compliant” or “CA SEFS compliant”. AMS will not consider state specific labeling requirements when approving labels bearing the US Grademark.
- II. When eggs do not bear official identification, applicants may request specific certifications using unscheduled service without meeting all USDA voluntary grading requirements such as sanitation, washing, or labeling requirements. For example, applicants may request USDA only to certify hen housing systems, segregation programs, box count, temperature, condition, etc. without additionally certifying the official US grade and weight. However, it is USDA’s regulatory responsibility that any observed temperature abuse, product adulteration, and violations of the Egg Products Inspection Act must be handled and reported per USDA policies.
- III. **Grade Shielded Eggs:** Because USDA verifies all marketing claims continuously on eggs bearing the grade shield, shielded eggs that state the housing system on the label such as “cage-free” or “comes from hens with 1ft.² of cage space” will automatically meet Arizona housing verification without issuing a certificate. If USDA identified product does not state the housing



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Livestock and Poultry Program
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system type on the label, the applicant will need to ask for the additional certification to be issued on an official certificate. Cases may be stamped with the official grademark including certificate number to link the certified cases to the certificate.

Non-shielded Eggs: Eggs certified for animal husbandry practices under unscheduled service that do not meet other USDA voluntary grading requirements ARE NOT eligible for USDA identification including any USDA stamp. If the applicant requests this type of certification, graders are to review applicable audit documents verifying the barns meet the appropriate housing system requirements, monitor the company's segregation plan, verify the correct eggs are packaged in the appropriate packages, and issue a certificate stating that the certification was limited to verifying the housing system and segregation program. The applicant is responsible for providing traceable markings on the case that will uniquely identify the lot being certified. Reference of this marking should be noted on the official certificate in remarks.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey Hendricks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeff Hendricks
National Supervisor - Shell Eggs
Livestock & Poultry Program

**Officially graded, packing/packaging
missing husbandry labeling statement**

Exhibit I

(See reverse side of form for OMB and EEO Statement)

OMB APPROVED: NO. 0581-0128



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
Livestock and Poultry Program

**SHELL EGG
GRADING CERTIFICATE**

This certificate is receivable in all courts of the United States as prima facie evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained. This certificate does not excuse failure to comply with any of the laws and regulations enforced by the United States Department of Agriculture.

CERTIFICATE NO.

SEA- 1234567

PLACE EXAMINED

City, State

PLANT NUMBER

P-#####

APPLICANT (Name and address, including ZIP)

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

NAME AND ADDRESS OF SHIPPER OR SELLER 1/

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECEIVER OR BUYER 1/

Name
Address
City, State, Zip

LOT NO.	NO. CONTAINERS PER LOT ^{1/}	NO. CONTAINERS EXAMINED	NET WT. ^{2/}	PERCENTAGES								OFFICIAL U.S. GRADE AND SIZE	
				AA	A	B	B*	Dirties	Checks	Loss	Under Wt. ^{3/}		
1	1500	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	US Grade A Large

DESCRIPTION

LOT NO.	EGGS	TYPE OF PACKING	TYPE OF PACKAGING	CASE QUALITY RANGE	CHARACTER OF LOSS	WHERE HELD AND TEMPERATURE	CASES STAMPED WITH
1	White	New 15 Dozen Cases	1 Dozen Cartons	---	---	Cooler 40F	US Grade A Large SEA # 1234567

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION

Product represented by this certificate meets specification requirements for:

_____ Dated _____

Product represented on this certificate meets the requirements for the stated grade and size as determined by online sampling on Date _____

Disease Free Certification Statements attached.

PURCHASE ORDER #

SALES ORDER #

ITEM #

REMARKS:

Product referenced on this certificate is certified to originate from hens that have at least 1 square foot of cage space.

Husbandry system of source flocks were verified through documentation of current [United Egg Producers, American Humane, etc] audits. Copies of certificate are on file.

Segregation was monitored continuously under USDA supervision through processing and packaging.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

In compliance with the Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture Governing the Grading of Shell Eggs issued pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended, and any other Act of Congress conferring like authority, it is certified that the product(s) listed hereon were examined and that the class, quality, quantity, and/ or condition of the product(s) at the time and on the date shown, were as stated above.

OFFICIAL GRADER (Printed Name & Signature)

DATE

^{1/} As stated by applicant or contractor. ^{2/} Weights based on 30-dozen equivalent. ^{3/} Eggs reported as undersized are also reported under other headings according to their quality.

Non-Graded Product Certified for Animal Husbandry

Exhibit II

(See reverse side of form for OMB and EEO Statement)

OMB APPROVED: NO. 0581-0128



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE
 Livestock and Poultry Program

SHELL EGG GRADING CERTIFICATE

This certificate is receivable in all courts of the United States as prima facie evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained. This certificate does not excuse failure to comply with any of the laws and regulations enforced by the United States Department of Agriculture.

CERTIFICATE NO.

SEA- 1234567

PLACE EXAMINED
 City, State

PLANT NUMBER
 P-#### (Omit if Unscheduled Service)

APPLICANT (Name and address, including ZIP) Name Address City, State, Zip	NAME AND ADDRESS OF SHIPPER OR SELLER <u>1/</u> Name Address City, State, Zip	NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECEIVER OR BUYER <u>1/</u> Name Address City, State, Zip
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LOT NO.	NO. CONTAINERS PER LOT ^{1/}	NO. CONTAINERS EXAMINED	NET WT. ^{2/}	PERCENTAGES								OFFICIAL U.S. GRADE AND SIZE	
				AA	A	B	B*	Dirties	Checks	Loss	Under Wt. ^{3/}		
1	1500	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Not Officially Graded

DESCRIPTION							
LOT NO.	EGGS	TYPE OF PACKING	TYPE OF PACKAGING	CASE QUALITY RANGE	CHARACTER OF LOSS	WHERE HELD AND TEMPERATURE	CASES STAMPED WITH
1	White	New 15 Dozen Cases	1 Dozen Cartons	---	---	Cooler 40F	Not Stamped

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION			
Product represented by this certificate meets specification requirements for: _____ _____ _____ Dated _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Product represented on this certificate meets the requirements for the stated grade and size as determined by online sampling on _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Disease Free Certification Statements attached.
PURCHASE ORDER #	SALES ORDER #	ITEM #	

REMARKS:

Certification limited to verification of animal husbandry system and proper segregation through processing and packaging. Product was not graded for quality or size.

Product referenced on this certificate identified with [XXX] on the cases are certified to originate from hens that have at least 1 square foot of cage space.

Husbandry system of source flocks were verified through documentation of current [United Egg Producers, American Humane, etc] audits. Copies of certificate are on file.

Segregation was monitored continuously under USDA supervision through processing and packaging.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT	
In compliance with the Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture Governing the Grading of Shell Eggs issued pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended, and any other Act of Congress conferring like authority, it is certified that the product(s) listed hereon were examined and that the class, quality, quantity, and/ or condition of the product(s) at the time and on the date shown, were as stated above.	
_____ OFFICIAL GRADER (Printed Name & Signature)	_____ DATE
<small>1/ As stated by applicant or contractor. 2/ Weights based on 30-dozen equivalent. 3/ Eggs reported as undersized are also reported under other headings according to their quality.</small>	