

# Directive

9180.59

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## COMPOSITE SAMPLE ANALYSIS FOR COMBINED LAND CARRIER INSPECTIONS

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## 1. PURPOSE

This directive transmits enhanced guidelines for compositing samples from multiple land carriers (e.g., railcars, containers) into a single sample for inspection analysis when requested. Official personnel may combine samples from a maximum of 5 railcars, 15 trucks, or 20 containers of bulk shipments of grain or pulses (beans, peas, or lentils) into one sample for a single lot grade.

## 2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This directive revises the existing directive of the same number and name, dated 11/20/06, to specify the maximum number of containers which may be combined for a single lot grade.

## 3. BACKGROUND

Composite sample analysis for railcars (maximum five cars per sample) was permitted for aflatoxin determinations in 1990. In response to market demands for grain exports to Mexico, FGIS Program Bulletin 95.7, dated 5/17/95, provided for the combining of 5 export railcars maximum, or 15 export trucklots maximum, into one composite sample for single certification of all requested quality information.

The surge in containerized cargo shipments changed marketing strategies for U.S. shippers and led to increased “booking” (a grouping of containers in a contract) sizes for containerized shipments. FGIS policy remained silent on limiting number of containers to accommodate the contractual requirements between the shippers and receivers of containerized shipments. However, in an effort to promote uniformity and consistency, FGIS has now limited the number of containers that can be combined to form a single lot.

## 4. POLICY

Upon request by the applicant for service, official personnel may combine samples from a maximum of 5 railcars or 15 trucks or 20 containers into one sample for analysis. Unlike the CuSum plan, it is not necessary to sample the carriers comprising the requested composite sample in the order they were loaded.

To form a composite sample from multiple carriers, official personnel must sample each individual carrier and examine the sample for odor, insects, and condition. Samples representing carriers containing grain that has an odor, or is out of condition, may not be composited with other samples to form a composite sample.

Samples representing individual carriers that contain insects, but are not “infested” by definition in the U.S. Standards for Grain, may be composited with other samples that are “OK” for odor and condition to form a composite sample of the lot. For individual carriers that meet the definition of “infested”, the shipper has the following options:

- a. Remove the “infested” carrier from the unit (e.g., unit train, booking);
- b. Include the “infested” carrier in the composite lot and fumigate the “infested” carrier; or
- c. Include the “infested” carrier in the composite lot, elect not to fumigate the “infested” carrier, and receive a grade certificated for the composite lot with the special grade “infested”.

If official personnel are recording phytosanitary information on the FGIS 921-2, “Insects in Grain Report”, concerning the number and type of insects found in carriers, they must indicate on the form if a carrier was fumigated, and provide fumigation information (as supplied by the fumigator) in the appropriate section of the form.

Since the checks for odor, insects, and condition are made on the basis of individual sample analysis, composite type samples should not be downgraded or designated with the special grade “infested”, except as stated in “item c” above, due to any one of these factors. If an insect or insects are found in a composite sample do not count them towards the infested criteria.

Certify the results for each group on a single certificate that includes the identity of each carrier represented by the composite sample.

Each carrier is considered a unit when recording inspection volumes or applying unit fees for billing purposes.

## 5. QUESTIONS

Direct any questions concerning this directive to Patrick McCluskey, Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch, at (816) 659-8403, or email to [Patrick.J.McCluskey@usda.gov](mailto:Patrick.J.McCluskey@usda.gov).

*/s/Robert Lijewski*

Robert Lijewski, Director  
Field Management Division