



The Grain Inspection,
Packers and Stockyards
Administration

June 27, 2014

Policy and Litigation Division

TO: Packers and Stockyards Program Employees

1400 Independence Ave SW
Mail Stop 3646
Washington, DC 20250-3646

FROM: Policy and Litigation Division
Weighing and Grading Technical Team

Voice 202-720-7363
Fax 202-690-3207

SUBJECT: Instrument Grading Systems for Livestock Carcasses and
Carcass Products – Regulation 201.71(a) Amendment

Hotline 1-800-998-3447

www.gipsa.usda.gov

BACKGROUND

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) issued a final rule amending regulation 201.71(a) to incorporate by reference the 2013 edition of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 44 (NIST Handbook 44). The new rule becomes effective and enforceable on June 30, 2014.

The amended regulation incorporates the new specifications in Section 5.59 of the 2013 NIST Handbook 44. In turn, NIST Handbook 44 references consensus standards established by American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International Committee F10 on Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Systems.

ASTM International Committee F10 on Livestock, Meat and Poultry Evaluation was formed in 2001. The ASTM International Committee is made up of members representing industry associations, packing companies, instrument manufacturers, academics and government agencies. The committee currently has jurisdiction of over 5 standards, published in the Annual Book of ASTM Standards, Volume 15.12. F10 has five technical subcommittees that maintain jurisdiction over these standards.

INSTRUMENT DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE

The design and manufacture of instrument assessment systems for livestock carcasses and carcass products shall conform to ASTM Standard F 2342-M09. Any departure or exception to the standard specifications of F 2342-M09 must be justified in writing. The failure to conform or justify an exception would violate the regulation.

- **F2342/F2342M09 Standard Specification for Design and Construction of Composition or Quality Constituent Measuring Devices or Systems**

ASTM Book of Standards Volume: 15.12

This specification covers the requirements for design and construction of electronic devices or systems for measuring composition or quality constituents of live animals, livestock and poultry carcasses, and individual cuts of meat, or a combination thereof. Examples include, but are not limited to, half and whole carcasses, primals, subprimals, and boxed meat. A manufacturer designing the grading device and system must meet this standard.

INSTRUMENT TESTING AND VERIFICATION

Testing and testing standards shall conform to ASTM Standard F 2343-09. Standards shall cover each third of the normal operating range of the device for the approved quality and yield factor or grade (e.g., backfat, ribeye area, USDA Yield Grade, and marbling score).

- **F2343-09 Standard Test Method for Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Devices**

ASTM Book of Standards Volume: 15.12

This guide covers test methods used to determine the accuracy of electronic devices that evaluate composition or quality constituents of livestock, meat, and poultry. This guide sets the tolerances for accuracy of the measuring device. It would be a violation if accuracy tolerances are not met.

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Instrument assessment systems shall be used, operated, inspected, and maintained as described in ASTM Standard F 2341-05.

- **F2341-05 Standard Practice for User Requirements for Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Devices or Systems**

ASTM Book of Standards Volume: 15.12

ASTM standards cover the requirements for users of livestock, meat, and poultry evaluation devices or systems used to measure and record composition or quality constituents of live animals, carcasses, and individual cuts of meat, when those devices or systems provide data that is used to determine economic value. Areas covered include installation, operator training, operation, verification, inspection, and maintenance of these evaluation devices or systems, and documentation of procedures for retention of original date. Current P&SP Scales and Weighing modules already incorporate the procedures for grading evaluation devices and systems in use today. When new grading evaluation devices or systems are used in commerce, such modules will be updated. P&SP will be reviewing and revising current letters to correctly include language that references the 2013 NIST Handbook 44.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

1. Electronic Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Systems and/or Devices Section 5.59. *Specifications, Tolerances, and Other Technical Requirements for Weighing and Measuring Devices*. National Institute of Standards and Technology Handbook 44, 2013.
2. Standard Practice for User Requirements for Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Devices or Systems. American Society for Testing Materials International Standard F 2341-05.
3. Standard Specification for Design and Construction of Composition or Quality Constituent Measuring Devices or Systems. ASTM International Standard F 2342 M09.
4. Standard Test Method for Livestock, Meat, and Poultry Evaluation Devices. ASTM International Standard F 2343-09.

NOTE: Standards can be obtained by contacting www.ASTM.org.