



United States Department of Agriculture

Grain Inspection,
Packers and Stockyards
Administration

Federal Grain Inspection
Service

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Administrator

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TO: FGIS Staff

FROM: Randall D. Jones
Deputy Administrator

Randall Jones 3/4/15

SUBJECT: Assignment of Quality Assurance Functions and Organizational Alignment

1. PURPOSE

FGIS is known world-wide for its high quality grain inspection and weighing services. This notice provides clarification regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Divisions, Board of Appeals and Review, Domestic Inspections Operations Office (DIOO), and the Grading Services Lab (GSL) as well as ensure the proper organizational alignment of the GSL.

2. BACKGROUND

In order to meet the needs of its stakeholders, FGIS continuously evaluates our Program seeking ways in which we can improve our services and processes. A primary initiative has been the centralization of services that has led to the creation of the National Grain Center, reduction of Field Offices, the formation of DIOO and GSL. The Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance Division (QACD), led a task force that reviewed all quality assurance functions within the Program and submitted their findings to the Executive Management Team for review. The primary role of the review was to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all quality assurance functions performed by FGIS are identified and assigned.

3. DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary functions of the Divisions are generally characterized as follows.

Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs - Coordinates and conducts all departmental initiatives and international activities.

Field Management Division – Functions as the service delivery arm of the Program and plans, develops, administers and manages all grain inspection and weighing activities under the U.S. Grain Standards Act (USGSA) and the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (AMA). Through a network of 7 Field Offices and a Federal/State Office, provides direct service as well as manages the Delegated States and Designated Agencies that provide services on behalf of the Program.

Technology and Science Division – Responsible for the technology and science utilized in the delivery of the official USGSA and AMA services. Provides technical leadership, training and support services, inspection methods development, specialized analytical tests, standardized processes, and final appeal inspections for field-based testing services.

Quality Assurance and Compliance Division - Safeguards the integrity of the services provided by FGIS, Delegated States, and Designated Agencies. QACD develops, monitors, audits, analyzes and reports on the quality of the services. Investigates reports of alleged violations of the USGSA and the AMA, assists USDA's Office of Inspector General to conduct more complex investigations, and initiates appropriate enforcement actions.

4. BOARD OF APPEALS AND REVIEW

The BAR is final arbiter for decisions related to subjective factor analysis. In this role the BAR performs many critical functions including monitoring FGIS Quality Assurance Specialists to ensure alignment throughout the official inspection system.

5. DOMESTIC INSPECTION OPERATIONS OFFICE

DIOO serves as the Field Office responsible for the supervision and monitoring of all Designated Agencies who perform work on behalf of FGIS. The GSL will be aligned under DIOO and serve as the quality assurance body for DIOO in the same manner in which the quality assurance specialists serve in other Field Offices.

6. NEXT STEPS

The Division Directors will work with the Office of the Deputy Administrator to allocate proper resources (funds and staffing) to effectuate the implementation of assignment of quality assurance functions and organizational alignment set forth in this Notice.