



Federal Purchase Program Specification Pulled Chicken: December 2024

I. Purpose

This document provides the procedures USDA, AMS graders (graders) will utilize with the certification of pulled chicken to the [December 2024 Federal Purchase Program Specification \(FPPS\)](#). The grader must read this procedure carefully and note what items must be observed during formulation, sampling, packaging and packing, labeling, loading and shipping, and the preparation of worksheets and certificates. The grader will not proceed until their supervisor has reviewed the [QAD 620: USDA FPPS – Poultry General Requirements](#) and this procedure with them.

Pulled Chicken, Fully Cooked, Frozen (111881 & 111870) must be processed and packed as outlined in the specification. The commodity must not be processed or packaged more than 90 days prior to the first day of the delivery period for each sales order. The chilled commodity must be processed, packaged, packed, and placed in a freezer within 7 calendar days after the date of harvest.

Under the [Supplement for Chicken Products Distributed for Federal Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs](#) the contractor is able to select Option A: Grading-Based Monitoring and Certification or Option B: Audit Based Verification for contract compliance and certification of the commodity. Regardless of which option is chosen, all raw material must be graded or certified by the USDA, AMS grader. For all processing steps following raw material collection, the contractor may request the use of either option. These procedures apply for contractors selecting Option A.

II. Procedures

A. Processing & Fabrication

1. Meat Requirements

Pulled Chicken must be prepared from ready to cook boneless, skinless chicken breast portions that are 3 inches or more in length. Chicken from other plants may be utilized provided they meet the FPPS requirements in section 530 of the FPPS. Frozen meat may be utilized if it meets criteria in section 542 of the FPPS. Mechanically separated chicken (comminuted), finely ground, flaked, finely chopped, or size reduced chicken meat are unacceptable for use.

2. Certification Requirements

Prior to marination, graders must check 30 pieces for defects to determine compliance with the FPPS requirements (see FPPS Table 1) using the sampling frequency and acceptance criteria found in Sampling Plan Level 1 (SPL-1). Results must be recorded on the LP-232L1. If the sample has more defects than the maximum tolerance for the sample plan, the meat the sample represents must be rejected. Regardless of the kind and number of defects found, any sample with bone or hard bone-like material must be cause for the rejection of the meat the sample represents.



3. Product Formulation Verification

Graders must personally observe the formulation of the marinating solution ingredients to certify compliance with the requirements at the frequency stated in [QAD 604: Formulation Certification](#). Results of the formulation verification must be documented on the LP-232L2. Formulations found that do not meet requirements in section 560 of the FPPS cannot be used and will necessitate additional verification checks.

4. Marination

Determine the percentage of marinade pickup according to the procedures outlined in [QAD 606: Percent Gain Marinated-Sauce Products](#). Retain the product representing any sampling interval that exceeds the applicable FPPS maximum of 15%. The marinating, cooking, shredding, and freezing of the commodity will be a continuous and sequential process as described in section II.J. Processing Sequence of [QAD 620: USDA FPPS Poultry General Requirements](#).

B. Fully Cooked Product checks

1. Cooked Temperature

Graders must follow the procedures for temperature verification in [QAD 608: Cooking Temperature Certification](#). The temperature must be checked on a sampling interval basis or more frequently if conditions warrant. All products must be fully cooked in accordance with USDA, FSIS Regulations.

2. Appearance and Dimensions

The commodity must be aggregated such that it is coarsely striated in appearance (i.e. shredded with minimal chunking; not ground or comminuted). Larger chunks of meat should separate with ease. Fully cooked meat needs to be white to light brown in appearance and not exhibit evidence of uncooked or uncooked pinkness. Results (*Satisfactory "S" or Unsatisfactory "U"*) must be recorded on the LP-232L2 reverse side.

Screening shall be in place on the production line post freezing to assist in the removal of fines. Graders must check the contents of one bag in a frozen state and follow the procedures for size verification in [QAD 607: Portion Control and Weight Range](#) to ensure pulled chicken length ranges from 1.00-4.50 inches with up to 10% less than 1 inch by weight. Pieces shorter than .75" or longer than 4.75" are marked as defects using the sampling frequency and acceptance criteria found in Sampling Plan Level 2 (SPL-2). Results must be recorded on the LP-232L2. Additionally, no more than 10% of the total weight from the sample may be shorter than 1" on an individual sample.

3. Organoleptic Examination

The ready to cook chicken must be examined on a continuous basis in accordance with [QAD 614: Organoleptic Examination](#) and FPPS requirements stated in section 550 of the FPPS. The fully cooked



product will be sampled and examined for organoleptic defects to determine compliance with FPPS requirements (see FPPS Table 2). Online sampling will be performed on randomly selected product after the cooking operation and prior to freezing. Results (*Satisfactory "S" or Unsatisfactory "U"*) must be recorded on the LP-232L2 reverse side.

The fully cooked product will be examined for organoleptic defects by visual examination and smelling for each sampling interval product is produced. This examination must include checking for defects such as overcooked, scorched, undercooked, and areas of dehydration. If such defects are found in the sample, the lot or product the sample represents must be retained.

4. Freezing Requirement

The chilled commodity must be processed, packaged, packed and placed in a freezer within 7 calendar days after the date of harvest. All cooked product must be frozen in a manner to bring the internal temperature of the product at the center of the package to 10°F, or below within 24 hours from the time the pulled chicken packaged. Specific guidelines on freezing and holding temperature requirements are outlined in [QAD 613: Frozen Product Examination](#).

C. Finished Product Checks

1. Metal Detection

All finished product must be examined by a metal detection device. Procedures and sensitivity levels are outlined in [QAD 609: Metal Detection](#). Results (*Satisfactory "S" or Unsatisfactory "U"*) must be recorded on the LP-232L2 reverse side.

2. Net Weight

Online sampling procedures found in [QAD 611: Net Weight Examination](#) can be used to ensure each finished shipping container weighs at least 30 pounds. Each delivery unit must consist of 1300 shipping containers weighing 30 pounds each with a total net weight of 39,000 pounds. For product code 111881 six 5-pound or three 10-pound bags will be packed in each shipping container and for product code 111870 fifteen 2-pound bags will be packed in each shipping container in accordance with the FPPS.

3. Packaging and Packing/Tamper Evident

The packaging and packing material must be "tamper-evident." Tamper-evident is defined as packaging or packing materials with one or more indicators or barriers to entry, which, if breached or missing, can reasonably be expected to provide visible evidence that tampering has occurred. Examples include damage to the box from tape being removed, or a hole in the plastic bag from it being torn or cut open, that would be obvious to a person inspecting the product. Determination of whether the material meets these requirements may be made by the supervisor. At time of shipment,



each lot will undergo an examination for packaging and packing defects per [QAD 617: Packaging and Packing](#).

4. Labeling

Contractors have the option to use commercial or USDA labeling. For product code 111870 packaged in 2 pound bags, individual labeling of the primary packaging is required because the product is destined for household use. Labeling must meet all requirements in section 700 of the FPPS. Child Nutrition (CN) labeling information or a Product Formulation Statement demonstrating product contribution to the National School Lunch Program meal pattern requirements is required. Each shipping container must be identified with a USDA Contract Compliance stamp with the applicable certificate number or production date. An AMS grader or other authorized personnel under the supervision of the AMS grader must stamp one end of each shipping container at the origin facility. If there is inadequate space available on either end of the shipping container, the stamp may be applied to a side of the container. As an alternative to stamping, the contractor may preprint the stamp on the shipping container or label. Prior approval by the Poultry National Office is required before using this alternative method.

The sodium content of the cooked commodity should be no more than 450 mg per 100 gram basis as evidenced by nutritional labeling.

D. Certification and Delivery

1. Temperature Requirement

At time of shipment, product must be 2°F or below. In lieu of drilling into the product, it is acceptable to sandwich the temperature probe between two unopened bags of product until the temperature stabilizes. Product with internal temperatures exceeding 2°F and up to 5°F will be tentatively rejected. Tentatively rejected product may be returned to the freezer and re-offered for shipment one time only. Product exceeding 5°F, or product that was tentatively rejected and exceeds 2°F when reoffered, must be rejected. Sampling levels will be according to the processors current freezing history. As an option to checking product at time of shipment, and upon review and approval by the supervisor, plants may use the alternate verification procedures as described in [QAD 613: Frozen Product Examination](#).

2. Certification

Any product not meeting the outlined criteria, or any other specified requirement must be retained. An LP-210P: *USDA Poultry Products Grading Certificate* must accompany each shipment. The Purchase Order number, Sales Order number, Sales Order Item number, and Seal number must be stated. See attached certificate example.



3. Contractor Checkloading

Contractors have the option to utilize Contractor Checkloading as described in [QAD 620: *General Donated Commodity Instructions*](#).

Exhibit:

Exhibit I - LP-210P Pulled Chicken Certificate Example

Exhibit II - LP-210P Pulled Chicken Certificate Example – Split Delivery

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Quality Assessment Division
1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 0258
Washington, DC 20250

QAD 621J Procedure
September 9, 2025
Page 6 of 7

EXHIBIT 1

(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 POULTRY PRODUCTS 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.
			PPA- 1256879
			PLACE EXAMINED
			Springfield, IL
			PLANT NUMBER
			P-7734

APPLICANT (Name and address, including ZIP)	NAME AND ADDRESS OF SHIPPER OR SELLER ^{1/}	NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECEIVER OR BUYER ^{1/}
Excellent Chicken Co. 4545 Poultry Ave Springfield, IL 62629	Same as Applicant	New York State 555 Albany Ave Albany, NY 12345

LOT NO.	NO. CONTAINERS PER LOT ^{1/}	NO. CONTAINERS EXAMINED	PRODUCT (KIND, CLASS, TYPE, STYLE, SUBSTYLE)	MARKED WEIGHT OF LOT ^{1/}	TEST Shortage Overage	TOTAL NET	OFFICIAL U.S. GRADE
1	1300	-----	Frozen, Cooked, Pulled Chicken, Six 5-pound	-----	-----	39,000	-----

LOT NO.	TYPE AND CONDITION OF CONTAINERS	WHERE HELD AND TEMPERATURE	CONTAINERS WERE STAMPED WITH
1	New Fiber Boxes	Trailer -10° F	USDA Contract Compliance with mm/dd/yy
		Seal # 12345	

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION

Product represented by this certificate meets specification requirements for: FPPS for Pulled Chicken (111881) DATED December 2024			☒ Product derived from poultry of domestic origin. ☒ Certification determined by online sampling. ☒ The number of containers shown above was counted by the official grader. ☐ Destination weight and temperature certification.
PURCHASE ORDER # 4100055689	SALES ORDER # 5000123654	ITEM # 100	Test weighing performed on _____ at _____ am/pm.

REMARKS:

Total new weight of product represented on this certificate was determined using the QAD 611 online test weighing procedures.

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

In compliance with the Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture Governing the Grading of Poultry 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.

Jane Grader

Jane Grader

mm/dd/yyyy

OFFICIAL GRADER (Printed Name & Signature)

DATE

^{1/} As stated by applicant or contractor.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Quality Assessment Division
1400 Independence Avenue SW, Stop 0258
Washington, DC 20250

QAD 621J Procedure
September 9, 2025
Page 7 of 7

EXHIBIT II - Split Delivery

(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	POULTRY PRODUCTS 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.
				PPA- 1093348
				PLACE EXAMINED Springfield, IL
				PLANT NUMBER P-7734

APPLICANT (Name and address, including ZIP)	NAME AND ADDRESS OF SHIPPER OR SELLER ^{1/}	NAME AND ADDRESS OF RECEIVER OR BUYER ^{1/}
Excellent Chicken Co. 4545 Poultry Ave Springfield, IL 62629	Same as Applicant	Department of Education New York State 555 Albany Ave Albany, NY 12345

LOT NO.	NO. CONTAINERS PER LOT ^{1/}	NO. CONTAINERS EXAMINED	PRODUCT (KIND, CLASS, TYPE, STYLE, SUBSTYLE)	MARKED WEIGHT OF LOT ^{1/}	TEST Shortage / Overage	TOTAL NET	OFFICIAL U.S. GRADE
1	1300	-----	Frozen, Cooked, Pulled Chicken, Three 10-Pound	-----	-----	39,000	-----

LOT NO.	TYPE AND CONDITION OF CONTAINERS	WHERE HELD AND TEMPERATURE	CONTAINERS WERE STAMPED WITH
1	New Fiber Boxes	Trailer -10° F	USDA Contract Compliance with mm/dd/yy

ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION

Product represented by this certificate meets specification requirements for:
FPPS for Pulled Chicken

(111881) DATED December 2024

- ☒ Product derived from poultry of domestic origin.
☒ Certification determined by online sampling.
☒ The number of containers shown above was counted by the official grader.
☐ Destination weight and temperature certification.

PURCHASE ORDER # 410002055	SALES ORDER # 5000026781	ITEM # See Remarks
-------------------------------	-----------------------------	-----------------------

Test weighing performed on _____ at _____ am/pm.

REMARKS:

Stop 1 Item: 100 Number of containers = 800 Total Net Weight = 24,000 LBS
Department of Education - New York State
555 Albany Ave
Albany, NY 12345

Stop 2 Item: 200 Number of Containers = 500 Total Net Weight = 15,000 LBS
Department of Education - New York State
888 Main St.
Bronx, NY 12346

Total new weight of product represented on this certificate was determined using the QAD 611 online test weighing procedures.

Stop 1 Seal: 12345
Stop 2 Seal: 23456 given to driver

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

In compliance with the Regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture Governing the Grading of Poultry 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.

Jane Grader

Jane Grader

mm/dd/yyyy

OFFICIAL GRADER (Printed Name & Signature)

DATE

^{1/} As stated by applicant or contractor.