

Agricultural Marketing Service
Deputy Administrators
Tobacco Programs
Raleigh, NC or Lexington, KY Regions
Agricultural Commodity Grader (Tobacco)
GS-1980-11
Set Work Leader

SJ TB2

I. INTRODUCTION

The Tobacco Programs must provide a group of graders (referred to as "sets") for each official auction sale conducted during the tobacco marketing season. These sets are grouped geographically for administrative and program control purposes into "circuits." Both the circuits and their sets are designed to provide tobacco grading service during a marketing season which begins in the southern flue-cured belts and progresses northward, generally ending in the burley region. During this northward movement, circuits are structured to reflect historic zones to tobacco marketing. These zones do not usually market simultaneously, but sequentially.

The incumbent of this position is a Set Work Leader. In addition, the employee may rotate as a grader-in-charge at a tobacco redrying plant which blends and processes tobacco, and/or may serve as an import grader where tobacco is initially unloaded into the United States.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Set Work Leader

The incumbent is responsible for leading the work of an assigned group of graders at tobacco auction warehouses.

Inspects, grades, and certifies individual lots of tobacco in accordance with U.S. Official Tobacco Standards.

Reviews the application of grade standards by graders for accuracy and uniformity. Resolves formal and informal appeals by growers who question the grades assigned to their tobacco. Interprets and applies official grade standards with respect to specific cases or unusual situations. Reviews records at individual flue-cured tobacco warehouses prior to grading to determine if the warehouse is in compliance with the regulations pertaining to the grower Designation Plan. These regulations control the daily amount each warehouse may sell of (1) grower designated tobacco, (2) undesignated tobacco, (3) auction purchased resale tobacco, and (4) non-auction purchased tobacco. Responsible for assuring compliance by burley warehouses with sales limitations set by local Boards of Trade. Informs the Regional Office of any incidents of noncompliance which can result in penalties being assessed to warehouses ranging from adjustments in selling schedules to the withdrawal of grading services.

Supervises the collection of representative samples of U.S. standard grades to be used in conducting qualifying courses for new employees, orientation and preseason refresher courses for Tobacco Programs' employees, visitor training courses used by international industry personnel, and other government agency employees, as well as farmers and warehousemen.

Supervises the training of new employees in the application of standards and the duties of tobacco graders.

Makes daily and periodic program and special reports as required. Supervises the recording of grades and price information by lower grade employees for transmission to a market news office where it serves as a basis for the issuance of market news reports and press releases. Supervises the distribution of market news reports on the markets to growers, buyers, and the trade which enables the growers to determine if they are receiving market value for their tobacco.

Conducts demonstration meetings, as assigned, for local farm groups and others wherein technical advice and assistance is given in the proper methods of selecting, sorting, and preparing tobacco for market. Explains the interpretation and application of official standards and regulations, market news service, and other phases of the inspection program.

Inspects warehouse for compliance with safety, sanitation, and lighting requirements. Checks the arrangement of tobacco on the sale floor prior to grading to determine if it is properly displayed and aligned according to regulations.

Provides daily or periodic reports to a market reporter on market activities such as volume or price fluctuations for inclusion in ensuring reports.

Consults with Regional Supervisors as required on advisory performance ratings for graders assigned and approves leave.

B. Grader-In-Charge

This position is subject to rotation as a Grader-in-Charge at a tobacco redrying plant. Inspects, regrades, and grades (as necessary) two or more types of tobacco coming in from the auction floor, considering all 10 controlling factors. Applies the official standards (over 252 grades) and makes on-the-spot decisions as to the accuracy of grades assigned on the auction market. Grades incoming tobacco not previously graded. Makes final determinations.

Assures proper packing of incoming tobacco and investigates irregularities and takes appropriate action. Assures the proper packing of the tobacco into uniform hogsheads and certifies all tobacco leaving the plant. Reviews and supervises the blending of tobacco into "plant grades" not included in U.S. Official Tobacco Standards.

Assures that remnants known as "picking" (non-official) grades, which are assigned to tobacco too mixed in quality for official grades, are properly blended into containers of uniform weights with strict adherence to quality control.

Serves as the official contact at the plant with full responsibility for the grading and blending program at the plant, and explains grading decisions to manufacturers, dealers, buyers, and representatives of cooperative associations. Assists the plant manager in displaying tobacco in proper light, scheduling work to minimize night and overtime duty, hiring competent ticket managers (who assist in inspection work), and eliminating safety hazards.

C. Import Grader

When assigned to grade imported tobacco, monitors the unloading of imported tobacco except cigar and oriental tobacco, from containers or carriers and randomly selects packages to be inspected. Inspects a sufficient number of packages to assure an accurate determination of the type and official standard grade. Secures a copy of the invoice and packaging list from the importer, and checks all package markings and the number of packages against the packing list to assure that the tobacco inspected is the same tobacco as represented on the invoice and packing list. As required, takes samples for pesticide testing and certification.

Provides equal opportunity in employment for all subordinates, applicants and new hires. Prohibits discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and physical or mental disability and promotes a full realization of equal employment through continuous affirmative actions within the work environment.

III. JOB CONTROLS

1. Knowledge Required by the Position Level 1-7 1250 pts.

Knowledge of two or more types of tobacco, the controlling elements of quality, the methods of curing tobacco, and the effect curing has on tobacco, and the U.S. Official Tobacco Standards for approximately 252 grades of tobacco in order to assure uniform grading of tobacco sold at auction.

Must have knowledge of every possible grade/quality range of tobacco as determinations are final and incumbent resolves both formal and informal appeals by growers who question grades assigned to their tobacco.

Knowledge to review warehouse (flue-cured) records and determine compliance with regulations pertaining to the grower designation plan. Knowledge of floor grading, tobacco packing, blending operations, and packing of blended tobacco (hogshead).

Knowledge to assure compliance by other than flue-cured warehouses with sales limitations set by local Boards of Trade.

Knowledge to inspect warehouse for compliance with safety, sanitation, and lighting requirements.

Knowledge to assure accuracy and adequacy of data source of market news reports and season analysis of grade distribution.

Skill in dealing with plant management, growers, warehouses, industry personnel, and other graders.

2. Supervisory Controls Level 2-4 450 pts.

The grader makes decisions on the full range of technical situations as they relate to the work, and determinations are final. Has sole responsibility for dealing with growers and warehouse operators on matters affecting the grading program. Is responsible for proper grading of all the tobacco offered for sale in the warehouses. Also, supervises and coordinates the work of other graders assigned to the set. Is responsible for compliance with sales limitations and grower designation regulations as well as compliance with safety, sanitation, and lighting requirements.

Also serves as the grader-in-charge at a plant or point of entry which requires making decisions on the full range of technical situations as they relate to the work.

Work is reviewed for an overall evaluation of its effectiveness in achieving results compatible with the program objectives.

3. Guidelines Level 3-3 275 pts.

Guidelines are composed of the U.S. Official Tobacco Standards which include 252 or more grades, plant grades (non-standard), and picking areas, as well as applicable laws and regulations pertaining to selling and warehousing tobacco. Knowledge of curing tobacco.

The incumbent must be able to apply official and nonstandard grades to all tobacco sold in the warehouses. Must also apply official and non-standard grades to all tobacco processed in the plant and to imported tobacco.

The incumbent has full responsibility for developing and maintaining overall site relations with warehouse management and growers for achieving program objectives as well as working to resolve specific problems. This includes responsibility for uniform grading on the floor.

4. Complexity Level 4-4 225 pts.

Applies expertise and judgment in applying standard grades and reviewing the work of other graders on all tobacco sold at warehouse. Responsible for correct grades on incoming tobacco at a plant as well as grading blended and processed tobacco.

Responsible for uniform grading and packing of tobacco leaving plants and warehouses. Investigates any false packing of incoming tobacco.

Responsible for inspecting warehouses for safety, sanitation, and lighting requirements.

Responsible for distribution of market news information to growers, buyers, and the trade.

Has responsibility for on-site relations and maintaining grading programs at the warehouses. Must explain grading decision to growers, dealers, and buyers. Informs Regional Office of any incidents on noncompliance.

5. Scope and Effect _____ Level 5-4 225 pts.

Incumbent is responsible for the uniform grading, regrading, blending, and packing of tobacco in redrying plants and warehouses according to U.S. Official Tobacco Standards.

The U.S. Official Tobacco Standards are accepted worldwide as a universal language. Domestic companies buy tobacco based on these grades, and foreign countries place orders with dealers based on official U.S. Government grades.

Errors in judgment in confirming or applying the proper U.S. Official Tobacco Standards on lots of tobacco would affect its sale. Improper interpreting of regulations and instructions and procedures could result in significant loss of money to the growers, warehouse operators, and buyers. Improper labeling and identification by grade of the tobacco would result in substantial expense, inconvenience, and embarrassment. Anything less than continuous expert judgment in any of these areas would result in a loss of faith in the grading program which in turn would jeopardize all Department tobacco programs.

The effect of these programs in general has a stabilizing influence on such agriculture factors as energy use, resource use, technology, productivity, employment market structures and systems, and credit supply in local communities. Accurate and authoritative determinations in inspecting, grading, and uniformity of grades of tobacco are essential to accomplish these purposes.

Tobacco offered for importation into the United States must be inspected and graded to comply with the Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983. This tobacco enters the United States from various foreign countries and has unique characteristics. The grader must possess an exceptional knowledge of the U.S. Standards in order to accurately grade tobacco from the different countries.

6. Personal Contacts _____ Level 6-2 25 pts.

Contacts include growers, warehousemen and their employees, research and extension people, other graders and office personnel, and dealers, buyers, and importers.

7. Purpose of Contacts _____ Level 7-3 120 pts.

