


November 02, 2015

TO: Shell Egg Graders

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SUBJECT: Export Requirements for Table Eggs Destined to Gulf Cooperative Council
(GCC) Nations

This instruction outlines specific certification and shipping requirements for shell eggs (table eggs) to be exported to Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) Nations. The GCC members consist of the following nations:

- Saudi Arabia
- Bahrain
- Kuwait
- Oman
- Qatar

Please visit the Shell Egg Index, Section E-35, for certification instructions regarding the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

I. Product Requirements

- All shell eggs must originate from laying flocks in the United States.

II. Grade Requirements

- The shell eggs must be graded and certified as U.S. Grade A or better, as outlined in the United States Standards, Grades, and Weight Classes for Shell Eggs (AMS 56).

III. Weight Requirements

- Product must meet the requirements of the marked U.S. weight class, as outlined in the United States Standards, Grades, and Weight Classes for Shell Eggs (AMS 56).

IV. Processing Requirements

- Product must be processed and packed under continuous voluntary supervision in shell egg facilities utilizing either USDA resident or temporary grading service.

A. Expiration Dating

- The following statement will be printed in the remarks section of the Shell Egg Grading Certificate:

“The expiration date declared on the product is the responsibility of the applicant.”

The disclaimer statement listed above shall immediately follow the declaration of the production code and the associated expiration date. For example, a 90-day expiration date shall be recorded as, “Lot 213 identified with production code 15-08-2015 (DD-MM-YYYY format) and expiration date 28-10-2015 (DD-MM-YYYY format)” followed by the disclaimer statement above.

- Individual eggs stamped with an expiration date exceeding 30 days from date of pack are not eligible to be certified by the USDA for domestic distribution.
- The packer is responsible for the validity of an expiration date applied to the exported shell eggs.

B. Individual Egg Stamping

- Printing equipment may be limited in the capability to provide an extensive number of digits printed on the egg. Therefore, the processor is responsible for the format declaring the expiration date, using the available printing capabilities (format may vary depending upon the type of equipment used).
- Individual eggs must be reasonably dry prior to printing or stamping. (The USDA is not responsible for the legibility of the printing on the individual eggs.) The following information must appear on the individual egg presented for certification for export to GCC nations.
 - The country of origin, expressed as “US”, must be stamped or printed on each egg.
 - The production date preceded by the capital letter “P” must be stamped or printed on the egg expressed in the Day/Month/Year format using numerical figures. For example, P 04/12/2015.
 - The expiration date preceded by the capital letter “E” must be stamped or printed on the egg expressed in the Day/Month/Year format using numerical figures. For example, E 28/02/2016.
- The USDA grader will verify records maintained by plant management demonstrating the export of the individually identified eggs with a voluntarily declared expiration date for an extensive period of time.

C. Packing/Packaging

- All packing material must be new, showing no evidence of previous use.
- The interior packaging material (cartons and flats) must be new, showing no evidence of adhering foreign material or previous use.
- Each shipping case must be identified with the USDA Graded For Export Stamp with the applicable certificate number.
- Pallets must be new or good used, free of visible evidence of adhering foreign material, and/or structural damage.

D. Packing Case Labeling

- Labels must be printed or stamped in a central location on the end of each case.
- Handwritten or stenciled stamps are not acceptable.
- The plant number assigned to the packer/producer must be shown.
- The words, “Keep Refrigerated”, or other similar terminology must be declared on each shipping case.
- The Statement of Identity, “Eggs” must be on each shipping case.
- The “Safe Handling” statement must be on each shipping case or the statement may accompany the shipping invoice.

V. Transport Unit

- Transport units used to export eggs to the GCC nations must be reasonably clean.
- Graders are to visibly examine and document (on Form PY-75 or PY-211, as applicable) the cleanliness of the transport unit and assure the refrigeration unit is capable of providing adequate refrigeration (ambient transport temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or less) during transport.
- When unsanitary conditions are observed in transport units, or when a refrigeration unit is not present or functional; the grader will notify a responsible plant official of the conditions. Product is not to be loaded onto the unit until the unsanitary conditions have been corrected.
- Transport units without functional refrigeration units are not eligible for transport of table eggs.
- When such conditions occur, the grader will document the details of the occurrence, including the name of the plant official notified, on the applicable worksheet (Form PY-75 or PY-211).
- Transport units must be sealed with a plant shipping seal prior to departure from the processing facility. The seal number must appear on the PY-210S, export certificate issued. The USDA grader is not required to be present at the time of shipment, provided the transport unit is acceptable, the shipping cases are properly identified, and the seal (s) numbers are recorded on the certificate issued.

VI. Certification

- The eggs certified as meeting the requirements of at least U.S. Grade A may be based on the results of either online sampling or full-size stationary lot grading. When using the stationary lot option, percentages from the samples taken must be reported on the certificate.
- The original and any additional copies of Form PY-210S, Shell Egg Grading Certificate and the Disease Free Certification Statements for Other Countries (issued in accordance with guidance filed in E-01 of the Supervisors/Resident Graders Shell Egg Index) will be provided to plant management to accompany the shipment.
- The importer is responsible for presenting the original USDA certification documents (signatures appearing in blue ink) to foreign government officials at the port of entry to the respective country.

- The following information is to be included on the certificate:
 - The name and address of the receiver or buyer located in the identified GCC nation. It is not permissible to show, “To Be Sold”.
 - The USDA plant number.
 - The USDA graders signature in blue ink.
- In the remarks section, the following statement must be included:

“Each individual egg has been stamped: “US”, with the production date and expiration date using an approved ink.”