

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY GRADER I

This is grading work in the marketing of agricultural commodities in a poultry or shell eggplant, or in a fruit and vegetable, peanut or grain station in the Marketing Division North Carolina Department of Agriculture.

Employees examine commodities for quantity, quality, condition and other factors in certifying the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grade which serves as a primary criteria for determining the marketing price. The assignment of an official USDA grade is guided by a set of standards; however, judgmental decisions are required in determining the effect of variables such as the degree of weather damage and the presence of foreign materials. Work is performed under the general supervision of a higher level grader or supervisor and is reviewed for accuracy and uniformity in applying grade standards. Work may include other duties as assigned.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Work involves the sampling and grading of a limited variety of fruits and/or vegetables, a limited variety of grains or peanuts, limited poultry products, or shell eggs. Each commodity has a complete set of detailed instructions for grading which includes factors such as quantity, quality, condition, size, and type, and the effect of other variables. A grade is determined based on these factors and a certificate may be issued. Work may include conducting sanitation and safety inspections of equipment and work areas, or routine calibration of equipment.

Guidelines - State and federal rules, regulations and grading standards are specific to the work being performed and can usually be applied in most work situations.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Employees are responsible for sampling and grading commodities in an assigned program in accordance with applicable state and federal rules, regulations and standards.

Consequence of Action - An error in grading could cost the buyer or seller substantial financial loss.

Review - Work is reviewed by a higher level grader or supervisor through frequent observation of work in the field for proper grading techniques and consistency.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees must be familiar with the USDA standards, principles, and procedures or grading agricultural commodities in an assigned program.

Purpose - Employees must be able to explain USDA standards, principles, and procedures for grading agricultural commodities in an assigned area.

IV. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

Nature of Working Conditions - Work requires graders to obtain samples from baskets, boxes, bags, trucks, train cars and other storage facilities. Work may be performed in an office, a warehouse, processing plant, fruit, vegetable, peanut or grain station, or at other locations.

Nature and Potential of Personal Hazards - Employees are exposed to inclement weather, moving machinery, cutting tools, dust, odors, all of which could contribute to personal injury.

V. RECRUITMENT STANDARDS:

Knowledges, Skills, and Abilities - Working knowledge of USDA standards, principles, and procedures for grading agricultural commodities in the area of assignment. Working knowledge of commodity processing procedures and sanitation standards as applied to the determination of a grade. Working knowledge of equipment calibration and use in the area of assignment. Ability to make uniform and constant decisions in assigning and certifying commodity grades. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with producers, processors, buyers and others in the commodity area assigned. Ability to complete required forms, records, and reports.

Minimum Education and Experience Requirements - High school or General Educational Development diploma and one year of closely related work experience such as farming, commodity grading or working in a processing plant in the area of assignment; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

Necessary Special Qualification - Ability to obtain licensure by USDA for commodities graded; possession of a valid state driver's license.