

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY GRADER IV

This is supervisory and technical work in the commodity grading in the largest, more complex poultry, poultry products and shell egg plants, or advanced grading Work in classifying red meats or numerous horticultural products in the Marketing Division, North Carolina Department of Agriculture.

Employees perform supervisory and technical grading work in the larger, complex plants, serve as grader-in-charge of poultry or eggplants with a variety of processing and production operations and multiple contract specifications. Work involves the training and supervision of several graders, maintaining equipment used, maintaining and reviewing records, and dealing with plant management. Employees performing advanced grading work serve as terminal market graders for over ninety (90) varieties of fruits, vegetables and nuts, or as meat graders of beef, pork, veal, lamb and calf for compliance with contract specifications. Employees independently examine commodity products and classify or certify in accordance with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grading standards. Work may involve a closely related set of duties. Work is performed under the general supervision of a grading supervisor and is reviewed through reports and periodic conferences. Work may include other duties as assigned.

I. DIFFICULTY OF WORK:

Complexity - Work involves the sampling and grading of over ninety (90) varieties of fruits, vegetables and nuts, determining conformance with numerous grades and condition standards, issuing federal certificates, reporting violations to the USDA, and grading products during an appeal situation. Red meat graders inspect five types of carcasses for degree of conformation, maturity, quality and cutability, certify the quality of the meat by interpreting and applying official USDA grade standards, inspect and accept all meats and meat food products sold to state-owned and other government-supported institutions, and issue an official certificate for products in compliance with institutions' specifications. Grader-in-charge duties encompass the training and supervision of several graders (including plant graders), supervising the grading inspections of the products, performing the more difficult grading assignments, maintaining records concerning the grading and certification of products, maintaining time sheets for employee payroll, and billing the industry for services performed. Grader-in-charge duties also include advising management or producers concerning processing or packing procedures which will result in better grades and less product loss from breakage and spoilage.

Guidelines - State and federal rules, regulations and grading standards are numerous, but specific to the work being performed and can usually be applied in most work situations. Multiple contract specifications also affect the variety of steps in the grading process. Additional direction is provided through various manuals, publications, and instructions and memorandums from program supervisors.

II. RESPONSIBILITY:

Accountability - Employees are responsible for the advanced grading and appeal grading of numerous and/or complex products or commodities in an assigned program in accordance with applicable state and federal rules, regulations and standards and contract specifications, or for working as grader-in-charge at a large, complex location to ensure accuracy and uniformity in applying grading standards, effective communications, and program management.

Consequence of Action - Failure to properly grade a commodity, to maintain uniformity in applying grading standards, to appropriately train and supervise staff, or to maintain effective communications with co-workers, plant management, and producers/farmers, could cost the buyer or seller substantial financial loss, or poor product quality. Failure to appropriately maintain time sheets for the employee payroll and billing the industry for services performed could adversely affect the income of the state-grading program.

Review - Work is reviewed by a grading supervisor through the review of written reports and regular observation for accuracy and uniformity in applying grades, effective communications with co-workers, plant management and producers/farmers, and the review of payroll and billing records.

III. INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Subject Matter - Employees must be familiar with state and federal (USDA) standards, principles and procedures for grading agricultural commodities in an assigned program to grade commodities, to train and supervise permanent, seasonal and temporary help in grading, and to explain grades or problems to co-workers, plant management, producers/farmers, shippers, receivers, and others.

Purpose - Employees must be able to explain, interpret, and apply 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 - Thorough knowledge of USDA standards, principles, and procedures for grading agricultural products in the area of assignment. Considerable knowledge of commodity processing procedures and sanitation standards required to accurately certify the quantity, quality, class, and condition of the whole or processed product. Working knowledge of equipment calibration and use in the area of assignment. Working knowledge of the packing and shipping requirements of the various contractors and receivers. Ability to train and supervise employees in grading work and the grading process and procedures. Ability to make uniform and constant decisions in assigning and certifying commodity grades. Ability to maintain effective working relationships with plant management, producers, shippers, receivers, co-workers, and others. Ability to complete required forms, records, and reports, and to compute billing charges

Minimum Education and Experience Requirements - High school or General Educational Development diploma and four years of closely related work experience including three years of experience in grading the commodities of the plant or station to which assigned; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

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