

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Fruit and Vegetable Division, Fresh Products Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent performs inspection and grading work on fresh fruits, vegetables and related products at various terminal market sites such as warehouses, railroad sidings, packing plants, and similar facilities and assignments may involve details and/or reassignment to a different geographical area as determined by management. Grading Assignments involve a limited variety of fruits and vegetables.

II. MAJOR DUTIES

Selects representative samples from product lots in accordance with prescribed sampling procedures and plans.

Inspects the product to determine its quality, condition, and/or its compliance to other stated contract specifications. Typically, this requires considering such factors as:

- the product's size, shape, color, degree of firmness, and similar quality factors;
- the type, extent, and cause of any product defects or diseases;
- the quantity, packaging, or similar conditions which are common in contract specifications.

Prepares the inspection reports. When the assignment involves products with which the employee is thoroughly knowledgeable, applies the official standards and regulations to determine the product's grade and/or condition and directly issues the certificate.

If necessary, explains determinations to the appropriate industry employee. In difficult or unusual cases, prepares a draft certificate with tentative determination and submits it for supervisory review before issuance.

As assigned, performs inspections and gradings of products with which the employee is unfamiliar under the guidance of a senior grader.

III. FACTORS

Factor 1. Knowledge Required by the Position Level 1-5, 750 points

Knowledge of the official standards and regulations, or pertinent product characteristics, and of common product defects as applied to a limited variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Knowledge of transportation, storage, and handling practices insofar as they may be causes of product defects, and as applied to a limited variety of products.

Skill in inspecting and grading assigned product varieties and in maintaining interpersonal relationships with industry personnel.

Factor 2. Supervisory Controls Level 2-2, 125 points

The grader normally receives daily inspection and grading assignments from the supervisor, who also assigns the priority of the individual assignments.

Recurring assignments (i.e., those involving products familiar to the employee) are performed without specific technical instructions. However, if unusual or difficult situations with the product arise, the supervisor is consulted for interpretation and guidance or for making the final determinations. Assignments involving a product which is new or unusual to the grader are normally performed under direct supervision and guidance.

The work is reviewed for technical accuracy and completeness through spot checks of inspection and grading while it is being performed and through review of inspection worksheets.

Factor 3. Guidelines Level 3-2, 125 points

The primary guidelines are the official grade standards, physical models and visual aids, agency instruction manuals, and supplemental technical and administrative directives.

The employee independently selects and applies the appropriate guides that, in most cases, are familiar. Borderline grading and inspection determinations, or assignments involving products unfamiliar to the employee, are referred to the supervisor or senior grader for a decision. In addition, the number of guides applicable to the work are limited.

Factor 4. Complexity Level 4-2, 75 points

The work primarily involves the direct inspection and grading of products. The techniques and methods used in the inspection process are closely related, and variations in the work stem chiefly from differences among the types of products inspected. In addition, a limited variety of products are assigned to the grader.

The evaluations of storage, transportation, and sanitation conditions required by the duties are not technically complicated.

Factor 5. Scope and Effect Level 5-3, 150 points

Assignments involve making some final grade and condition determinations and directly issuing certifications. Such determinations affect the product's price and/or acceptability in relation to contract specifications. Both factors affect the financial interests of buyers and sellers.

Factor 6. Personal Contacts Level 6-2, 25 points

Contacts include employees and managers of firms involved in fresh fruit and vegetable marketing such as receivers, vendors, brokers, and shippers.

Factor 7. Purpose of Contacts Level 7-3, 120 points

The purpose is to promote and maintain cooperation and suitable working relations with the persons in the industry by explaining the agency program and resolving conflicts. This includes explaining and defending grade or conditions determinations. Schedules grading and inspection services in cooperation with industry personnel.

Factor 8. Physical Demands Level 8-3, 50 points

The work requires periods of considerable physical exertion such as lifting heavy cartons and crates (often over 50 pounds); climbing into boxcars and trucks; and moving, crouching, and crawling in cramped areas.

Factor 9. Work Environment Level 9-2, 20 points

The work environment includes exposure to adverse outdoor weather; working in refrigerated areas; and exposure to fumes and odors from coolants.

Total Points 1440