

Commodities Scientific Support Division  
Eastern Commodities Support Laboratory  
Aflatoxin Laboratory  
Physical Science Aid  
GS-1311-04

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Eastern Commodities Support Laboratory is responsible for performing chemical, microbiological, and physical analyses of poultry products, egg products, dairy products, processed meat and meat products, peanuts, processed fruits and vegetables and other food products; cotton fibers; and tobacco. These tests are conducted in support of grading, certification, acceptance, and regulatory programs.

The aflatoxin laboratories perform aflatoxin analyses on peanuts, peanut products, other nuts, corn and similar grains, and may also perform other laboratory tests.

## II. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- \* Maintains positive identification of each sample received for testing.
- \* Applies knowledge of procedures for each type of product analyzed.
- \* Responsible for nonquantitative steps of analytical testing procedures.
- \* Receives incoming chemicals and stores them.
- \* Mixes chemical reagents and prepares stock solutions.
- \* Disposes of waste chemicals, using proper safety precautions.
- \* Arranges samples for analysis.
- \* Prepares the absorbent used in thin layer chromatography.
- \* Prepares thin layer chromatography plates according to prescribed procedures.

## III. JOB CONTROLS

The employee works under the direction of the lab supervisor. Incumbent must select the proper procedure for the test being performed. Employee may receive oral instruction in discussing time frames, possible technical problems and alternative guidance. Work is subject to periodic review for adequacy of methods employed and accuracy of end results. Review during progress is rarely conducted. Incumbent applies skill, knowledge and judgment in arranging work sequences, adjusting and operating equipment and in recognizing significant deviations in results. Work methods are established. The employee has contact with other lab workers in order to exchange information and receive instruction. There is exposure to potentially dangerous toxic chemicals.