



## *Fresh Products Branch*

### *Digital Imaging Inspection Services*

#### *Background*

The Fresh Products Branch (FPB) of the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service provides nationwide grading, inspection, and certification services to shippers, importers, processors, sellers, buyers, and other financially interested parties on a user-fee basis. In an effort to implement new services that respond to customer needs, FPB is now offering digital images as an additional inspection service. The produce industry can request digital images of fresh fruits and vegetables depicting the appearance of produce, defects, shifted loads, brands and container markings, and the condition of the containers.

#### *What are digital images?*

Digital images are optically formed pictures produced using a digital camera. A digital camera uses a computer chip instead of film to capture an image. Digital images are created with a series of data digits (computer bits and bytes), which compose an optically formed duplicate, reproduction, or likeness of something or someone.

#### *What are some of the benefits?*

- Applicants can receive digital images of the product or situation in question.
- Digital images can provide photo documentation to accompany the traditional written documentation.
- Digital images can assist produce growers, shippers, brokers, buyers, and distributors in making better business decisions.
- Digital images may be used to assist all parties involved in settling disputes.
- Digital images may be accessed over the Internet and viewed on the applicant's computer screen within minutes after the images are taken.
- Applicants may use their computers to view digital images, print images, or access the Internet to send the images to another office with Internet access.
- Several people at different locations can view digital images simultaneously.
- Applicants can use digital imaging technology to assist in quality control, product procurement, and marketing efforts.

#### *How to request digital images?*

Any financially interested party may request digital images, with or without an inspection, by calling or faxing FPB's market inspection offices. FPB inspectors will take several images of the product or situation in question and provide an ID number and a password to the applicant, so that the images may be accessed over the Internet and viewed on the applicant's computer screen. Digital images are password protected to prevent one industry participant from obtaining access to the images of another industry participant's products.

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***What is the cost?***

Fees for the service are based on FPB's hourly rate, with a 1-hour minimum.

***How can digital images be viewed?***

Sample images may be viewed by visiting [http://view.primesolve.net/usda\\_login.asp](http://view.primesolve.net/usda_login.asp) on the Internet. Upon reaching the login page, enter the assigned login ID# **940** and password **eating#061**. These sample images reflect the condition of loads and containers, container markings and defects. (For optimal viewing, the computer display properties should be set at a minimum of 256 colors for the color palette and 800x600 pixels for the screen area and desktop area.)

***How to obtain additional information?***

For additional information on FPB's digital imaging services and a list of market offices and their phone numbers please visit our website at [www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpdigimage.html](http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpdigimage.html) or contact FPB's Program Support Section on (202) 720-0391.

***“a picture is worth a thousand words”  
decay on onion***



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