

DAIRY EQUIPMENT SANITARY DESIGN EVALUATION SERVICE

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Dairy Grading Branch offers many services on a voluntary, user fee basis that help provide assurance of wholesome and high-quality milk and dairy products. One of the voluntary services offered is a program to evaluate dairy processing equipment for sanitary design and fabrication.

Sanitary processing conditions are essential for the wholesome, high quality dairy products consumers desire. The Dairy Grading Branch, Dairy Equipment Sanitary Design Evaluation Service, provides assurance to buyers that equipment designs and fabrication meet acceptable standards and can be effectively cleaned in order to produce wholesome, high quality dairy products.

Due to the high cost of dairy processing equipment or processes, fabricators and users need to protect their investment. The Dairy Equipment Sanitary Design Evaluation Service provides both the fabricators and users a means by which to ensure the completed equipment will meet all inspection requirements prior to installation.

The production of wholesome, high quality dairy products depends upon processing equipment which can be effectively cleaned and sanitized. Sanitary design requires the application of special materials and engineering techniques to ensure that the products processed are protected at all times. Mechanical cleaning of equipment while fully assembled requires exacting sanitary design characteristics in order to be effective. Equipment which is to be manually cleaned requires easy to disassemble design features.

Evaluation Criteria

The Dairy Grading Branch utilizes internationally recognized criteria for design evaluations. Dairy Grading Branch evaluations fully support and utilize established 3-A Sanitary Standards and 3-A Accepted Practices. In those instances where 3-A Sanitary Standards or Accepted Practices have not been developed, we use the *USDA Guidelines For The Sanitary Design and Fabrication of Dairy Processing Equipment*.

These standards, practices and guidelines provide criteria for materials, design, fabrication and installation as appropriate.

How to Obtain An Evaluation

The Dairy Equipment Sanitary Design Evaluation Service is a voluntary inspection service available to dairy equipment fabricators and users. To participate, an equipment fabricator or user has three options:

1. Design drawings may be submitted by mail for an evaluation,
2. The fabricator may bring design drawings to a joint meeting at the Dairy Grading Branch offices in Washington, DC, or,
3. A Dairy Grading Branch specialist can travel to a site of the fabricator's choice to conduct the evaluation of both drawings and the actual equipment to be evaluated.

Equipment which meets all of the evaluation criteria within the appropriate 3-A Standards or Accepted Practices, or the USDA guidelines is issued a letter stating that the equipment is acceptable for use in dairy plants surveyed and approved for USDA grading service.

Upon request, a U. S. Department of Agriculture, Equipment Acceptance Certificate can also be issued.

Fees & Charges

All evaluations are provided on a user fee basis. The time to conduct the evaluation, prepare the report, and travel to and from an evaluation site are charged at the published hourly rates for Dairy Inspection and Grading Services. Travel expenses are also charged at the published per diem and travel reimbursement rates for official Federal travel.

For More Information

For more information about USDA dairy services, write to: USDA/AMS/Dairy Programs, Dairy Grading Branch, Room 2746-South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW - Stop 0230, Washington, DC 20250-0230, or call the Dairy Grading Branch at 202-720-3171, fax 202-720-2643, or e-mail at First name.Last name@usda.gov (for example: Duane.Spomer@usda.gov.).

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