

Directive

9170.13

5/1/97

UNIFORM FILE SAMPLE RETENTION SYSTEM

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to establish a uniform method for retention of file samples of grain and commodities by official agencies (OA), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) field offices, the Analytical, Reference, and Testing Service (ARTS), and the Board of Appeals and Review (BAR) for specified periods of time.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This directive summarizes the procedures for retaining official file samples for grain and commodities inspected under the authority of the United States Grain Standards Act (USGSA), or the Agricultural Marketing Act (AMA). This directive supersedes Program Directive 917.13 dated 6-26-96. This directive is updated to reflect organizational changes, new numbering system, and new format but does not revise policy.

3. POLICY

To accomplish the mission of the agency, FGIS has established the policy of maintaining an effective record management program. Part of the official record system is the maintenance of file samples retained for reference or review purposes.

4. USE OF FILE SAMPLES

The term "file sample," when used in this directive, means a representative sample or representative portion of a sample that is retained for a specified period of time for reference or review purposes under the USGSA or AMA. Do not use any file sample that has changed condition to obtain official results.

File samples retained by official personnel may be used for:

- * Retests
- * Reinspections
- * Appeal Inspections
- * Board Appeal Inspections
- * Investigation into trade complaints
- * Training of official inspection personnel
- * Supervision or review by field office and BAR personnel
- * Supplementary completion of the original grade (e.g., infestation, odor, etc.)

5. SIZE OF FILE SAMPLES

File samples should be of sufficient size to accommodate subsequent examinations or analysis. The file sample shall be an unworked portion (if available) of the representative sample used for the inspection. The worked portion may be retained as the final file only when insufficient sample is available for an unworked file sample.

- a. USGSA Inspections. Samples retained for grade should be approximately 1,300 grams or more, except for the lighter grains (e.g., oats, barley, etc.) that require less grain to determine grade. For factor only tests or official criteria (e.g., wheat protein), smaller file samples should prove sufficient to handle review services. File samples larger than 1,300 grams may be retained if deemed necessary to provide subsequent inspection service.
- b. AMA Inspections. File samples of graded commodities shall be of sufficient size to perform a complete grading or factor analysis. To determine the proper size for specific commodities, refer to the Rice Inspection Handbook, Bean Inspection Handbook, or Pea and Lentil Inspection Handbook as appropriate.

The amount of sample sent to the testing laboratory for nongraded commodities (e.g., flour, oil, etc.) shall be of sufficient size to perform original, retest, and appeal testing analysis. To determine the proper sample size for specific products, refer to Chapter 2, Sampling, in the Processed Commodities Handbook.

6. SAMPLE RETENTION

- a. For each submitted sample or officially inspected lot examined for grade, factors, or official criteria, a file sample must be retained except as noted below.

Rejected Sublots. All rejected sublots (i.e., material portions) at export locations which are returned to the facility. This includes, but is not limited to, sublots rejected due to excessive levels of aflatoxin or vomitoxin.

Elevator Elects. Grain returned to the elevator before a subplot is designated by inspection personnel, or a subplot that is inspected and found acceptable under the inspection plan, but the elevator elects to return the subplot to the house.

Mycotoxin Samples. All aflatoxin and vomitoxin testing services in which the contractual specifications have been satisfied.

Official Commercial Inspection Service Samples. Unless requested by the applicant for service or an interested party, or when deemed necessary by the field office manager.

- b. File samples for grain and graded commodities shall be maintained by the OA or FGIS field office that performed the original inspection. If a file sample retained by the OA is used for an appeal or supervision inspection, the field office which performed the appeal or supervision inspection shall thereafter have the responsibility for retaining the file sample for the applicable time period.
- c. ARTS will maintain the official file samples of nongraded commodities tested.
- d. Defense Personnel Support Center (DPSC) noncomposite file samples for both food and nonfood components and end items shall be retained by the inspection office or at the sampling point.
- e. Official personnel may, at their discretion, keep file samples for a longer period than required. The minimum retention periods for file samples representing grain or commodities are as follows:

USGSA FILE SAMPLES

MINIMUM DAYS

	IN	OUT	EXPORT	OTHER
TRUCKS	3	5	30	--
RAILCARS	5	10	30	--
BARGES (river)	5	25	--	--
SHIPS & BARGES (lake or ocean)	5	25	90	--
BINS & TANKS	--	--	--	3
SUBMITTED SAMPLES	--	--	--	3

AMA FILE SAMPLES

A. GRADED COMMODITIES

MINIMUM DAYS

DOMESTIC	10
EXPORT	60
DPSC	30
SUBMITTED SAMPLES	3

B. NONGRADED COMMODITIES

MINIMUM DAYS

MISCELLANEOUS PROCESSED PRODUCTS	30 (after last test result) (e.g., original, retest, appeal)
HOPS	15
DPSC (food and nonfood components)	30
DPSC (end items)	30

7. SEPARATIONS

- a. If the work portion is saved for file purposes, separations made in the grading analysis may be mixed back into the major portion of the sample, provided that the addition of separations does not alter the overall quality of the sample. Do not add portions back into the sample which have undergone a material change (e.g., pearling, bleaching, etc.). Maintain these portions separately.
- b. The field office manager shall determine which separations, if any, need to be saved on file samples analyzed for original, reinspection, appeal, Board appeal, or supervision purposes.

8. FILE SYSTEM

- a. The filing system must permit efficient retrieval of file samples and ensure adherence to the required retention periods. Further, file samples must be protected against theft, manipulation, substitution, and unauthorized use.
- b. Use large polyethylene bags, semi-rigid plastic containers, or metal containers to retain file samples of grain, graded commodities, and dry nongraded commodities. Use metal or semi-rigid plastic containers when samples contain an off odor.
- c. Samples of liquid or semisolid nongraded commodities are to be retained in tightly closed glass, metal, or similar kinds of containers as specified in the Processed Commodities Handbook. Use only clean, rust free containers.

9. STORAGE AND PROTECTION OF FILE SAMPLES

- a. Store each file sample in a manner that will protect it from moisture loss, exposure to manipulation or substitution, and from rodent infestation. Do not place paper identification stubs, paper envelopes, or other similar absorptive materials in direct contact with the grain or commodity in the container.
- b. If only FGIS and OA personnel have access to the room where file samples are stored, lock or seal the room when official personnel are absent.
- c. If industry personnel have access to the room where file samples are stored, protect the samples by storing them in a cabinet or closet which is locked or sealed when official personnel are absent.

- d. When the samples are protected by lock, only FGIS or official agency personnel shall have access to the key(s) or combination(s). When the samples are protected by seals, maintain a record of the seals applied and/or removed.

10. IDENTIFICATION OF SAMPLES

The office retaining the file samples will identify each sample by attaching a sample ticket, a numbered or coded sampling ticket stub, or by coding the sample containers in a manner which will ensure positive identification of the sample.

11. DISPOSITION OF SAMPLES

- a. Emptying of Containers. At the end of the retention period, empty the file containers, clean if necessary, and inspect for condition and odor. Discard containers that will not maintain the integrity of the sample.
- b. Sample Disposal. FGIS field offices and OA's which sell, donate, or destroy excess grain or commodity samples shall maintain a record of each transaction and include a copy of the record with their budget report. Reporting requirements for excess USGSA samples are found in Book IV of the Grain Inspection Handbook. For procedures for disposal of commodities inspected under the authority of the AMA, refer to FGIS Directive 265.1, dated 6/05/85.
- c. Poisonous Samples. Samples containing noxious weed seeds or other material which might be harmful to human or animal life shall not be sold, donated, or used for human food or animal feed. Samples which contain toxic substances (e.g. aflatoxin, etc.) shall be disposed of in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

/s/ David Orr

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