

Position Classification Standard for Food Inspection Series, GS-1863

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SERIES DEFINITION

This series includes positions that involve the inspection of slaughter, processing, packaging, shipping, and storing of meat and meat products, poultry and poultry products, fish and fish products, meat products derived from equines, and food establishments engaged in these activities in order to determine compliance with law and regulations that establish standards for the protection of the consumer by assuring them that products distributed to them are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled and packaged. Performance of the work in this series requires the knowledge of normal conditions in live and slaughtered meat, poultry, and fish; of standards of wholesomeness and sanitation of meat, poultry and fish products; and of the processing and sanitation practices of the food production industry or industries inspected.

This standard supersedes the single agency standard for the Food Inspection Series, GS-1863, issued June 1963.

EXCLUSIONS

Excluded from this series are the following:

1. Positions requiring performance of scientific work in the field of veterinary science. (See the [Veterinary Medical Science Series, GS-0701.](#))
2. Positions requiring performance of professional and scientific work and inspections, investigational and related activities for the purpose of discovering potential and existing violations of Federal laws relating to the nature, adulteration and misbranding of foods, drugs and cosmetics; in gathering evidence regarding such violations for presentation in court. (See the [Consumer Safety Series, GS-0696.](#))
3. Positions involving technical inspection and investigative work (not requiring professional scientific training) connected with the enforcement of Federal laws relating to the nature, adulteration, and misbranding of foods, drugs, and cosmetics. (See the [Compliance Inspection and Support Series, GS-1802.](#))
4. Positions involving examination of food products primarily for the purpose of carrying out the provision for Government grading regulations. (See the [Agricultural Commodity Grading Series, GS-1980.](#))
5. Positions concerned with investigative work involving alleged and actual violations of various inspection regulations, agreements, or similar laws. (See the appropriate series of the [Investigation Group, GS-1800.](#))

TITLES AND SPECIALIZATIONS

The title for positions in this occupation is Food Inspector, without further designation concerning the nature of the food inspected, such as meat, poultry, or fish. There are two approved specializations in this series:

- Slaughter Inspection, and
- Processed Products Inspection.

Slaughter inspection involves the ante-mortem and post-mortem inspection of cattle, swine, sheep, goats, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, rabbits, and equines.

Processed products inspection covers the inspection of all processed food containing the above animals, poultry, or fish. Processed products range from fresh boneless meats, ground meat and hamburgers, frozen fish fillets, and fish cakes, through ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products to uncooked and cooked sausage, luncheon meat, canned food products, cured and smoked products, and refined lard and shortening, regardless of the meat, poultry, or fish products involved.

Positions that involve the inspection of slaughtered meat and poultry exclusively are entitled Food Inspector (Slaughter).

Positions that involve the inspection of processed products only are designated as Food Inspector (Processed Products).

Mixed positions and any other positions that do not fall in the established specializations are designated as Food Inspector, without parenthetical designation.

The prefix "Supervisory" is to be added to positions involving substantial supervisory responsibility.

OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

The food inspection occupation covers both meat and poultry slaughter inspection; and meat, poultry, and fish processing inspection. The meat and poultry inspection program of the Federal Government is established under legislation that requires that all meat and poultry products in interstate commerce be wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled, and packaged. Legislation also requires that meat, poultry, and meat and poultry products in intrastate commerce be inspected by State authorities in accordance with standards that are equal to those established by the Federal Government for interstate commerce. In the absence of an effective State inspection program equal to the Federal program, the Federal Government can assume responsibility for the inspection of meat and poultry products in intrastate commerce on its own authority, or at the request of the State.

Slaughter inspection

Slaughter inspection involves inspecting the slaughter of beef, calves, swine, sheep, goats, and equines (which are known as red meat); and inspecting the slaughter of poultry, largely chicken, ducks, geese, and turkeys (although rabbits also come under the definition of poultry inspection). The basic processes in the inspection of red meat slaughter and poultry slaughter are the same. Ante-mortem inspection involves a visual examination of the live animal or poultry prior to slaughter in order to determine that its appearance and behavior present nothing that appears abnormal. Postmortem slaughter inspection involves the determination that no pathological conditions render the product unfit to eat; that the product has not become contaminated in the course of the slaughter; and that the product is handled, stored, and packaged in a sanitary manner so as to keep it wholesome and fit for human consumption. The major differences between meat and poultry inspection are in the techniques used in passing or rejecting the products presented for inspection.

Red meat slaughter inspection

Red meat slaughter is carried out in slaughter and packing houses. These tend to specialize in beef slaughter, swine slaughter, or veal and lamb slaughter, although there are some packing houses which slaughter more than one species of animals. The packing houses vary in size from those that operate on a full eight-hour basis slaughtering a large number of animals (e.g., 700 per hour) to those that slaughter a relatively small number per day one or two days a week. Inspection of animals in either of these types of slaughter house is essentially the same. There is visual ante-mortem inspection of the live animals, carried out by the inspector, in order to determine that they are in a normal and healthy condition. Food inspectors assigned to slaughter inspection are trained to recognize abnormalities in appearance and behavior of the live animal. Any animals which they consider to be suspicious from the point of view of perfect health are held for examination by a Veterinary Medical Officer.

Post-mortem inspection consists of a visual and tactile and/or incisory inspection of the head, viscera, carcass, and offal in order to determine (1) that no pathological conditions are present, and (2) that the carcass is in a clean and wholesome condition. In large plants where slaughter is done on an assembly line basis, inspection stations are established on the line for head, viscera, and carcass inspection, while inspection of the edible offal (liver, heart, brain and tripe) takes place in the offal preparation room. In smaller plant's that do not operate on an assembly-line basis, a single inspector may carry out all four inspection processes described above.

Poultry inspection

Because of the nature of the operation, poultry slaughter is generally carried out on an assembly-line basis. Food inspectors make an ante-mortem inspection of the poultry in the cage prior to slaughter. After the poultry has been slaughtered, singed, and eviscerated, each carcass passes before an inspector who examines the viscera and the body to assure that there are no evidences of pathology. Working with him is a plant employee who, at his instruction, trims those carcasses which he feels require trimming before being passed for human consumption.

Rejection

The red meat inspector does not have authority to condemn an entire carcass but does have authority to condemn parts of it. If he finds any evidence of abnormal conditions or contamination which cannot be corrected by trimming, he retains the carcass in a sealed or locked cage for final inspection by a Veterinary Medical Officer who has the authority either to condemn or to pass the suspected carcass.

The poultry inspector, on the other hand, does have the authority to condemn individual carcasses as not fit for human consumption. The difference between the authority of the two inspectors in this respect stems primarily from economic considerations.

Neither meat nor poultry slaughter inspectors have the responsibility themselves for trimming meat or poultry carcasses or carrying out any other function that is normally done at the plant. They do not deal with individual employees, but give instructions to foremen and to plant management to assure that the actions they wish to have carried out are carried out. In addition to the inspection of the product carcasses, the food inspector in charge of a slaughter plant is also responsible for assuring that the plant is maintained in a clean and sanitary fashion, and that plant employees are wearing proper clothing so as to avoid contamination of the product. Inspectors in-charge must assure that the premises meet basic sanitary requirements in terms of cleanliness, that employees' lockers are cleaned, that there is no infestation of rats or other vermin, etc. Inspectors in-charge, and subordinate inspectors under their direction, carry out continual inspection of the physical plant and call to the attention of management deficiencies such as rusty rails, cracks, leaking ceilings, floors that are unsanitary, and any other conditions in the plant that might contaminate the product.

The inspector-in-charge deals with plant management in order to assure that unsatisfactory conditions are remedied and that the plant is maintained in a wholesome and sanitary fashion. Some of these conditions require immediate remedy for unsatisfactory conditions; others require that the inspector-in-charge work with plant management to develop long-range plans for improvement of physical conditions in the plant. He examines plans for replacement of equipment, redesign of work space and any other proposal that will affect the general sanitary condition of the plant, and he makes recommendations for their modification or approval. His recommendations are from the point of view of accessibility for cleaning, maintaining general sanitation, and avoiding conditions that might lead to product contamination.

Processing inspection

Processing inspection is essentially quite different from slaughter inspection. By and large, the processed meat, poultry, and fish products are those in which the meat, poultry, or fish has changed its identity as it is incorporated into a processed product. Processed products range from hamburger and ground beef, chicken rolls, turkey rolls, frozen fish fillets, and fish portions, to the more complex foods, such as frozen dinners including meat, poultry, or fish, canned soups, stews, meat and chicken pies, crab cakes, cooked and uncooked sausage, cured and smoked products, refined lard and shortening.

Food Inspectors (Processed Products) are responsible for inspecting all products arriving in the processing plants for wholesomeness and to assure that the meat and poultry are from inspected

plants. They inspect all products which will end up in the final processed product; that is, vegetables, cereals, spices, eggs, and all other ingredients used in the final product in addition to the meat, poultry, or fish. They assure that the finished processed product has been handled in an acceptable sanitary manner throughout the processing in the plant. This involves inspecting to make sure that the plant meets general sanitary requirements and regulations, that the equipment is cleaned and maintained in accordance with regulations and approved practices and that no conditions that might be potential sanitary hazards exist. Food Inspectors (Processed Products) are also responsible for assuring that processed products are manufactured in accordance with approved procedures, that all ingredients are identified through all phases of the process, that all products are correctly labeled and not adulterated. All labels for processed products must be approved by the inspection authority. In most establishments, the food inspector-in-charge works with management in developing the statements on the label, the description of the formula, and the process itself.

Inspection of processed meat, poultry, and fish products differs from slaughter inspection in that generally it is not a continuous inspection, but takes place on a sample basis at random intervals, since the nature of processed food products varies considerably, inspection objectives, procedures, and timing vary among plants.

Food Inspectors (Processed Products) inspect at critical stages of production to assure:

- compliance with regulations concerning percentages and proportions of fat, water, breadings, and added cereals;
- that items whose use is restricted by law or regulations, such as nitrates and nitrites, phosphates and anti-oxidants are present in no more than the authorized quantities or proportions in the final product;
- compliance with labels, formulae, and stated descriptions of manufacturing processes;
- general wholesomeness and freedom from contamination;
- compliance with regulations and standards for maintenance and cleaning.

Some plants that have an unusually high volume or complexity of products and a variety of product lines have instituted quality control programs to assure compliance with their own requirements and specifications as well as with Federal requirements. When these quality control programs, which are usually based upon statistical methods of sampling and analysis, been approved by the inspection authority, they serve as the basis for the Federal inspection program. The food inspector has the objective of assuring that plant management is adhering to its own quality control program and procedures as approved. He inspects the plant for general cleanliness and sanitation, and deals with management to improve the physical facilities and equipment. He reviews the records and findings of the plant's quality control staff in terms of the mutually agreed upon provisions of the quality control program, and manufacturing processes as administered by plant management.

CLASSIFICATION FACTORS AFFECTING THE GRADE-LEVEL EVALUATION OF FOOD INSPECTOR POSITIONS

Two factors are used in this standard to define the grade-level evaluation of positions in the occupation:

- Nature of Work Assignments
- Level of Responsibility

Nature of work assignments

This factor deals with such elements as the kind of inspection involved, physical conditions of the plants, attitudes of plant management, complexity of the products involved, as these affect the level of difficulty of the inspection work.

Kind of inspection: This element includes whether it is slaughter inspection or processing inspection; whether inspection involves line inspection for pathological conditions and freedom from contamination; whether it involves total plant inspection, including general sanitation of the physical plant, equipment, methods, and techniques of cleaning equipment and the methods of handling, storing, and shipping the product; whether it is traditional processed food inspection or whether it involves the inspection of an approved quality control program.

Physical conditions of the plant: The physical plant may be modern and up to date, with no sanitation problems, equipped with modern equipment that can easily be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition; or it may be located in old, outmoded, and cramped quarters which make it difficult to avoid potential sanitation hazards or to operate at optimum sanitary conditions. Because of zoning laws and other restrictions, it may be impossible to move the plant, or to enlarge it, so that there is a constant problem to keep it in an acceptable condition. Very often this involves expenditure of substantial amounts of money by the owner. Inspectors assigned to plants with these characteristics must remain constantly aware of potential hazards and make sure that corrective measures are taken promptly. Inspectors-in-charge may have primary responsibility for dealing with owners and management to develop long-range plans for upgrading the physical facilities and equipment in order to eliminate potential hazards. They must also make sure that the improvements or repairs that are carried out are timely and acceptable.

Attitude of management: The attitude of management toward the Federal inspection program may range from cooperative, through indifferent, resistant, or hostile to antagonistic. In the meat and poultry inspection program, all plants shipping interstate products and plants engaged in intrastate commerce in those States whose inspections programs are directly administered by the Federal Government are subject to mandatory inspection. The fish inspection program is voluntary and paid for by the inspected plant; however, once a plant comes under inspection, it is subject to all of the requirements and regulations. The degree of cooperation obtained by the inspector in carrying out long-range plans for sanitation and general upgrading of a plant will have a significant effect on the difficulty and responsibility of his job. Where management is resistant, the inspector must have greater ability in dealing with people, to explain, coax,

persuade them to do what has to be done to bring plants to a satisfactory level. When management is resistant and hostile and prone to undertake devious and illegal methods to avoid complying with regulations and requirements, the inspector faces an entirely different situation. Where the management of a plant has violated Federal regulations, the plant still remains under inspection, and inspectors are required to operate in the plant. The degree to which they are subject to resentment, hostility, or, in some cases, intimidation is a measure of the difficulties of the assignment with which they are faced.

Complexity of product and product lines: This aspect of the work assignment applies to processed food inspection.

The simplest forms of food processing are the breaking and boning of meat carcasses, the preparation of individual portions of meat services for portion control, grinding and chopping of meat, rendering the preparation of ready-to-cook poultry and poultry parts, and the preparation of frozen fish fillets, portions, or whole fish. In this category of processed foods, the inspector must be concerned with net weight, total count of pieces or servings, proportion of fat and moisture to animal protein, and the species or part identification of the product.

Next in the range of complexity of individual products is the manufacture of meat patties, pizza, frankfurters, and luncheon meats; the manufacture of chicken and turkey rolls and sausage, fish sticks, crab cakes, breaded shrimp, and the preparation of frozen dinners in which the meat, poultry, or fish portion is similar to the products described above. In this category of processed foods, the inspector must be concerned with all of the matters cited in the simpler category, plus the addition of cereals, fillers, preservatives, flavorings, colorings, breading, etc. Some of these additives, such as nitrates and nitrites, are restricted in use, by regulation. The label and formula show a variety of ingredients which must be properly listed on the label and present in the correct proportions in the products.

The most complex range of processed foods includes frozen dinners, pizza, gourmet foods such as veal parmigiana, chicken kiev and frozen dinners whose meat, poultry, or fish component represents a complex formulation of several ingredients, etc., canned soups, stews, etc. These foods include a combination of meat, fish, or poultry, with additional vegetables, sauces, spaghetti or other pasta. In this class of foods, the method of preparation is complicated and the components, which cover a wide range of non-animal protein foods, are all subject to inspection for wholesomeness and identity. In addition, the ingredients, which are required to be listed on the label in the order of their predominance in the finished product, are used in several of the components of the finished product. For example, cereals and shortening may be used in breading and in sauces in the same product; or the crust in a meat pie may include some of the ingredients found in the filling. For these reasons, the problems of inspecting and controlling ingredient statements and formulae require more skill and knowledge of the manufacturing processes than in connection with the less complex ranges of processed foods.

Complexity of product lines is another aspect of this element. It is measured in terms of the number of different products manufactured by the plant, how often each is manufactured, and the extent to which new products are introduced, established products are discontinued, and

formulae for products are changed, or several similar products with different formulae are produced.

Inspectors assigned to plants with complex product lines must have a thorough knowledge of the operations and products of the plant, must be able to relate the inventories of raw materials and supplies to the formulae being manufactured, and must be more keenly aware of the possibilities of adulteration or mislabeling that are presented by the more complex processed foods.

Level of responsibility

Nonsupervisory food inspectors are subject to the supervision, direction, review and evaluation of the inspector-in-charge of the plant or department to which they are assigned.

Inspectors-in-charge receive supervision from supervising inspectors. In addition, Veterinary Medical Officers review the technical decisions that are made by food inspectors (slaughter) and have professional responsibility for the final rejection of red meat carcasses that are considered unsafe for consumption. The Veterinary Medical Officer determines which obvious conditions may permit condemnation by the food inspector in both red meat and poultry. The level of responsibility exercised by inspectors-in-charge is a significant consideration. For example, in any given inspection situation, the inspector in charge of a plant may be primarily responsible for maintaining relations with plant management in working on long-range development programs or in working with plant management in the physical relocation of equipment. In other situations, with respect to plants with the same characteristics, these responsibilities may be assumed by the supervisory staff rather than by the inspector-in-charge. This difference in responsibility will have a material effect on the grade level of the position of the inspector-in-charge.

Inspectors in charge of plants may be responsible for the evaluation, training and development of subordinate inspection staff assigned to the plant; or, in some cases, they may be responsible only for their own assignment, with the supervisory inspector carrying primary responsibility for the training, development, and evaluation of inspection staff assigned to the plant. The presence or absence of this kind of responsibility is also a significant matter in evaluating nonsupervisory food inspector positions.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED

The kinds and levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities required are not treated separately in the grade-level descriptions, since they are reflected in the description of the other factors.

There is a basic knowledge and ability required of all successful inspectors. This involves a knowledge of food animals, of normal and abnormal appearances, of general sanitation, and sanitary practices in the food industry, and of what constitutes a potential sanitary hazard. In addition, however, in many assignments, particularly those involving inspection of processing plants, additional knowledge are also required. This is more noticeable in processing plants where the inspector must be familiar with regulations concerning the amount of fat, moisture, vegetable protein, or restricted substances that could be added to the product. In order to carry out an effective inspection of such a plant, a food inspector must:

- be familiar with the plant operations and with the processing of each product in the product-line;
- understand the flow of raw materials from the time they are received in the plant until they are incorporated into the final products;
- know at what intervals in the processing it is necessary to take samples;
- understand and appreciate the significance of his findings;
- recognize the critical points in the production line which must be more carefully inspected, reviewed, and sampled;
- be familiar with the operations of the plant in order to recognize whether they are carrying out their duties efficiently and correctly.

When he discovers apparent or real violations of regulations, the inspector must be able to understand enough of the food process to realize what is causing a violation. In some cases, this may be deliberate on the part of management; in others it is something which goes on in the process which may not really be understood by management itself. He must recognize these two different situations and determine what appropriate action to recommend. These knowledge, skills, and abilities are obtained, in many cases, through formal academic training above the high school level, either in universities or schools of technology. Knowledge of biology, food technology, chemistry and statistics may be a requirement in some positions. When approved quality control programs exist, the knowledge of statistics and statistical analysis is a basic requirement for the processed foods inspector.

HAZARDOUS WORKING CONDITIONS

Food inspectors of all specializations are exposed to hazardous working conditions as a frequent and indispensable part of most of their assignments. These conditions include exposure to the danger of slipping and falling because of bloody, icy, or wet floors, using sharp knives during the post-mortem inspection, working around processing equipment which can present a hazard to plant staff and inspectors alike, and constant movement in and out of refrigerated storage rooms, below zero freezers, and warm incubation and cooking rooms.

These hazardous conditions affect all staff to one degree or another during the course of their assignments, and have, therefore been taken into account in the grade -level evaluations in' this occupation.

NOTES TO USERS

The inspection work described above and the grade-level descriptions that follow are based primarily on the meat and poultry inspection program of the Department of Agriculture. However, the grade-level characteristics which serve as the basis for evaluating positions in this occupation are designed to be applicable without regard to current organizational structure. They may also be applied to evaluate food inspection positions in that and other departments, which are specifically described, such as those concerned with moisture control, imported meat, fish inspection, etc. The grade-level descriptions include at each level a description of the

typical characteristics of each of the grade level functions described, that is, nature of work assignments, and level of responsibility. Many positions exist that are mixed as to grade level in terms of these factors. Such positions should be evaluated in accordance with general classification practice with respect to [mixed grade positions](#). Particular attention should be paid to positions that involve rotating from plant to plant in order to ascertain that the factors affecting grade levels are similar in each plant. Where the inspector is given differing assignments as he moves from plant to plant; or where the plant characteristics differ, or his responsibility varies, the position should be considered over a representative period of time and treated as a mixed position.

While supervisory positions are not described in this standard, some positions responsible for the inspection service within a given plant may also include responsibility for directing the work of one or two food inspectors at lower grade levels. Such a position is classified on the basis of the nonsupervisory responsibilities of the inspector in charge of the plant or department.

Supervisory positions are to be evaluated by reference to the [General Schedule Supervisory Guide](#).

The absence of written criteria for any grade levels not included in this standard does not preclude classifying a position to that grade level on the basis of comparison with this standard and according to the accepted principles of position classification.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-5

Nature of work assignments

Food inspectors at grade GS-5 receive training in the objectives, methods and techniques of meat, poultry, and fish inspection. They are instructed in the provisions of food inspection laws, regulations, manuals, and inspection procedures.

GS-5 food inspectors are assigned to slaughter inspection and/or processed food inspection. In slaughter inspection work, they receive a combination of on-the-job training and organized instruction in such areas as ante-mortem, and post-mortem inspection of meat and poultry slaughter. As they progress in their training, they are assigned to inspection stations where they carry out the inspection function under the close supervision of Food Inspectors (Slaughter) of higher grade. They are trained in the techniques of inspection of the live animals, how to detect abnormalities in heads, viscera, and carcasses that would render the meat or poultry unfit for human consumption.

Food inspectors at grade GS-5 who are assigned to processing inspection work also receive on-the-job training and classroom instruction in the general theories and principles of food sanitation, food processing, inspection of processing operations, and on the theories and principles of public health sanitation as it applies to food processing. As they progress in their training, they are assigned to food processing inspection work in cooperating plants where they carry out inspections under Food Inspectors (Processed Products) of higher grade.

Level of responsibility

Food inspectors at grade GS-5 work under the detailed step-by-step supervision of experienced food inspectors. They carry out the inspection processes to which they are assigned under the close observation of an experienced inspector who reviews their actions and corrects errors on the spot.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-7

This is the first full working level of food inspection in both slaughter and processed Products work. GS-7 food inspectors carry out one or more aspects of food inspection in situations that require the inspector to exercise judgment in the full range of inspection functions.

*Nature of work assignments***Food Inspector (Slaughter)**

Food Inspectors (Slaughter) at grade GS-7 inspect animals and poultry before slaughter, during slaughter, and in associated departments after leaving the slaughter floor.

This inspection involves antemortem inspection; all phases of post-mortem inspection, including complete inspection in the edible offal and inedible tasking areas; inspection of the handling of the products in coolers, freezers, storage areas, shipping docks; and inspection of the plant for general sanitary conditions and for potential sanitary hazards.

In poultry slaughter plants, GS-7 Food Inspectors (Slaughter) may also inspect the packaging and labeling of whole or cut-up parts of poultry, chilling and freezing, and other related activities that do not involve the cooking and processing of poultry and are closely related to the activities of the poultry slaughter plant.

Food Inspector (Processed Products)

Food Inspectors (Processed Products) at grade GS-7 inspect meat, poultry, and fish products in plants that carry out processing procedures such as preparation of raw products, defrosting, boning, or freezing of edible meat, poultry or fish products, in line with the instructions relating to the manufacturing and processing methods and equipment. Such inspections require overseeing the full range of processing operations at the plant by means of detailed inspection of each step of the manufacturing process in which meat and poultry or edible parts thereof are combined with other ingredients according to a specified formula and processed by various methods.

Food Inspectors (Processed Products) determine that the product is handled according to approved methods. They assure the wholesomeness of all ingredients entering into the finished product, including any which are not derived from meat, poultry, or fish such as vegetables, spices, cereals, vegetable protein, and flavorings.

GS-7 inspectors check the meat, poultry, and fish that is received into the plant for cleanliness, decomposition, contamination, or damage in transit or storage.

Food Inspectors (Processed Products) GS-7 supervise label and formulation compliance to assure that inspected products and their ingredients conform in kind and quantity to approved formula. They make frequent examinations to verify that the net weights and the uniformity of fresh, or frozen products meet requirements.

GS-7 food inspectors of all specializations make sanitary inspections of assigned plants to determine that sanitary requirements and regulations are being fulfilled. This includes inspection of plant facilities and equipment to assure that they are kept clean and maintained in the condition appropriate for the purpose for which they are intended, for example:

- that equipment and utensils are properly cleaned and sanitary before and during processing operations;
- that edible products are handled and stored in a sanitary manner;
- that condemned material and waste are handled and disposed of in the proper manner to assure that contamination of edible products does not occur;
- that employees are dressed in compliance with the regulations and that personal hygiene requirements are being met;
- that packaging supplies are properly cared for and used to assure that their condition is suitable for the purpose intended;
- that only approved cleaning agents and compounds are used;
- that fly control procedures are carried out in accordance with regulations;
- that outside plant premises are kept in a satisfactory condition;
- that rubbish and waste are not allowed to accumulate and become an unsanitary nuisance.

GSA food inspectors check the efficiency of the janitorial services in all rooms of the plant to assure that the various departments, including employees' rest rooms are kept clean, properly supplied with soap, towels, and other items needed.

Plant characteristics

Typically, the GS-7 food inspector is assigned to a plant that is well designed, not obsolescent nor cramped, and presents only the usual maintenance problems.

A slaughter plant typically engages in the slaughter of one or more species of animal or poultry. It may also carry out a breaking and boning function, or the preparation of cut pieces of poultry, but there is no grinding or chopping of meat or poultry.

A processing plant to which a GS-7 inspector is assigned produces products characterized as either simple or of medium range of complexity as discussed under Complexity of Product. The plant typically is considered to be in compliance with Federal regulations and has a continuing history of such compliance and cooperation with the inspection program in correcting unsanitary and unacceptable conditions. Food inspectors assigned to the plant can expect cooperation from management in carrying out suggestions and recommendations for improving the sanitary condition of the plant and the safe and wholesome handling of meat or poultry products.

Level of responsibility

GS-7 food inspectors are responsible for dealing with management in the persons of foremen and supervisors. These dealings consist, for example, of giving instructions to foremen and supervisors to clean up an undesirable situation; calling to their attention that employees of the plant do not meet clothing regulations; that cleaning or clean-up operations are not being carried out properly, effectively and in conformance with regulations; instructing them to hold for further inspection or rework any products which do not meet standards or regulations.

GS-7 inspectors have, and exercise, the authority to stop the production line whenever, in their opinion, the work is moving too fast to permit proper sanitary procedures to be carried out or for correct and effective inspections to be made. Typically, at this level, GS-7 food inspectors do not have responsibility for dealing with top management and owners of the plant in order to work out and develop long-range programs for upgrading the general sanitation and sanitary conditions and physical facilities, etc.

GS-7 inspectors are under the direct supervision of a food inspector or veterinarian in charge of the inspection program for the plant. They receive their assignments from the supervisor. They notify their supervisor of the need for major repairs or the replacement of worn, broken, and unsanitary equipment, utensils, and other facilities, and refer major violations to him for corrective action. When other problems arise in connection with the work, the supervisor is available to provide technical advice and guidance, to resolve disputes, to resolve appeals, and negotiate with plant management when new, unusual, or controversial problems arise or where plant personnel are uncooperative. The work of the GS-7 inspector is reviewed for accuracy, judgment, effectiveness, and conformity to regulations, instructions, and procedures.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-8

Food inspector positions at the GS-8 level differ from those at grade GS-7, either in the nature of the work assignments, the characteristics of the plants to which the inspectors are assigned, or the increased measure of responsibility with which the inspectors carry out their functions.

Nature of work assignments

In addition to the duties characteristic of GS-7 food inspectors, in both the slaughter and processed products specializations, GS-8 inspectors spend a substantial period of time during their rotational assignments inspecting general plant facilities. The GS-8 inspector is responsible for recognizing existing and potential sanitation problems arising from the physical characteristics of the plants, the procedures which are carried out in general cleaning and sanitizing of equipment and working space, deficiencies in food handling and clothing of staff employees, etc.. In contrast to GS-7 inspectors who, day-by-day, inspect (a) work processes being carried out and (b) equipment and facilities for current contamination and lack of cleanliness, GS-8 inspectors are required to recognize emerging deficiencies or trends in the condition of equipment and facilities that are potential causes of unsanitary conditions and to develop recommendations for corrective action which will be of optimum effectiveness. They

work both with their immediate supervisor and with top management of the plant in order to develop satisfactory work projects and time schedules for effecting changes necessary to bring the plant into conformity.

Plant characteristics

GS-8 food inspectors whose work assignment is essentially the same as those typical of grade GS-7 are assigned to plants which have characteristics such as the following:

-Slaughter plants typically and continually slaughter more than one species of animal, either concurrently or sequentially. Slaughter operations in these plants are carried out on an assembly-line basis, and a large number of animals are slaughtered per hour on all working shifts.

- Some slaughter plants combine the slaughter of one or more species of animal with the performance of simple processing operations, such as breaking and boning, cutting into primal cuts, manufacture of simple processed products such as ground meat and sausage meat, preparation of ready-to-eat chicken parts, boned turkey breast, etc.

Processing plants to which GS-8 Food Inspectors (Processed Products) are assigned have much the same complexity of product and product line as those to which GS-7 Food Inspectors (Processed Foods) are assigned.

Typically, GS-8 food inspectors are assigned:

- to plants with no continual history of conformity with Federal standards, which will require long-range planning to bring them into conformity with Federal requirements;
- to plants whose physical facilities are antiquated and outmoded and which will require continual expenditure to maintain them in a satisfactory condition or to modernize them;
- to plants with a demonstrable history of lack of cooperation or hostility toward the inspection program. Such plants typically have a record of continued violations of Federal regulations and requirements.

Level of responsibility

In addition to the responsibilities characteristic of GS-7 food inspectors, GS-8 inspectors are required to assume responsibility for observing the general overall sanitary condition of the plant to which they are assigned, including both the physical facilities of the plant, the equipment, and the sanitary practices involved in the various processes carried out in the plant. Not only are they required to recognize poor sanitation conditions and poor sanitary practices, but they are also responsible for recognizing such potential hazards and dangers to the wholesomeness of the products involved as formation of rust, crumbling cement, peeling paint on equipment, water leaks, etc. In addition to recognizing unsanitary conditions, GS-8 food inspectors are required to be sufficiently knowledgeable of the plant's processes and practices to be able to identify causes of unsatisfactory conditions and to develop plans and programs for correcting these causes.

GS-8 food inspectors are responsible for establishing effective relationships with foremen and supervisory employees of the plant to which they are assigned, and to develop effective relationships with plant management in order to work with them in affecting improvements in the sanitary condition of the plant.

GS-8 food inspectors are under the supervision of either a veterinarian or a food inspector in charge of the inspection of the plant. They consult with the supervisor in developing recommendations for the correction of unsatisfactory and unsanitary conditions, discuss with them appropriate approaches to management and, from time-to-time, participate with the inspector-in-charge in discussing with plant management the long-range program for improving or updating the physical facilities and sanitary practices and procedures of the establishment. By contrast, GS-7 inspectors check cleanliness of floors and equipment and actual contamination. They do not inspect into causes of contamination.

GS-8 food inspectors may provide on-the-job training and development to food inspectors of lower grade assigned to the plant. They serve as senior nonsupervisory inspectors on the staff and provide advice and assistance to other members of the food inspection staff as required.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-9

Typically, GS-9 inspectors of both specializations are responsible for the inspection program of one or more plants or a large department of a plant. The number of plants, or departments, involved depends upon the volume of work generated by the plant, the complexity of its operations and the geographical area involved. This level exceeds the GS-8 level because it includes an extra measure of responsibility for the program of a plant or plants, or a large department.

Nature of work assignments

GS-9 Food Inspectors (Slaughter) are usually assigned to plants or groups of plants with a relatively small-to-medium volume of production or to the slaughter department of a mixed plant. GS-9 Food Inspectors (Slaughter) carry out the full inspection programs in the plant. A veterinarian is available to make final determinations of pathology and to provide overall supervision and guidance.

GS-9 Food Inspectors (Processed Products) serve as inspectors in charge of one or more meat, poultry, or fish processing plants or large department. Typically, they are the only inspectors assigned and are fully responsible for carrying out the full range of the inspection program.

Plant characteristics

Slaughter plants or departments to which GS-9 Food Inspectors (Slaughter) are assigned have the following characteristics:

- the volume of production is too small to require the services of a full-time veterinarian, so that the GS-9 slaughter inspector deals with owners and managers independently on a day-to-day basis;

- many of the plants combine slaughter of red meat animals with boning and breaking operations and the manufacture of hamburger and sausage according to simple formulas;
- many of the plants may slaughter more than one species of animals.

Typically, these plants have newly come under Federal inspection and are now required to develop a long-range plan for improving the physical facilities and the equipment. They must develop procedures and techniques for the manufacture of hamburger and sausage that are in conformity with Federal requirements.

Owners of such plants are typically cooperative but not familiar with Federal requirements. Since they are relatively small operations, and since many of them have been in operation for many years, plant owners are not eager to spend money in order to bring their plants into full conformity.

GS-9 Food Inspectors (Processed Products) are typically assigned to plants with a full line of processed products which involve several formulations and varieties of labels. Most of the products are standard items in the meat, poultry, or fish industry; many combine meat, poultry, or fish with other food such as vegetables, cereals, and restricted items like nitrates and nitrites. The product line is commonly static; there are relatively few changes in formulation or labeling in the course of a year. Very rarely are new products introduced into the product line. Characteristically, at this level processing plants have typically had a continued history of compliance with Federal requirements, and the owners and/or managers are generally cooperative.

Level of responsibility

GS-9 food inspectors in both specializations are responsible for planning and carrying out the inspection program at assigned plants or departments, and for assuring that all products leaving the plants are in full compliance with law and regulations.

They have primary responsibility for working closely with the plant owners and managers in developing plans for correcting deficiencies, for bringing plants into compliance, and for correcting problem conditions that are liable to lead to the manufacture of products that are contaminated, unsanitary, adulterated or not in compliance with the Federal requirement. GS-9 food inspectors in both specialties report to supervisors, who are responsible for a number of plants and who are therefore not always immediately available to take care of questions and problems that arise.

GS-9 food inspectors receive advice, assistance and support from their supervisors. Supervisors also settle appeals made by plant management from decisions made by the food inspector. Supervisors participate in discussions between plant management and the GS-9 inspector-in-charge, when there are extensive recommendations involving a substantial outlay of funds or where delicate negotiations may be required.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-10

GS-10 food inspectors of both specializations differ from those at the GS-9 level only with respect to the characteristics of the plants to which they are assigned.

Nature of work assignments

GS-10 food inspectors in both specializations are assigned as inspectors in charge of one or more slaughter, processed products, or combination plants. Their assignments as inspectors-in-charge are similar to those described at grade GS-9.

Plant characteristics

The plants to which GS-10 food inspectors in both specializations are assigned differ from those typical of the GS-9 level, either in the complexity of the product, or in the attitude of the plant owners or management including the history of compliance with Federal regulations. Complexity of the products is evidenced by the variety of processing operations involved and the variety of products, many of which are not manufactured each working day. Typically, product "A" may be scheduled four times a week, product "B" once, product "C" two half days, and product "D" only by demand. Some plants may have contracts which are filled only once, periodically, or irregularly. These plants produce several products that are essentially similar but with variations in approved formula and labels. They may be constantly introducing discontinuing products that vary in formula or ingredients.

Plants to which GS-10 food inspectors of both specializations may be assigned may have product lines similar to those typical of plants at the GS-9 level, but such plants may be new to Federal inspection. They may require considerable planning and scheduling of improvements to bring them into compliance and then into conditions that will avoid creation of potential sanitary hazards. Other plants to which food inspectors of both specializations may be assigned may also have product lines characteristic of plants at the GS-9 level, but management that is resistant to the Federal inspection program; that undertakes delaying tactics or deceptive practices; and that is generally unwilling to carry out recommendations for changes that will render the plant free from sanitation hazards. Such plants usually have a continued history of violations and hazardous conditions and, in many cases, have been subject to repeated court action.

Level of responsibility

GS-10 food inspectors of both specializations are, like GS-9 food inspectors, responsible for carrying out the food inspection program at the plant or plants to which they are assigned. They are called upon to maintain effective relationships with plant owners and managers. Their supervisors are available for consultation, advice and assistance in developing long-range plans, for negotiating with management, and for considering appeals from decisions of the inspector-in-charge.

FOOD INSPECTOR GS-1863-11

GS-11 food inspectors are found only in the processed products specialization. Work assignments at this level differ from those at grade GS-10 only in terms of the characteristics and operations of the plants to which they are assigned.

Nature of work assignments

GS-11 Food Inspectors (Processed Products) are assigned as inspectors in charge of processing plants whose product line is extremely complex, and whose volume of production is large. Typically, plants of this nature produce a large variety of processed foods; many times the same products may be manufactured according to several different formulae which are varied depending upon market conditions. Typically, the products are prepared in large batches, and the formulae must be determined according to the demands of an automated production system. It is therefore not possible for either management or the Federal inspector to inspect the product visually and determine solely from physical observation of the manufacturing process whether the product is being produced in conformity with Federal requirements.

Therefore, most plants of this nature have established a quality control program. A quality control staff is established to carry out the program. The staff is usually directed by a food technologist, biologist or chemist who is capable of directing the laboratory procedures necessary to determine whether the product is in compliance with the established formulae, labeling, and Federal requirements. In essence, a quality control program involves selecting and testing samples at certain stages in the production line according to a predetermined schedule. For example, six samples may be collected every half hour and tested in order to determine fat content and water content. Every tenth package may be taken off the assembly line, counted to determine that the count is correct and weighed to determine that the weight is correct. The quality control staff carries out this sampling and testing program according to a protocol which has been established by the plant and approved by the food inspection authority. Plant quality control staff members record their findings both in terms of count, weight, chemical composition, fat content, etc. The records are analyzed to determine whether the product is in conformity with the approved quality control standards. The analysis is essentially a statistical analysis that determines in the final run whether the product is or is not in conformity.

Inspectors in charge of plants with this kind of approved quality control program observe the quality control staff of the plant taking their samples and examine their records. They check the findings of the quality control staff in order to determine that the program is being carried out in accordance with the approved protocol.

Food inspectors may also take samples of their own, either at the same time the quality control aid takes his samples or at different times. The food inspector may rely upon the laboratory analysis made by the quality control staff, or he may send his samples to the department's laboratory for independent analysis and findings. This kind of inspection is different in its essence from the inspection carried on by inspectors in charge of plants which do not operate a quality control program.

Level of responsibility

Responsibility of GS-11 food inspectors who are assigned to approve quality control programs differ from those of inspectors in more traditional types of plants. They must rely not on direct observation and accepted practice but must carry out the inspection program in terms of the meaning of the laboratory analysis, the significance of the statistical data, which are analyzed both by the quality control staff and by the inspector to determine whether the products are in conformity with the Federal program.

Their personal relationships tend to be with the head of the quality control staff, who is typically a food technologist, chemist, or biologist with a professional knowledge of the methods and techniques used to determine the compliance of the company's product.

In many cases processing plants with an approved quality control program have established standards which are more rigid than the minimum requirements of the Federal program. In this situation, once the quality control has been approved, these self-imposed standards become the standards to which the plant is held, rather than the minimum Federal standards. The responsibility resting upon the GS-11 Food Inspector (Processed Products) therefore is of a different nature than that characteristic of inspectors in charge of processed food plants at lower levels.

GS-11 Food Inspectors (Processed Products) report to supervisors who are responsible for a circuit of processed food plants and who are not usually immediately available whenever problems arise. GS-11 food inspectors are expected to carry primary responsibility for all negotiations and discussions with the plant management in order to call to their attention products that are not in compliance with the quality control standards; they work with management to determine the causes of noncompliance. They are expected to recommend to plant management the improvement of physical plant facilities and general sanitation procedures.