



# Food Distribution Guidance Memorandum

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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

3101 Park  
Center Drive

Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

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**SUBJECT:** Truck Seal Requirement Guidance

**TO:** FNS Regional Offices  
State Distributing Agencies  
Indian Tribal Organizations

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to ensuring the quality and safety of the commodity products purchased for use in our programs and to prevent tampering or adulteration. As a result, we have implemented enhanced physical measures to secure all deliveries destined for use in our nutrition assistance programs. The USDA's procurement branches are implementing a consistent contract requirement for our contractors to seal all commodity loads.

The seals will be a barrier-type and meet the American Society for Testing and Materials Standard F 1157-04. The seals shall be 1/8th inch in diameter, high security bolt, cable or equivalent. These seals will require a tool such as bolt cutters to remove. These seals must be used for all single and multi-stop shipments and placed on all doors, hatches, vents or other points of entry. Receiving locations will be responsible for removing/breaking the seal. Therefore all locations are required to have bolt cutters or a similar tool to remove these seals. A bolt cutter is a tool used for cutting chains, bolts and wire mesh. They typically have very long handles and short blades. A bolt cutter to remove these seals should have the capability of cutting thru hard material of up to 1/8th inch.

The final implementation of the seal requirements is underway. The following guidance regarding load sealing will be effective January 1, 2008 for all products except the following Household Program canned fruits and all cheese products as they are delivered under long term contracts through June 2008.

- Apricots
- Peaches
- Pears
- Fruit Mix

The cheese and fruit products identified will be in compliance with the seal requirements upon award of new long term contracts with deliveries commencing on July 1, 2008.

Receiving organizations **MAY** refuse the load if the seal is broken or supporting seal number documentation does not match the seal. The receiving organization should follow their normal procedures and policies for accepting/refusing loads which are required to be sealed. The receiving organization must promptly notify the USDA marketing specialist identified on the notice to deliver of any refused delivery due to unsealed loads. When the receiving organization refuses a load, an official USDA rejection may follow. In any event, the contractor is responsible for delivering replacement product in accordance with the contract terms and conditions.

In the case of multi-stop deliveries, the contractor/vendor must provide a sufficient number of seals to ensure the conveyance is secured after each delivery destination. It is the responsibility of the contractor/vendor's agent (i.e., the truck driver) to seal the trailer after delivering each multi-stop shipment. The receiving organization has no responsibility to inspect, document or otherwise support seal application on a multi-stop delivery.

If you have any questions or need further clarification please contact Janice Fitzgerald at email address [janice.fitzgerald@fns.usda.gov](mailto:janice.fitzgerald@fns.usda.gov) or call 703-305-7537.



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