

Agricultural Commodity Grader (Cotton)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

Summary

This is one of several classing offices located in a major cotton producing area which administers programs on cotton, cottonseed, and related commodities provided for in legislative and administrative requirements in connection with standards, marketing services, and allied regulatory responsibilities.

Overview

Accepting applications

Open & closing dates

🕒 12/28/2021 to 01/04/2022

Salary

\$35,265 - \$56,790 per year

Pay scale & grade

GS 5 - 7

Locations

8 vacancies in the following locations:

📍 **Rayville, LA**

2 vacancies

📍 **Florence, SC**

2 vacancies

📍 **Lamesa, TX**

2 vacancies

📍 **Lubbock, TX**

2 vacancies

Telework eligible

No

Travel Required

Occasional travel - You may be expected to travel for this position.

Relocation expenses reimbursed

Yes— You may qualify for reimbursement of relocation expenses in accordance with agency policy.

Appointment type

Permanent

Work schedule

Full-time

Service

Competitive

Promotion potential

9

Job family (Series)

[1980 Agricultural Commodity Grading](#)

[\(/Search/Results?j=1980\)](/Search/Results?j=1980)

Supervisory status

No

Security clearance

[Not Required](#)

[\(/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Drug test

No

Position sensitivity and risk

[Non-sensitive \(NS\)/Low Risk](#)

[\(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Trust determination process

[Credentialing](#)

[\(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

[Suitability/Fitness](#)

[\(https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/faq/job-announcement/security-clearances/)

Announcement number

DE-11332437-GR-SA

Control number

628750800

THIS JOB IS OPEN TO



Career transition (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL)

Federal employees who meet the definition of a "surplus" or "displaced" employee.



The public

U.S. Citizens, Nationals or those who owe allegiance to the U.S.

Clarification from the agency

Applications will be accepted from any U.S. citizen. Direct Hire Authority will be used to fill this position. Veterans Preference and traditional rating and ranking of applicants does not apply to this vacancy

Duties

- The duties described are for the full-performance level. At developmental grade levels, assignments will be of more limited scope, performed with less independence and limited complexity.
- The duties may include, but are not limited to:
- Examination and evaluation of cotton to determine its official U.S. class and acceptability in terms of quality and condition in accordance with official standards and related regulations.
- Examines and evaluates cotton samples to determine appropriate classification. This includes both visual and tactile methods of inspection.
- Provides certified assurance of the quality of cotton.
- Collects cotton samples for use in surveys, studies, demonstrations, standards, and training programs.
- Collects market information on prices/qualities/movement of cotton/cottonseed.
- Investigates complaints pertaining to classification or alleged violations.
- Inspects/checks work of licensed samplers/sampling at gins and warehouses in connection with Cotton and Tobacco Programs.
- Checks to see that assigned classifications have been recorded, processes cotton classification appeals, and assists with preparation of reports.

Requirements

Conditions of Employment

- You must be a US Citizen or US National.
- Individuals who were born male after 12/31/1959 must be Selective Service registered or exempt.
- Subject to satisfactory adjudication of background investigation and/or fingerprint check.
- Successful completion of one-year probationary period, unless previously served.
- Direct Deposit: Per Public Law 104-134 all Federal employees are required to have federal payments made by direct deposit to their financial institution.
- Successfully pass the E-Verify employment verification check. To learn more about E-Verify, including your rights and responsibilities, visit E-Verify at <https://www.e-verify.gov/>
- Valid state driver's license is required at the time of application.
- {1980/1981}Federal Employees must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. If selected, you will be required within 60 days of onboarding to submit proof of vaccination or request a religious or reasonable accommodation exception from this requirement.

- The work environment exposes employee to crowded conditions. Moderate discomfort may be experienced due to the presence of cotton dust.
- Classification of cotton is extremely demanding on the hands, arms, and shoulders since it involves the handling of 1,600 portions of samples per day.
- The classification process requires physical dexterity and mental alertness and is extremely tiring, both mentally and physically.

Qualifications

Applicants must meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements by the closing date of the announcement, including specialized experience and/or education, as defined below.

FOR THE GS-07 LEVEL: Applicants must have one year of specialized experience equivalent to the **GS-05** level, that demonstrates:

- Ability to collect cotton samples for use in surveys, studies, demonstrations, standards, and training programs.
- Ability to learn the visual and physical examination and evaluation methods for determining the appropriate classification of cotton samples.
- Knowledge of office software in order to create and use work products.
- Ability to communicate orally and in writing in order to receive and convey information.

OR Applicants must have successfully completed a 4-year course of study, from an accredited college or university, leading to a bachelor's degree, that included 9 semester hours or the equivalent in agriculture, botany, crop production, agronomy, product processing, food chemistry, technology, quality control, or other related subjects.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for this grade level.

FOR THE GS-07 LEVEL: Applicants must have one year of specialized experience equivalent to the **GS-05** level, that demonstrates:

- Ability to apply grade standards to agricultural commodities.
- Knowledge of office software in order to create and use work products.
- Ability to communicate orally and in writing in order to receive and convey information.
- Ability to prioritize assignment and meet targeted deadlines.

OR One full year of graduate level education in Agriculture, Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Business, Economics or a related field.

OR Superior Academic Achievement: To qualify based on superior academic achievement, you must have completed the requirements for a bachelor's degree that included that included 9 semester hours or the equivalent in agriculture, botany, crop production, agronomy, product processing, food chemistry, technology, quality control, or other related subjects. from an accredited institution AND must meet certain GPA requirements.

Equivalent combinations of education and experience are qualifying for this grade level.

TRANSCRIPTS are required if:

- You are qualifying for the position based on education.
- You are qualifying for this position based on a combination of experience and education.
- You are qualifying for this position based on Superior Academic Achievement.
- This education must have been successfully completed and obtained from an accredited school, college, or university

COMBINATION OF EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE AT THE GS-05/07 GRADE LEVEL: Applicants may have combinations of successfully completed education and specialized experience to meet total qualification requirements. The total percentages must equal at least

100 percent to qualify for that grade level.

Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional, philanthropic, religious, spiritual, community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

Education

Please see above for education qualification requirement information.

Additional information

- Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP): Visit the [OPM](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/employee-guide-to-career-transition/) (<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/workforce-restructuring/employee-guide-to-career-transition/>) website for information on how to apply as a CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP eligible. To exercise selection priority for this vacancy, CTAP/RPL /ICTAP candidates must meet the basic eligibility requirements and all selective factors. CTAP/ICTAP candidates must

Benefits

A career with the U.S. government provides employees with a comprehensive benefits package. As a federal employee, you and your family will have access to a range of benefits that are designed to make your federal career very rewarding. [Learn more about federal benefits](#)

(<https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/benefits/>)

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Eligibility for benefits depends on the type of position you hold and whether your position is full-time, part-time or intermittent. Contact the hiring agency for more information on the specific benefits offered.

How You Will Be Evaluated

You will be evaluated for this job based on how well you meet the qualifications above.

This is a Direct-Hire Authority position, all applicants who meet the minimum qualifications, to include any specialized experience and/or selective placement factor(s), if applicable, will be referred to the selecting official. Before a certificate is issued to the selecting official, your application is reviewed to ensure that you meet all the qualification requirements. A rating will not be used; veteran's preference does not apply due to the existence of the Direct Hire authority for this position.

Note: If, after reviewing your resume and/or supporting documentation, a determination is made that you have inflated your qualifications and/or experience, you may be found ineligible. Please follow all instructions carefully. Errors or omissions may affect your rating. Providing inaccurate information on Federal documents could be grounds for non-selection or disciplinary action up to including removal from the Federal service.

To preview the application questionnaire, please visit: <https://apply.usastaffing.gov/ViewQuestionnaire/11332437>

Required Documents

The following documents are required for your applicant package to be complete. Our office cannot be responsible for incompatible software, your system failure or downtime, etc. Encrypted documents will not be accepted. Failure to submit required,

legible documents may result in loss of consideration.

- Resume that includes: 1) personal information such as name, address, contact information; 2) education; 3) detailed work experience related to this position as described in the major duties including work schedule, hours worked per week, dates of employment; title, series, grade (if applicable); 4) other qualifications; and 5) supervisors name and phone number for each work period listed and whether or not they may be contacted for reference checks.
- If education is required or you are using education to qualify, you must submit a copy of your college transcripts. An unofficial copy is sufficient with the application if it includes your name and the necessary course information; however, if you are selected, you will be required to submit official transcripts prior to entering on duty. Education must have been successfully obtained from an accredited school, college or university. If you are using education completed in foreign colleges or universities to meet the qualification requirements, you must show that the education credentials have been evaluated by a private organization that specializes in interpretation of foreign education programs and such education has been deemed equivalent to that gained in an accredited U.S. education program. For further information, visit the following: [Foreign Education Evaluation](#)
(<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ous/international/usnei/us/edlite-visitus-forrecog.html>)
. All transcripts must be in English or include an English translation.
- Although veterans' preference doesn't apply under Direct Hire Authority, applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of their eligibility. If claiming veterans' preference, you must submit a DD214, Certificate of Release from Active Duty, which shows dates of service and discharge under honorable conditions. If currently on active duty you must submit a certification of expected discharge or release from active duty service under honorable conditions within 120 days after the date the certification is submitted. The certification must be on the letterhead of the appropriate military branch and include the dates of military service.
- If claiming 10-point veterans' preference you must provide the DD214 or certification requirements (see above bullet), plus the proof of entitlement of this preference as listed on the SF-15 Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference. The SF-15 should be included but is not required. Failure to submit these documents could result in the determination that there is insufficient documentation to support your claim for 10-point preference. For more information on veterans' preference visit [FEDSHIREVETS](#)
(<https://www.fedshirevets.gov/job-seekers/veterans-preference/#content>).
- Surplus or displaced employees eligible for CTAP, RPL, or ICTAP priority must provide: proof of eligibility (RIF separation notice, notice of proposed removal for declining a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another commuting area, notice of disability annuity termination), SF-50 documenting separation (as applicable), last performance appraisal that is at least fully successful or its equivalent, and your most recent SF-50 noting position, grade level, and duty location with your application per 5 CFR 330.
- Worker's Compensation Separation: Agency certification of inability to place employee AND Notification of Separation OR Separation SF-50.
- Disability Annuity Termination: Notification from OPM of disability annuity termination AND Separation SF-50 of the last position held. Military Reserve or National Guard Technician Special Disability Retirement Annuity under 5 U.S.C. 8337(h) or 8456: Certification of special disability retirement annuity from a military department or National Guard Bureau AND Separation SF-50 of the last position held.

How to Apply

Please read the entire announcement and all instructions before you begin. You must complete this application process and submit all required documents electronically by 11:59p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on the closing date of this announcement.

Applying online is highly encouraged. We are available to assist you during business hours (normally 8:00a.m. - 4:00p.m., Monday - Friday). If applying online poses a hardship, contact the Agency Contact listed below well before the closing date for an alternate method. All hardship application packages must be complete and submitted no later than noon ET on the closing date of the

announcement in order to be entered into the system prior to its closing.

This agency provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities on a case-by-case basis; contact the Agency Contact to request this.

Step 1: Create a USAJOBS account (if you do not already have one) at www.usajobs.gov. It is recommended that as part of your profile you set up automatic email notification to be informed when the status of your application changes. If you choose not to set up this automatic notification, then you will have to log into your USAJOBS account to check on the status of your application.

Step 2: Create a Resume with USAJOBS or upload a Resume into your USAJOBS account. You may want to customize your resume to ensure it documents duties and accomplishments you have gained that are directly related to this position in order to verify that qualifications are met. In addition, your resume must support your responses to the online questionnaire (you may preview the online questionnaire by clicking on the link at the end of the How You Will Be Evaluated section of the job announcement).

Step 3: Click "Apply Online" and follow the prompts to complete the Occupational Questionnaire and attach any additional documents that may be required. You can update your application or documents anytime while the announcement is open. Simply log into your USAJOBS account and click on "Application Status." Click on the position title, and then select "Update Application" to continue.

NOTE: If a document is resubmitted, it replaces the previous submission, which means the previous document is no longer available to the Human Resources Office. If you are adding to, rather than replacing a previous submission, you must upload both the old document and the new document. You must verify that uploaded documents from USAJOBS transfer into the Agency's staffing system as there is a limitation to the number of documents that can be transferred. However, once in the Agency's staffing system, you will have the opportunity to upload additional documents. Applicants may combine all like required documents (e.g. SF-50s or veteran docs) into one or more files and scan for uploading into the application. Each file must not exceed 5MB. Grouping like documents into files will simplify the application process. Documents must be in one of the following formats: GIF, JPEG, JPG, PDF, PNG, RTF, or Word (DOC or DOCX). Uploaded documents may not require a password, digital signature, or other encryption to open.

Agency contact information



APHIS Human Resources

Phone

[612-336-3227](tel:612-336-3227)
(tel:612-336-3227)

Email

MRP.Application.Help@usda.gov
(mailto:MRP.Application.Help@usda.gov)

[Learn more about this agency.](#)
(#agency-modal-trigger)

Address

Agricultural Marketing Service
USDA APHIS MRPBS
250 Marquette Avenue, Suite 410
Minneapolis, MN 55401
US

Next steps

If you set up your USAJobs account to send automatic email notifications, you will receive an email acknowledging: 1) the submission of your online Occupational Questionnaire and resume was successful, 2) if you were referred to the selecting official for consideration, and 3) if you were selected or not selected. Your application will be reviewed to verify that you meet the eligibility and qualification requirements for the position prior to issuing referral lists to the selecting official. If further evaluation or interviews are required, you will be contacted. Log in to your [USAJOBS](https://www.usajobs.gov/) account to check your application status. We expect to make a final job offer approximately 40 days after the deadline for applications.

Multiple positions may be filled from this announcement.

As required by the President's Executive Order 14043, Federal employees are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 regardless of the employee's duty location or work arrangement (e.g., telework, remote work, etc.), subject to such exceptions as required by law. If selected, you will be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and submit documentation of proof of vaccination within 60 days of onboarding with the agency. Additional information will be provided regarding what information or documentation will be needed and how you can request of the agency a legally required exception from this requirement.

Fair & Transparent

The Federal hiring process is setup to be fair and transparent. Please read the following guidance.

[Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/equal-employment-opportunity/)

[\(/Help/equal-employment-opportunity/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/equal-employment-opportunity/)

[Financial suitability](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/financial-suitability/)

[New employee probationary period](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/probationary-period/)

[Privacy Act](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/privacy-act/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/privacy-act/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/privacy-act/)

[Reasonable accommodation policy](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/reasonable-accommodation/)

[\(/Help/reasonable-accommodation/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/reasonable-accommodation/)

[Selective Service](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/selective-service/)

[Signature and false statements](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/signature-false-statements/)

[Social security number request](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/social-security-number/)

[\(/Help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/social-security-number/\)](https://www.usajobs.gov/help/working-in-government/fair-and-transparent/social-security-number/)