



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Grain Inspection,
Packers and Stockyards
Administration

Stop 3614
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250-3614

February 08, 2012

Rick Tolman
Chief Executive Officer, National Corn Growers Association
632 Cepi Drive
Chesterfield, MO 64005

Dear Mr. Tolman:

At its December 2011 meeting, the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) adopted a resolution recommending that the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) implement “. . .the 149 MHZ technology for moisture measurement in August 2012 for fall harvest grains.” The Advisory Committee also recommended that GIPSA “work with industry to transition from the GIAC 2100 to the 149 MHZ technology to aid in stakeholder needs.”

The current official moisture meter is the Grain Analysis Computer (GAC) 2100. For the past several years, GIPSA has been conducting research into refining moisture measurements with the intention of implementing a new official moisture meter, and in doing so, developed the Unified Grain Moisture Algorithm (UGMA). The 149 MHz technology utilizes the UGMA. Three UGMA-based moisture meters are currently commercially available and two are expected to soon be approved for use as the official moisture meter - the Dickey-john GAC 2500 and the Perten AM 5200.

The UGMA-based moisture meters offer several advantages over the current official moisture meter. The UGMA-based moisture meters provide moisture readings that align more closely with results achieved through the official reference method, the air oven process. The UGMA-based moisture meters also offer an accurate reading at lower temperatures than the current official meter which in many instances poses significant challenges for grain moving through marketing channels during winter months. The UGMA-based moisture meters are also easier to maintain, requiring fewer calibration changes than current moisture meters.

The transition to a new official moisture meter is expected to begin in August 2012 for major fall harvested crops. It will continue through April 2013 for spring harvested crops and conclude in August 2013 for remaining fall harvested crops. During the transition period, two official moisture meters are expected to be utilized for different crops, which we recognize is not an optimal situation but is unavoidable. GIPSA is currently working with all stakeholders to ensure that the transition proceeds smoothly with minimum disruption to grain producers, handlers, merchandisers, exporters and processors.

If you have any questions regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 720-9170.

Sincerely,

Randall D. Jones
Deputy Administrator