

Cotton Tobacco

June 25, 2020

To: Cotton and Tobacco Program Customers

From: Ronald F. Robbins
Associate Deputy Administrator
USDA, AMS, Cotton and Tobacco Program

Subject: Review Classification for Plastic Extraneous Matter

On July 1, 2018, the USDA, AMS, Cotton and Tobacco Program (C&T) put into effect two new extraneous matter codes for samples containing plastic contaminants. The change was implemented in response to industry requests and concerns.

In response to additional industry requests and concerns, beginning July 1, 2020, official C&T policy regarding Review and Rework classifications for samples originally classed as having plastic contaminants will be modified. *If the original classification had a plastic extraneous matter code (e.g. 71 & 72), the following modifications will be made:*

- *Plastic extraneous matter code will be automatically applied to the Review or Rework classification;*
- *All other factors (e.g. Grade, Leaf, Micronaire, Length, Strength, Uniformity, Color and % Area) will be classed as normal including the module averaging rules for certain factors; and*
- *Review and Rework classification for all other extraneous matter codes remains unchanged.*

The C&T classing offices will continue to notify cotton gins when plastic is identified in a sample. Offices will also continue to save all samples that contain plastic for management and customer review as needed.

We value our customers and truly hope this modification to the Review/Rework process for samples originally having plastic extraneous matter will assist the industry with achieving contamination-free cotton. The National Cotton Council has a webpage dedicated to this very important subject. The link to this webpage is:

<http://www.cotton.org/tech/quality/contamfree.cfm>

Thank you for your continued trust and support of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's cotton classing system. If you have any questions regarding this issue, contact your local classing office or me at Ronald.Robbins@usda.gov or at 901-384-3000. Contact information for all of our classing offices may be found on our website at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/cotton-tobacco/classing-offices>