

THE ONE INDUSTRY APPROACH TO

GRADING AND PRESENTATION OF

FLUE – CURED TOBACCO

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FOREWOOD

Probably no aspect in the production of tobacco is so time consuming and onerous as grading and presentation. Coming as it does at the end of many months of hard labour, it is not surprising that some fail to allow through and make the best of the fruits of their labour.

An unfortunate by-product of this situation is that the selling system becomes clogged up by large numbers of bales, which have been rejected as defective for one reason or another. Numerous publications and articles have been produced on the subject of grading and presentation in years gone by. Grading courses feature in all training institutions programmes. The Tobacco marketing Board issues a circular every year on the subject and all sectors of the Industry spend hours every season discussing the price fluctuations between tobacco, which are well graded and presented, and those which are not. Almost without exception any serious differences of opinion which arise at the Auction are due to indifferent grading or to a lack of understating between buyers and growers as to what exactly is well presented and well tobacco.

The purpose of this publication is to establish: -

- a) What exactly do the Tobacco Trade members, who are after all the customers, require from growers in the way of grading and presentation.
- b) How a grower can obtain top prices for well graded and presented tobacco, and
- c) What are the Tobacco Marketing Board's and the Tobacco Research Board's recommendations and requirements.

An essential ingredient in any Industry is to find common ground between all sectors of that Industry for the overall benefit of everyone in the Industry. The publication is a sincere effort to produce a one Industry approach to Grading and Presentation.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of grading is to present tobacco in a manner that enhances both its use and value to the buyers by sorting out leaves of similar characteristics into uniform lots for sale. The grading process is one of the most labour intensive operations in tobacco production requiring a high degree of management and supervision so that maximum benefit is obtained from the product for sale whilst at the same time maintaining an acceptable level of throughput from the grading shed. Before outlining in detail how we can achieve the above, it is important to understand what the buyers (the customers) require from growers in the way of grading. A more detailed description of the approach to grading which takes into account the Buyers technical consideration will then follow.

BUYERS REQUIREMENTS

There are various technical factors which buyers take into account when purchasing, processing and packaging tobacco for export.

These factors include: -

- the chemical composition
- the smoking characteristics
- the flavour and aroma
- the cutting quality
- the filling value or capacity and
- moisture content of the tobacco.
-

When tobacco is well graded and presented, it is much easier for the buyers to blend different grades in order to achieve the numerous and stringent specifications in terms of chemical composition, smoking characteristics, flavour and aroma, etc set by their overseas customers.

It is therefore imperative that leaves from different plant positions (different groups) i.e. primings, lugs, cutters, leaf, and tips must be kept separate because they have important different chemical characteristics. For instance lower stalk tobacco will tend to contain relatively less nicotine than that higher up the stalk. Lower stalk leaf will generally tend to be more useful in filling capacity and neutrality in smoke than upper stalk leaf.

Likewise leaves with differing colours i.e. pale lemon 'E', Lemon 'L' Orange 'O', light mahogany 'R' and dark mahogany 'S' have different smoking qualities and chemical composition and must be kept separate. For example orange leaf will tend to contain more nicotine than the lemon leaf.

The most important attribute in tobacco is the smoking characteristic of leaf in terms of flavour and aroma. There is a tendency for flavour to improve with maturity i.e. the riper, softer and truer coloured the leaf is in the upper section of the plant, the more flavoury it becomes.

Flavour, aroma and cutting quality will vary with changes in the style of tobacco. For this reason differing styles must be kept separate.

Another important technical consideration is length. Short and long leaf should not be put into one category of a grade because if the grade is to be tipped and threshed, a mixture of short and long leaf produces an unacceptable product. Therefore leaf of different lengths must be kept separate.

For these reasons growers must grade their tobacco according to plant position, colour, style, quality and length. Obviously sorting out leaves by colour alone (the standard practice on a considerable number of farms) will not achieve, on the one hand, the buyers objective of processing the tobacco to customer satisfaction, and on the other hand, the desired goal of securing maximum buyer interest and demand (higher prices) for the growers bales on the Auction floor.

The following account outlines on way in which growers can grade their tobacco to an acceptable standard.

FACTORS AFFECTING UNIFORMITY OF GRADING

Grading really starts before the crop is planted. Planning to produce uniformity at all stages of production will produce the conditions under which grading is most likely to be made easy. Some of the points, which have the most significant bearing on, the outcome of grading, are: -

1. Land selection - uniform soil types
2. land preparation - uniform ploughing and tith preparation gives a more uniform crop.
3. Fumigation (nematode control) - rows of plants or individual plants that have been grown in untreated soil will be stunted and produce a different type of leaf to the rest of the land.
4. Fertilisation - uniformity of application will help to produce uniform seedlings and hence a uniform crop.
5. Seedling selection - evenness of seedlings will give a more uniform crop.
6. Topping and Suckering - has a major impact on grade composition. It is

particularly important to ensure that the crop is topped as early as possible and within the shortest possible time. Complete control of suckers there-after is essential.

7. Reaping types
 - even and light reappings will prevent mixing of types and reduce degrees of ripeness and will also make curing easier.
8. Curing number of
 - efficient curing systems will tend to reduce the Grades.
9. storage reduce
 - segregation of reappings by lands and by barns will reduce the number of grades going through the shed.

DIVISION OF LEAVES BY PLANT POSITIONS AND DESCRIPTION OF MAIN GROUPS

Tips

Small narrow leaves not exceeding 400 mm (16”) in length due to proximity to the flower axil or because of lack of plant growth remained underdeveloped.

Upper leaf

A group of medium to heavy bodied leaves with a fairly constant but narrow width in relation to length and a prominent midrib. In the cured state lamina tends to fold to reveal the midrib.

Lower leaf

A group of medium bodied leaves of a semi-rounded but elongated shape with a pointed tip and fairly prominent midrib. In the cured state the lamina partially folds to reveal the lower portion of the midrib.

Lugs and Cutters

Groups originating from the middle to lower position on the plant. Leaves are normally thin bodied, open widely and tend to roll to conceal the midrib. Better qualities are of the soft cutting type and lower qualities are of the more fragile granulating type.

Primings

Small rounded open faced; leaves normally tissuey to thin bodied with injury and earthy aroma characteristic of leaves grown near the ground.

RELATIVE PERCENTAGES BY WEIGHT AND LEAVES PER KILOGRAM
(AVERAGE AND RANGE 1988 TO 1990 SEASONS)

	% Total Mass	Leaves per kg	Range
Primings	3-7	152	120-220
Lugs and Cutters	15-20	107	90-150
Lemon Leaf	30-35	84	70-110
Orange Leaf	30-35	74	55-90
Tips	1-3	*	*

*Tips vary but are approximately 10-20% lower than equivalent leaf.

THE GRADING PROCESS

Given the buyer's technical considerations and requirement, five major aspects determine the grade of a leaf. These are:

Plant position or group

Style Factor

Colour

Quality or degree of waste, or

Injury

Length

Plant Position

As already stated leaves from different plant positions must be kept separate. Separation into groups should present in one season let alone in one run of tobacco. The farmer should recognize the following colours; pale lemon 'E' Lemon 'L', Orange 'O', Mahogany – (light 'R' and Dark 'S'). The colour refers to the basic colour of the lamina; blemishes within the lamina will determine the quality of the leaf (an aspect explained below under the heading quality).

Style Factor

After a decision has been made on the colour of the leaf, the next aspect, which determines the grade of a leaf, is the style factor.

Style refers principally to the texture and maturity of tobacco. Style differences occur as a result of variations in plant growth due to differences experienced in terms of weather conditions, soil nutrient status and cultural practices. Four basic styles are recognized, these being: -

- a) Higher maturity ('H' style) – denotes tobacco, which is very ripe to mellow often with injury and spot, associated with advanced maturity. This style consists of leaves normally grown at or above mid-portion of stalk.
- b) Ripe/Soft ('F'/'FA') style – "F"/"FA" grades are full coloured, open –grained, ripe and soft natured.
- c) The standard style refers to tobacco, which is slightly close grained but not slick or flattish in appearance with normal or average maturity and an average colour.
- d) Close grained, slick or slately ("K", "U") refers to tobacco, which is close grained and immature, having a smooth to flat surface and a relatively pale or dull colour becoming distinctly grey in the middle to lower qualities. The symbol "U" is used for predominantly slately grey tobacco.

Extra factor

Having decided on the main style of the leaf a further separation that is based on presence of extra factors is necessary. More than one extra factor may be present and the grower may have to decide on the most prevalent. An extra factor describes a superficial but specific side to a grade, which is significant in it.

The following extra factors are recognized: -

Spot 'A'

This spot is normally associated with tobacco grown in fast ripening areas. It occurs on the leaf as a small brownish blotch with an off-white center. Tobacco with spot in excess of 5% of leaf area should be separated into a spot grade.

Harsh natured or sun baked 'D'

This refers to tobacco, which is harsh natured and lifeless due to lack of oil caused by dry conditions or baking. Such condition can occur to ripe open grained, standard, or the close-grained 'K' styles.

Scorched 'Q'

This is tobacco showing a noticeable degree of red caused principally by raising barn temperatures before the removal of excess moisture in the leaf.

Greenish 'V'

Any tobacco, which has a greenish tinge or cast to it. It is normally referred to as running green i.e. the green will not be apparent after further maturity.

Green-'G'

Any tobacco, which contains a set green on the leaf surface.

Generally speaking visible green can occur on the whole range of colour, styles and qualities but it would not be practical to suggest a complete duplication of grades for green. Light, or running green should at least follow the main colour and style separations where such differences occur. Heavy or fixed green should be graded by colour and by the amount in the leaf. Because greens are the most severely price discounted grades on the market greater attention should be given to these grades by ensuring firstly that amounts are minimized (that is by checking that no ripe or mature styles are included with immature 'greens '). Secondly that the heavier or cruder green is removed from the lighter green grades. Where green is a

problem, a solution may be to remove all greens into a few colour and style categories for finer grading later on.

Guineafowl spot-‘Y’

A blemish on tobacco appearing as a speckling of small greenish – black or black dots which are distinctly different from other spot diseases.

These extra factors must be shown to new or inexperienced graders. The graders must be quite clear in their minds what is meant by the various extra factors and able to divide each of the basic colours into the four styles and then the extra factors. So a pile of says lemon coloured leaf may be divided into lemon –standard with spot: lemon ripe with spot ;or lemon K with V etc. The same may be done in the case of orange coloured leaf, i.e. orange ripe spot orange H, or orange K green.

Quality

Quality or finish is the term used for the degree of blemish, waste or injury. When grading on the farm three qualities are recommended, these being: -

1 = fine- good, 2 = fair 3 = low to poor. However in terms of the TIMB’s official classification system qualities are referred to numerically (i.e. 1,2,3, 4 or 5) for primings, lugs and leaf and (1,2, or 3) short leaf, strips and scrap.

Length

Generally speaking, if grading is approached as described above, length should present no difficult. If however, the variation in length should present no difficulty. If however, the variation in length of graded leaf is too great, shorter and longer leaf must be kept separate. The length variation of leaf within of leaf within a bale of graded tobacco must not exceed 75 mm for leaf under 400 mm and 125 mm for leaf over 400 mm length.

To summarise, although each decision that must be made has been dealt with separately the grader’s decisions on the grade of a leaf are virtually made simultaneously. When a leaf is picked up for grading the decision is made for example on the following lines: - “orange” ripe with spot”, second quality “long”. The leaf will then be allotted to its appropriate position on the grading table. With a little practice the grader will soon gain confidence and his output will increase.

The above procedure should be practiced and established before the start of the grading operation and also before grading a fresh run of tobacco.

GRADING OF STRIP AND SCRAP

The grading of strip and scrap is very much easier since tolerances are greater. Strips and scrap are usually graded into light, dark and greens.

Strip

It should be of the same plant position but can contain bordering colours and qualities. Two-thirds of the mid-rib and all signs of barn rot, stem rot stem rot or mould should be removed. It can contain some large clean scrap of the same type.

Scrap

Must be clean and free of foreign matter. It should be seized by screening. Scrap of the same appearance from cutters, lugs and primings can be blended together but scrap from thin leaf grades and bodied leaf and tips should be kept separate.

SAMPLE GRADING

The art of good grading is to produce a manageable number of grades easily identifiable as separate grades with a high degree of consistency within each grade. To grade too finely is to invite a problem with too many small lots of different grades.

Sample grading is therefore necessary to establish the number of grades required. The sample grading is carried out by the grower with his foreman master blender and check graders before the commencement of the grading operations as well as each time a fresh run of tobacco is encountered. The rough graders are then master grades, which are placed in the appropriate on their tables for reference purposes during grading.

CHECKLIST OF DO'S AND DON'TS IN GRADING

DO keep reappings separate and unless lands are of the same soil type and planted at the same time grade reappings from different lands separately.

DO keep different VARIETIES and tobacco from different CURING SYSTEMS separate (different varieties should never be graded together but the same tobacco from different curing systems can be graded together).

DO make sure the tie-leaf same as the rest of the bale. Short leaves in the grade can be used for tying and thereby increase uniformity.

DO pay equal attention to lower quality grades since this end of the market has larger price variability especially between ripe and less mature styles.

DO check greens and if these have been held back to the end of the season, a light regarding of greens which have run and those which have not, is advisable.

DO make sure that strip and scrap is free of looses midribs, foreign mater and mould.

DO Check that the sizes of the butts are between 25 mm and 28 mm.

DO keep separate leaves differing in colour groups, style qualities and length.

DO NOT mix broken long leaf with short leaf and do not allow the inclusion of bent over stems in the butts. These practices affect the tipping and threshing properties of a grade and apart from the probability of rejection, they spoil presentation and lower the commercial value of a bale.

1. BALING AND PRESENTATION

Neatly baled tobacco immediately attracts the buyer's eye. Even before inspecting the tobacco, his interest is aroused. It is very important to create a good impression. Well graded and carefully presented tobacco will encourage the buyer to bid confidence and assist the Starter in selling your tobacco to the best advantage.

The use of twine from hessian or jute is prohibited, as are polypropylene twine and monofilament. The recommended space between stitches is 37 – 40 mm, and the use of lock stitches at the ends of the bale and in the center, is essential to avoid the stitching “running” to the floor when a bale is opened for inspection prior to sale.

If a metal baling box is used be sure to clean the inside surface frequently. Gum from the tobacco deposits on the metal can rub off onto the tie leaves leaving the tobacco looking as if it has been contaminated by grease. Bales so marked can be turned down as damaged. Make sure the bales are not overweight and that the maximum dimensions prescribed are not exceeded.

II GROUPING

The importance of correct grouping of tobacco for sale is still not appreciated by all growers. Even if great attention has been paid to the grading aspects, the grower's grouping skill can either make or break a sale.

Whilst good grouping normally results in better and more stable prices, bad or erratic grouping inevitably costs the grower money.

Objectives

The two main objectives of grouping are:

- 1 To ensure the maximum buying interest and to hold it for as many bales as possible, and
- 2 To help the starter to sell the tobacco instead of merely putting a price on it.

Whilst the first objective is common-sense, the starter's task is much more than just appraising the leaf and approximate price on it. He must also give time and attention to the buying line itself – checking to see who is bidding and who is not and why. He also helps the auctioneer to pick up bids and must judge the right moment to buy for the “house” if necessary. The more time a starter can devote to the buying line, the more he can help to sell the tobacco. The more time he spends in appraising the starting price, because of rapid changes in style or quality, the less time he will have to devote to the auction itself.

Buyer's Point-Of- View

In a good run of quality leaf, an interested buyer will appraise the first bale thoroughly and, if the following bales are alike, he will be inclined to take a good deal on trust. His major task will be to concentrate on his own bidding and the activities of his competitors. Anything that breaks this concentration may result in a decrease in price. If a “maverick” bale appears, immediate reappraisal is necessary. The buyer's concentration is broken, the rhythm of the sale upset and it may take several bales before the sale regains momentum. The graphs below illustrate this point.

A – The smooth sale of well – grouped bales inspires buyer confidence.

B – When a run includes poor bales (4 and 9), confidence is shaken and later bales may suffer (5,10,12 and 13).

GUIDE TO GROUPING

As a first step, consider the nature of the tobacco to be offered and decide whether or not to split the consignment into more than one sale: -

During baling set aside a sample hand from each bale and place the hand identified with the same lot number as that of the bale into a plastic bag. When enough bales have been prepared for sale the samples in the plastic bags then used instead of the bales for grouping purposes.

The following are important practical aspects of grouping: -

- a) For styles of tobacco currently in demand, a fair sized run is recommended to establish and maintain buyer interest for as long as possible.
- b) With less desirable tobacco, or tobacco that is in weak demand shorter runs may be contemplated to reduce the chances of flagging and lower prices.

During baling set aside a sample hand from each bale and place the hand identified with the same lot number as that of the bale into a plastic bag. When enough bales have been prepared for sale the samples in the plastic bags then used instead of the bales for grouping purposes.

The following are important practical aspects of grouping: -

- a) Group plant positions (lugs, leaf, tips etc) and styles (open grained, standard, close – grained etc) separately.
- b) Group in descending order of quality, as it is sometimes possible to sell some of the poorer quality bales at prices close to the better grades, which preceded them.
- c) Study the market at frequent intervals so that the colours, styles and qualities with which to start the runs can be determined. Buying patterns change from season to season and prices within a season. It is important therefore, to attend as many sales as possible and spend time assessing the price structure and relative grade values. Wherever possible make use of the strong points in the market. If orange grades are selling better than lemon start the run with orange, running gradually into lemon.
- d) Avoid placing even slightly green tobacco (no matter how good it may be at the beginning of a run. When a buyer sees a green bale at the start of a consignment, he will immediately be looking for more.
- e) Once the correct grouping has been established from the sample, the bale tickets can be marked accordingly.
- f) Mark bale tickets clearly with grouping numbers.

Example

When grouping a consignment of leaf showing different styles and qualities the following procedure is recommended.

Using the samples in the plastic bags identify first of all the different styles. Keep them apart and set them out in descending order of quality. Start with bales of spotted leaf richer-coloured and displaying a superior degree of maturity and group them from good to poor. Follow the ripe spotted grades with bales of strip (emanating from the spotted richer coloured leaf) grouped in descending order of quality. These in turn will be followed by bales of standard tobacco in descending order of quality with strip from this style following immediately. Then sub-standard, close-grained “sponge” grades running from best to worst will follow. Follow the sponges with scrap bales and finally, the tail end of the run will have the greens again running from best to worst.

The above grouping pattern would enable the buyers to concentrate all their attention and therefore bid more confidently on a run of bales of one style as opposed to a succession of individual bales.

III CONDITIONING (MOISTURE CONTROL)

The condition or “feel” of tobacco is an important selling point, embracing all styles and qualities.

Tobacco that is too dry not only results in breakage and waste in the initial factory processing, but may also give the less experienced buyer the impression that it is ‘harsh’ – resulting in a lower price. Conversely, tobacco that is over – conditioned becomes stained and discoloured and it too is penalized.

The condition of cured leaf and the growth of mould are directly related to the relative humidity of the air. Mould growth is prevented at below are directly related to the relative humidity of the air. Mould growth is prevented at below 70% relative humidity, whereas at higher tobacco becomes susceptible to mould. The condition of stored tobacco affects the amount of mould in bales subsequent to grading.

The following will help in achieving the correct condition and prevent the incidence of mould in stored tobacco but it must be appreciated that what is done for one style of leaf may result in a “too dry” or “too wet” condition for another style.

An easy test for over – conditioning is to take a hand of tobacco, bend the tips back against the main part of the leaf, squeeze, and release – the tips should spring back without difficulty. If they don’t then the tips are almost certainly carrying too much condition.

a) Conditioning Process

i) After Curing

Once curing is complete the curing facility should be cooled as quickly as possible. No attempts should be made to condition a hot barn. If the barn can be left to pick up condition naturally this is ideal. The rate of conditioning can, however be speeded up by adding moisture to the barn by means of water on the floor or low-pressure steam. Do not over condition. Do not over condition. Preferably temporarily bulk the tobacco overnight before packing into permanent storage because moisture is then distributed more evenly throughout the leaves.

To prevent mould growth, maintain the relative humidity in the storage and untying sheds at about 65%. This can be monitored with a wet and dry bulb hygrometer. (Consult Section “H” of the Tobacco Research Board’s Flue – Cured Tobacco Recommendations handbook for more details).

ii) Before Grading

Invariably stored tobacco (in slat – packs, bales or bulks) will dry out. Therefore, the tobacco should be transferred from the bulk, bales or slat packs to a conditioning box. The leaves should be placed in a conditioning box. The leaves should be placed in a conditioning box with the butts resting against the wire- mesh bottom. The conditioning box is then placed on a streaming rack so that steam can filter through the mesh bottom and the leaves. Merely laying the leaves on the steam tray will result in uneven conditioning, some leaves will be conditioned (or over-conditioned) while others will remain dry.

iii) During Grading

To maintain condition, and provided grading is being done in the normal dry weather, an overall humid atmosphere should be maintained within the grading area. The relative humidity in the grading sheds should be maintained at 75%.

The cheapest and most effective means of achieving this is the provision of multiple steam outlets, and the closure of as many windows, doors etc as can be tolerated. Monitoring of humidity is again with a wet and dry bulb hygrometer.

Humidifiers may be introduced, but as a general rule they only have effect over limited areas, and must be carefully adjusted or tobacco will merely be sprayed with water resulting in patches of moisture stained or mouldy tobacco amongst otherwise sound leaf.

iv) After Grading

Rods or sticks of tied hands may be placed on racks until baled. Tied hands may also be placed in the grade box. The tobacco should not be stored at 75% relative humidity for an extended period otherwise mould will develop. If the tied hands feel under – conditioned on the racks or grade box, additional moisture may be added to the tobacco. Try to ensure the steam penetrates the whole hand and condition is applied to the whole length of the leaf – not just the tips.

Tobacco should not be conditioned by the introduction of steam into a bale by means of a hose –pipe as inconsistent condition and the condensation of moisture on the leaf may result.

b) Strip and Scrap

Strip and scrap tend to be neglected, but it is just as important to present these in as sound as tied leaf. When there are no midribs, to absorb much of the moisture, it is easy to over condition strip and scrap, which can rapidly turn mouldy.

Strip and scrap bales are frequently found to contain wet and mouldy patches, despite the fact that the rest of the tobacco in the bale is in the correct condition. This can be caused by tobacco that has been swept off a damp floor near the stream box and put into the bale without first being laid out to let the excessive moisture evaporate.

NB: When steaming it is important to use low-pressure COOL steam, preferably at a pressure between 1.75 and 2.75 bars (i.e. 11.07 and 18.96 kPa). Hot steam at too high a pressure can cause a dry condition in tobacco.

c) Adjustment of Conditioning Methods

Variations in the approach to the conditioning of tobacco may be required according to the type of weather experience during the growing of the crop.

Where tobacco has been grown with adequate rainfall, caution is required, particularly when dealing with lower reaping. Such tobacco is usually soft-natured, and readily absorbs moisture and in the better quality, bright, thin-bodied primings, lugs and cutters, over-conditioning will soon cause discolouration and bruising. Over-pressing of this style of tobacco will increase staining so do not make up bales to maximum mass. For fully conditioned lugs and primings “soft” bales are almost always safer than hard “cakes”.

Deterioration takes place whenever stained tobacco is re-handled or re-baled, so treat stained and clear tobacco as separate grades. The rehandling process of a bale rejected as mixed (stained & clear) will add to the cost, and do nothing for the appearance and value of the stained leaf.

A dry-weather or drought affected crop requires a different approach. Dry-natured and sun-baked tobacco, although difficult to condition satisfactorily, sells better if it carries full condition, particularly in the leaf grades. Obviously it is necessary to avoid wet, funky and mouldy tobacco, but more positive conditioning treatment is required.

When conditioning drought – affected tobacco, ensure that steam is applied to the whole leaf and not only to the tips of the leaves. If excessive moisture is applied the tips will perish or turn mouldy in the bale. Even with harsh tobacco the midrib has a high moisture holding capacity, and one should therefore concentrate on the area from the middle of the leaf to the butts, rather than from mid-rib to the tips. With drought-affected tobacco, hold tobacco over the steam box “ butts down” and afterwards soften the top half of the leaf.

d) Conditioning Instructions

No matter how much conditioning skill, knowledge or experience a grower has, it is all wasted unless the employees working the steam box have simple clear operational instructions. They must understand why a change in style of leaf may mean a change in conditioning procedures. The time spent in training will pay dividends in the future.

IV THE TOBACCO MARKETING BOARD

Orderly Marketing

The prime objective of the Tobacco Marketing Board is to ensure the orderly marketing of tobacco. Any rule that is made for this purpose or to ensure that the tobacco offered for resale is in an acceptable marketing condition.

The Role of the Arbitrator

Arbitrators, identified by badges are employed by the TIMB and are present on all sales floors. Buyers have an unrestricted right of appeal on any bale not declared pre-sale for a defect.

Arbitration takes place in complete isolation without interference from the Buyer, the grower or his representative and the Arbitrator’s decision either way is final.

The detailed procedures for appeal and arbitration will be sent to all registered growers each year.

The Role of the Classifier

The TIMB Classifier will endorse the official classifications on all bale tickets. This classification is used for statistical purpose and is invaluable in the Board’s annual crop assessment exercise. The statistics produced are freely available to all in the Tobacco

Industry and many articles, which appear in Tobacco publications, are based on these statistics.

A supplementary role for the Board's classifiers is to identify and close up obviously defective tobacco bales.

The Role of the Sales Supervisor

The major function of the Sales Supervisor is to control and regulate the sale and the sales programme at all licensed floors or at any other such place as authorized by the Board.

Sales Supervisors ensure the orderly marketing of tobacco and settle any disputes, which may arise on the sales floor.

Symbols for rejected bales

The following symbols have been adopted to indicate defects: -

BMR	Mixed leaves in the hands
MR	Mixed hands
LR	Mouldy
KR	Funked
OR	Hot
BGR	Badly handled (Too wet. Too dry)
DR	Damaged Grease, Petrol, Paraffin, chemicals, soot etc
SR	Stem Rot
WR	Withdrawn for such defects as
i.	Loose leaf or scrap baled with tied hands.
ii.	Scrap with bare stems in bale.
iii.	Stems in butts.
iv.	Small or large butts.
v.	Reversed ties in butts.
vi.	Plastic string used for bale sewing.
vii.	Plastic inner wrap.
viii.	Foreign matter.
RR	Rejected (Any other reason not specifically provided for above)
NR	No Sale.

To summarise, good grading and presentation are important selling points for the Zimbabwe crop and these factors will remain vital to Zimbabwean producers. To achieve this a full appreciation of the objectives of grading by every worker in the grading shed is essential. Each grader must have a clear understanding and skills in the techniques of grading. Regular training and instruction sessions are therefore necessary so that the grading and presentation standards are maintained. Finally ensure that no foreign matter is inadvertently put into a bale of tobacco, since even the smallest amount of foreign matter can result in a bale being found unfit for sale and this negates all of a grower's efforts in grading and presentation.

