

February 24, 2015

The Office of Weights and Measures Proposes Revisions to the Method of Sale for Animal Bedding and Recommends New Test Procedures and Test Measures for Use in Verifying the Quantity Declarations on Packages of Peat Moss and Animal Bedding

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Animal Bedding (bedding), also called pet or stall bedding, litter or simply bedding, is generally sold by dry volume in compressed or uncompressed packages. Based on numerous failed inspections of packaged animal bedding, the Office of Weights and Measures (OWM) conducted a study in which compressed and uncompressed packages of animal bedding were measured using a variety of procedures and test equipment. The results from those tests indicate that the current procedures in NIST Handbook 133, Checking the Net Contents of Packaged Goods the dimensional inspection procedure for testing compressed packages (e.g., peat moss); and the volumetric inspection procedure (e.g., mulch); are inadequate for use in testing animal bedding. Uncompressed volume measurements of animal bedding are dependent on a number of factors, including the size and shape of the measuring container, the method of filling the measuring container, and the means used to break up the bedding prior to measuring. Based on the findings of this study, draft procedures were developed for testing both the compressed and uncompressed volumes declared on packages of animal bedding. OWM also designed and constructed new test measures to be used with the procedure, and then brought these measures to several animal bedding packaging plants for on-site verification of the test methods. Preliminary findings indicate that the draft procedure provides more consistent measurement results. Further, the study shows that there is no correlation between compressed and uncompressed volumes of animal bedding, leading to the conclusion that the requirement for compressed volume statements on the package label is unnecessary. The full text of the proposal is posted on the OWM website under "Topic Areas" at www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/pubs/hb133.cfm and includes recommended changes to the method of sale for animal bedding in NIST Handbook 130, Uniform Laws and Regulations in the Areas of Legal Metrology and Engine Fuel Quality, a revised test procedure for NIST Handbook 133 relating to the verification of the compressed volume of Peat Moss (which has been used with animal bedding), new test procedures for measuring the compressed and uncompressed volumes of animal bedding,

suggested test equipment, and a gravimetric auditing procedure that allows inspectors to avoid destroying all of the packages.

The complete proposal at www.nist.gov/pml/wmd/pubs/hb133.cfm provides background information to the proposed amendments to the Method of Sale of Commodities Regulation in NIST Handbook 130 and the recommended test procedures in NIST Handbook 133.

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