

Protein, Dairy & Eggs on the Same Trailer

Beyond produce: USDA Handbook 669 guidance for meat, seafood, cheese, poultry, and shell eggs — including the odor-transfer rules that destroy dairy next to onions or fish.

ProspectSentinel

~11 min read

USDA AH-66 + HB 669

For shippers & reefer desks

Cold Chain Index

Claim Analyzer

Transit Guide

Executive brief

AH-66 is produce-centric. Handbook 669 is broader: dairy (including cheese temperature tables), fresh and cured meats, seafood, poultry, and eggs. If your book moves protein next to produce — or dairy after an onion load — you need this chapter pair more than another apple chart.

Temperature worlds (order-of-magnitude guidance)

- **Hard frozen:** typically 0°F (−18°C) class holding for frozen foods; load tight with perimeter air intercepting wall heat (HB 669 frozen vs nonfrozen loading contrast).
- **Fresh meat / many refrigerated proteins:** follow commodity tables (HB 669 Table 6 family) — generally deep chill, not produce tropical bands.
- **Poultry:** fresh vs hard-chilled bands differ; do not casual-mix with warm produce zones.
- **Shell eggs:** commonly handled in a refrigerated band around the low-to-mid 40s°F in transport guidance contexts; keep away from strong odor sources.
- **Cheese / dairy:** variety-specific (Table 5 guidance in HB 669); dairy is a champion odor absorber.

Odor law: Emitters include apples, citrus, onions, garlic, pineapple, and fish. Absorbers include dairy, eggs, meat, and nuts. Clean trailers after fish or onions before butter and cheese. Never treat “it was cold” as proof the dairy was protected from odor.

Mixed protein + produce

Run the same five-factor test. Many protein/produce combinations fail on temperature alone; others pass temperature and fail odor. {t('cci')} includes protein/dairy items and odor-transfer logic for exactly this reason.

Broker script

“We can cover the eggs at the egg band, or the citrus at the citrus band — not both in one airspace. If you need both, it’s multi-temp or two trucks.”

Claims angle

Protein claims often hinge on continuous temperature evidence and prior cargo sanitation. Produce-style chilling injury arguments rarely apply; frozen thaw/refreeze and odor taint do. Use [Perishable Claim Analyzer](#) for temperature-excursion framing and keep sanitation photos when prior loads were fish or alliums.

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FAQ

- ▶ Is this official USDA guidance?
- ▶ Can I share these with customers?
- ▶ Where are the interactive tools?

Sources & interactive tools

- [USDA AH-66 — The Commercial Storage of Fruits, Vegetables, and Florist and Nursery Stocks \(2016\)](#).
- [USDA AMS HB 669 — Protecting Perishable Foods During Transport by Truck](#)
- **Federal rules (eCFR):** [7 CFR Part 46 — PACA regulations](#) · [49 CFR Part 370 — Principles and practices for the investigation and voluntary disposition of loss and damage claims](#)
- [Cold Chain Index](#) — 200+ commodity storage/transit matrix + co-load checker
- [Produce Shipper Transit Guide](#) — dock setpoints, mix load, checklist
- [Reefer Precool Time Estimator](#) — half-cooling-time style estimator
- [Perishable Claim Analyzer](#) · [PACA Good Arrival Calculator](#) · [Produce Truck Rate Explorer](#)
- [Freight claim package checklist](#) · [Claim / Carmack deadline calculator](#)

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Primary sources: USDA-ARS Agriculture Handbook 66 (2016); USDA-AMS Handbook 669, *Protecting Perishable Foods During Transport by Truck* (1995, reprinted 2008), including Load Compatibility Groups from USDA Marketing Research Report 1070 (Lipton & Harvey, 1977). Selected federal regulation entry points: [7 CFR Part 46 \(PACA\)](#); [49 CFR Part 370 \(freight claims\)](#).

Full series

00 Cold Chain Operating System

01 The Reefer Is Not a Precooler

02 Colder Is Not Safer

03 Ethylene: The Invisible Load Killer

04 USDA Groups 1–8: The Mixed-Load Playbook

05 Airflow, Load Patterns & Multi-Temp Zones

06 Commodity Setpoint Desk Guide

08 CA, MAP & When Gas Matters

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