

Getting What You Pay For

It's hard to be a smart consumer today. You think about the products you buy and the amount you can spend. Can I afford this? Is it the best buy? Am I getting my money's worth?

Almost everything we buy is sold by **weight**, **volume**, **length**, **count** or **measure**. Think of examples—a **dozen** eggs, a **gallon** of milk, a **liter** of wine, a **yard** of cloth, a **pound** of hamburger, a **cord** of firewood. Without standard measurements, it would be difficult to do even simple things like use cookbooks or buy carpeting, laundry detergent and fabric.

Keeping the Market In Balance

You don't carry a scale or measuring tape with you to check the weight or measure of everything you buy. How do you know you're getting what you pay for?

For hundreds of years, your local Weights and Measures officials have been working behind the scenes to protect consumers, businesses and manufacturers from unfair practices. Weights and Measures officials work in agriculture departments, consumer protection offices and other state and local government agencies. These men and women use highly accurate equipment to inspect scales, meters and packaged products at supermarkets. They also inspect weighing and measuring equipment and packages at warehouses, packing plants, feed mills, shipping companies, lumber yards and gasoline stations. They act as a third party to help maintain fairness and keep the marketplace in balance.

Each state has a metrology laboratory which has set standard weights and measures. These are used to check the accuracy of the equipment used by weights and measures officials and industry.

(Provided by **NYS Weights and Measures Associations** and the **National Conference on Weights and Measures**.)