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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 95-040N]

FSIS's Top-to-Bottom Review—Notice of Availability of Report

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing the availability of a preliminary report entitled "Top-to-Bottom Review." The report, which consists of four volumes, contains analyses and options developed by teams of Agency employees who examined the Agency's future roles, resource allocation and organizational structure. FSIS particularly seeks comments from all interested parties concerning the regulatory roles analyses and options found in Volume II.

DATES: Comments will be accepted through October 31, 1995.

ADDRESS FOR COMMENTS: Comments should be addressed to: Top-to-Bottom Review, Room 350-E, Administration Building, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, Washington, DC 20250.

ORDERS: The report may be obtained by contacting the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), U.S. Department of Commerce, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161. Either paper or diskette copies may be purchased from NTIS.

Orders for the diskette, which contains all four volumes of the report, should reference NTIS accession number PB95-505392. Orders for paper copies should reference the accession number for the particular volume or volumes desired. They are as follows: Volume I: Report Digest, PB95-265419; Volume II: FSIS Regulatory Roles, PB95-265427; Volume III: FSIS Structure, PB95-265435; Volume IV:

FSIS Resource Allocation and Other Administrative Subjects, PB95-265443.

For telephone orders or further information on placing an order, call NTIS at (703) 487-4650 for regular service or (800) 553-NTIS for rush service. To access the document electronically for ordering and downloading via FedWorld, dial 703-321-3339 with a modem or Telnet fedworld.gov. For technical assistance to access FedWorld, call 703-487-4608.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jeanne Axtell or John McCutcheon, Top-to-Bottom Review Coordinators, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, Room 350-E Administration Building, Washington, DC, 20250; telephone (202) 720-3521 or (202) 720-2709, respectively.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: FSIS is announcing the availability of a preliminary report titled "Top-to-Bottom Review."¹ Volume I is a comprehensive digest of the full report. It contains an introduction, summaries of the findings of all 10 review teams, and appendices. Volume II contains the findings of three teams that examined the Agency's regulatory roles of the future. Volume III contains the findings of three teams that examined the Agency's organizational structure. Volume IV contains the findings of the remaining four teams that addressed resource allocation; laboratory resources; supervisory and managerial roles; and employees' knowledge, skills, abilities and training.

The following information provides context for the preliminary report.

Administrator Michael R. Taylor announced early in 1995 that FSIS would look at itself "from top to bottom" and define for the future the Agency's regulatory roles, resource allocation, and organizational structure in a manner consistent with the goals and strategies of the proposed Pathogen Reduction/HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) regulation. The resulting Top-to-Bottom Review is part of the Agency's overall initiative to improve the safety of meat and poultry products and better protect consumers.

The intensive self-examination was prompted also by two other factors. First, the Federal deficit and the resulting pressure to reduce government

spending mean that FSIS cannot expect significant increases in its funding in future years. Second, Federal agencies are under a presidential mandate to streamline headquarters and support functions and reduce the number of senior-level positions. It is thus critical to ensure that FSIS is making the best possible use of the resources it has to improve food safety and meet its other consumer protection responsibilities.

The review has involved people from all parts of the Agency. A special effort was made to include as many field representatives as possible when the 10 working teams were formed.

Outreach Program

An extensive outreach program was conducted for FSIS employees and constituents. Internal outreach activities were guided by the conviction that the Agency's employees should be kept fully informed about the review at every stage and that employees' suggestions should be solicited and considered throughout the course of the review.

A three-day employee call-in was held June 12-14. About 250 employees participated. An additional 131 sent in written suggestions, and about 20 more have used the review's electronic mailbox to submit their views. This feedback, which consisted of well over 1000 ideas, comments, and questions, was sorted by subject and provided to the review leaders and teams for consideration.

Constituents received information about the review through a notice in the **Federal Register** June 20 and mentions in the FSIS Update, a weekly newsletter faxed to industry groups, consumer groups, and others who follow the Agency's activities. Briefings for industry and consumer representatives were held June 9, with the Administrator and review leaders presenting status reports and answering questions about the review. Briefings were also held for Congressional staffs.

Intent of the Report

The preliminary report is the result of creative brainstorming by a diverse array of knowledgeable FSIS employees responding to the Administrator's call for bold options. It offers and analyzes a range of possible actions and is meant to serve as a basis for internal and external consideration and comment.

The review leaders were concerned about the length of the report, which

¹ The report is available for review in the office of the FSIS Docket Clerk, Room 4352 South Agriculture Building, Washington, DC 20250.

exceeds 600 pages. They considered consolidating and trimming some of the material, but decided instead to retain all of it and issue the preliminary report in the form of several volumes in order to give FSIS employees and constituents access to the entire body of work produced by each team. Those who do not want to receive and review the entire report can read Volume I, where they will find summaries of the complete versions of the teams' work as presented in Volumes II, III, and IV.

Some topics are addressed more than once. This apparent duplication of effort is intentional. While different teams did examine some of the same issues, they did so independently, applying their own unique perspective and approach. These differing views will provide the Agency's management team with a full range of options to consider.

The teams had just 10 weeks to gather the necessary information and discuss their conclusions. They would have liked more time to write up the results of the work, but the review leaders elected to issue the preliminary report on time as a "work in progress" rather than delay it for further development of the underlying analyses or refinement of the written components. The report serves its purpose of providing Agency management with a wide range of options. Further analysis will be conducted, as needed, before decisions are made.

Work of the 10 Review Teams

The 10 teams that conducted the Top-to-Bottom Review are listed below with a brief and general characterization of their work.

FSIS Regulatory Roles (see Volume II of the Report)

1. Farm-to-Table (Outside the Plant)

This team looked at strategies for ensuring that food safety programs are functioning throughout the non-plant levels of the farm-to-table continuum. Possible FSIS roles were considered from the pre-harvest animal production environment to the end point of preparation and consumption. At every point, the team found opportunities to reduce the likelihood of foodborne illness.

2. Inplant Regulatory Roles

This team analyzed three representative types of plants (processing, poultry slaughter, and livestock slaughter) in order to identify the possible FSIS inspectional and regulatory roles in each type of operation, determine how FSIS resources are currently allocated within

plants, identify potential gaps in the current inspection program's ability to deliver food safety assurances to the public, and suggest how the gaps might be filled. The team developed a range of options for conducting antemortem and postmortem inspection and HACCP validation and verification.

3. Separation of Industry and USDA Roles

The team was charged with determining strategies and techniques to better define the distinct roles and responsibilities of FSIS and industry in ensuring food safety. It observed that the roles are presently commingled because USDA (FSIS) has assumed many management and consultant functions in the meat and poultry plants it regulates. The team identified 13 techniques for "decoupling" FSIS from the industry and "decoupling" inspection personnel from plants.

FSIS Structure (See Volume III)

4. Organizational Structure

The team was charged with determining the optimal structure needed for headquarters and the field to carry out the goals and strategies of the proposed Pathogen Reduction/HACCP regulation, taking into account the streamlining goals of the Administration and the reinvention objectives outlined in the National Performance Review. The team developed a model for a new, highly integrated organizational structure for FSIS. It considered several ways of streamlining the supervision and management of the field regulatory programs.

5. Field and Headquarters Support Services

This team was asked to determine what support activities are best performed in the field and at headquarters. It suggested numerous ways of modifying the existing structure so that streamlining goals can be met and some of the resources now used for support services can be shifted to new food safety initiatives such as HACCP. The team's approach included looking at ways to combine the regional and area office functions to eliminate duplication of services and reduce support staffing.

6. Policy and Regulation Development

The purpose of this team was to examine how policy and regulation development activities can be better managed within the Agency.

FSIS Resource Allocation and Other Administrative Subjects (See Volume IV)

7. Optimal Resource Allocation

This team's assignment was to determine the optimal balance between resources allocated to health and safety activities and those allocated to economic adulteration, labeling, and misbranding activities. It looked at how FSIS can allocate resources flexibly, with inspectors' assignments scheduled according to the risk presented by certain plants, products, or processes. Several options were considered for implementing a new resource allocation system.

8. Allocation of Laboratory Resources

The team was charged with determining what level of laboratory activities is necessary for regulatory oversight of industry operations and determining what testing should fall to FSIS and what should be industry's responsibility. Options were developed for using the FSIS laboratories to support HACCP and other Agency programs.

9. Supervision and Management Roles and Responsibilities

This team was asked to determine the nature of future supervisory and managerial responsibilities and examine better methods for delivering technical information. It called for analyzing supervisory and managerial jobs to determine actual knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) required to perform successfully in FSIS and designing programs to provide supervisors and managers with the necessary level of knowledge and skill in HACCP and pathogen reduction topics.

10. Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Training

This team looked at the KSA's and training that will be necessary to carry out the Agency's future roles along the farm-to-table continuum. It did not, however, address short-term HACCP training for FSIS employees. Another Agency project is addressing the short-term training needs for HACCP-based inspection.

Comments Sought

Through October 31, FSIS welcomes comments on the preliminary report. The Agency is particularly interested in receiving comments on Volume II: FSIS Regulatory Roles. The topics addressed there directly affect how the Agency deals with the public, and they relate to implementation of the proposed Pathogen Reduction/HACCP regulation.

Volumes III and IV address internal administrative matters primarily related to organizational structure and resource allocation. Because of budgetary pressures and the mandate to streamline its structure, FSIS is moving immediately to examine and further evaluate these administrative portions of the preliminary report.

Done at Washington, DC, on September 6, 1995.

Michael R. Taylor,

Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

[FR Doc. 95-22633 Filed 9-7-95; 2:53 pm]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council will meet in Baltimore, Maryland, October 19-21, 1995, with a tour of local projects scheduled for October 19, 8:00-5:00 p.m. The Council is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture. The purpose of the meeting is to receive status reports from prior challenge cost-share grant recipients and to initiate discussion on the 1995 Annual Report for Congress. The meeting will be chaired by William Kruidenier of the International Society of Arboriculture and Genni Cross of The Trust for Public Land/California ReLeaf, the Chair-elect. The meeting is open to the public and time will be provided at the beginning of each major agenda topic for public input. However, in order to schedule public input, time to speak must be requested by October 12, 1995. Council discussion is limited to Forest Service staff and Council members. Persons who wish to bring urban and community forestry matters to the attention of the Council may file written statements with the Council staff before or after the meeting.

DATES: The meeting will be held October 19-21, 1995.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Latham Hotel, 612 Cathedral Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

Send written statements and/or proposed agenda items to Suzanne M. del Villar, Executive Assistant, National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, 1042 Park West Court, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne M. del Villar, Cooperative Forestry Staff, (970) 928-9264.

Dated: September 6, 1995.

Joan M. Comanor,

Deputy Chief, State and Private Forestry.

[FR Doc. 95-22611 Filed 9-11-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

Olympic Provincial Interagency Executive Committee (PIEC), Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Olympic PIEC Advisory Committee will meet on October 12, 1995 at the Skokomish Tribal Center, North 80 Tribal Center Road, Shelton, Washington. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and continue until 3:30 p.m. Agenda items are: (1) 1996 Restoration Priorities; (2) Adaptive Management Planning (share ideas and discuss AMA plan and product concept); (3) Marbled Murrelet Critical Habitat: Process and Procedures; (4) Update on "318" and Salvage Sales on the Olympic NF; (5) 1996 Watershed Analysis Status and Follow-up; (6) Open Forum and Agenda Items from Advisory Committee; and (7) Public Comments. All Olympic Province Advisory Committee Meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Direct questions regarding this meeting to Kathy Snow, Province Liaison, USDA, Quilcene Ranger District, P.O. Box 280, Quilcene, WA 98376, (360) 765-2211 or Ronald R. Humphrey, Forest Supervisor, at (360) 956-2301.

Dated: September 6, 1995.

Ronald R. Humphrey,

Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 95-22585 Filed 9-11-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Agency Form Under Review by the Office of Management and Budget

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. chapter 35).

Agency: Bureau of the Census.

Title: 1996 Integrated Coverage Measurement (ICM) Activities.

Form Number(s): CAPI Instrument, DT-1301, DT-1320, DT-1309(L), DT-1314, DT-1315, DT-1340, DT-1377.

Agency Approval Number: None.

Type of Request: New collection.

Burden: 8,541 hours.

Number of Respondents: 18,000.

Avg Hours Per Response: 11 minutes.

Needs and Uses: The Census Bureau requests OMB approval of the various activities and instruments associated with conducting ICM research in two planned tests -- the 1996 ICM Special Test and the 1996 American Indian Reservation Test. The potential ICM activities consist of an independent listing including a quality assurance advance listing, a housing unit followup interview including quality assurance and evaluation interviews, a person and group quarters interview including quality assurance and evaluation interviews, an outmover tracing interview including an evaluation interview, and a dual system estimation followup interview including an evaluation interview. Prompted by the need to improve statistical methodology for estimating population coverage during the decennial census, the Bureau of the Census developed the ICM approach. The ICM approach was first tested in the 1995 Census Test. Results of that test are still under analysis. After completing review of the 1995 ICM results, we may determine that some of these operations, quality control measures, or evaluations are not needed.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Frequency: One time only.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

OMB Desk Officer: Maria Gonzalez, (202) 395-7313.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Gerald Taché, DOC Forms Clearance Officer, (202) 482-3271, Department of Commerce, Room 5312, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent to Maria Gonzalez, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10201, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Dated: September 7, 1995.

Gerald Taché,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.

[FR Doc. 95-22560 Filed 9-11-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-07-F