

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 96-022-1]

National Animal Damage Control Advisory Committee; Meeting

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: We are giving notice of a meeting of the National Animal Damage Control Advisory Committee.

PLACE, DATES, AND TIME OF MEETING: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn, 3836 East Mulberry, Fort Collins, CO, (970) 484-4660. The Committee will meet on May 22, 1996, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. William Clay, Director, Operational Support Staff, ADC, APHIS, Suite 6B02, 4700 River Road Unit 87, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234, (301) 734-7921.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Animal Damage Control Advisory Committee (Committee) advises the Secretary of Agriculture concerning policies, program issues, and research needed to conduct the Animal Damage Control (ADC) program. The Committee also serves as a public forum enabling those affected by the ADC program to have a voice in the program's policies.

The meeting will focus on research and research priorities and will be open to the public. However, due to time constraints, the public will not be allowed to participate in the Committee's discussions. Written statements concerning meeting topics may be filed with the Committee before or after the meeting by sending them to Mr. William Clay at the address listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, or may be filed at the meeting.

Please refer to Docket No. 96-022-1 when submitting your statements.

This notice of meeting is given pursuant to section 10 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463).

Done in Washington, DC, this 2nd day of May 1996.

Terry L. Medley,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 96-11354 Filed 5-6-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

Economic Research Service

Notice of Intent To Extend a Currently Approved Information Collection

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Economic Research Service's (ERS) intention to extend a currently approved information collection in support of the annual ERS report on cotton ginning charges, harvesting practices, and selected marketing costs.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by no later than July 11, 1996.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Fred Hoff, Associate Director, Information Services Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1301 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20005-4788, (202) 219-0511.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Cotton Ginning Charges, Harvesting Practices and Selected Marketing Costs.

OMB Number: 0536-0001.

Expiration Date of Approval: August 31, 1996.

Type of Request: Intent to extend currently approved information collection.

Abstract: Information on cotton ginning charges and harvesting practices has been collected annually from U.S. cotton gins by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) since 1957. This information is used by the USDA and cotton industry participants as a primary source of data for planning and analysis, and is not available in any form elsewhere. Results are shown for each cotton growing state detailing

charges paid by producers for ginning services, the proportion of the crop harvested by different harvesting technologies, and the average volume of seed cotton needed to yield a standard 480-pound net-weight bale. Also, information is provided on the methods of temporary seed cotton storage used in each state. All required information is collected from cotton gins on a simple one-page questionnaire with a postage-paid return envelope enclosed.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response.

Respondents: Private owned or cooperative cotton ginning facilities located in 14 states.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,300.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 217 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Edward H. Glade, Jr., Commercial Agriculture Division, ERS, (202) 219-1286.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Fred Hoff, Associate Director, Information Services Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1301 New York Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20005-4788, (202) 219-0511.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval.

All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, DC., April 18, 1996.
Susan Offutt,
Administrator, Economic Research Service.
[FR Doc. 96-11298 Filed 5-6-96; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3410-18-M

Food Safety and Inspection Service
[Docket No. 96-012N]

Interstate Shipment of State-inspected Meat and Poultry Products

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for public comments.

SUMMARY: The 1996 Farm Bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit to Congress, by July 3, 1996, recommendations concerning the steps necessary to achieve interstate shipment of State-inspected meat and poultry products. Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA), products inspected under State programs "at least equal to" the Federal inspection program may be distributed only within State boundaries. FSIS is requesting comment from the public on which issues need to be addressed in responding to the Congressional directive to make recommendations concerning the interstate shipment of State-inspected products. Possible issues include, but are not limited to: the safety, wholesomeness, and labeling of State-inspected products; recall responsibilities; the administration of State programs; the funding of Federal oversight of State inspection programs; the funding of Federal assistance to State inspection programs; jurisdictional complications; eligibility of such products for export; and economic effects. The Agency plans to use these comments in formulating its recommendations to Congress concerning State-inspected meat and poultry products.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before June 6, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and two copies of written comments to Policy, Evaluation and Planning Staff, Attn: FSIS Docket Clerk, DOCKET No. 96-012N, Room 4352 South Building, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Patrick Clerkin, Office of the Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250; Code (202) 205-0700.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1996 Farm Bill Provision

Section 918(b) of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (PL 104-127; known as the 1996 Farm Bill), which was signed into law April 4, 1996, requires that, not later than 90 days after enactment of the Farm Bill, or by July 3, 1996, the Secretary of Agriculture submit a report to Congress concerning the steps necessary to achieve interstate shipment of meat and poultry products inspected under State programs that are "at least equal to" the Federal inspection programs. Under the current Federal meat and poultry inspection laws, such products may be distributed solely within the States in which they are prepared.

Background

Under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA; 21 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*) and the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA; 21 U.S.C. 451 *et seq.*), FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat, meat food, and poultry products distributed in interstate and foreign commerce are safe, wholesome, not adulterated, and properly marked, labeled, and packaged.

FSIS currently conducts antemortem and postmortem inspection of livestock and poultry at slaughtering establishments, inspects further-processed meat and poultry products, inspects the sanitary conditions of facilities where meat and poultry products are produced, and certifies U.S. products for export to foreign countries. FSIS investigates violations of the inspection laws and violative products are controlled through detentions, civil seizures and voluntary recalls.

FSIS inspection is supported by laboratory services in the fields of chemistry, microbiology, serology, and pathology. An important laboratory-supported function is the National Residue Program, which is designed to help prevent the distribution in commerce of products containing illegal concentrations of drugs, pesticides, and other chemicals. FSIS also carries out microbiological surveys to determine pathogen levels in raw meat and poultry and special microbiological studies and surveillance of raw and processed products. An example of this is the testing of raw ground beef for the presence of *E. coli* O157:H7.

FSIS operates a compliance program aimed at ensuring that meat and poultry products in commerce are not adulterated or misbranded. Through this program, the Agency exercises regulatory authority over businesses that

transport, store, or distribute meat and poultry products in interstate commerce after those products leave federally inspected establishments. The Agency also registers meat or poultry brokers, renderers, manufacturers, or wholesalers, or others dealing in meat or poultry products that are not intended for human consumption.

FSIS also maintains a comprehensive import inspection system. That system involves two major activities, the first being oversight to ensure that exporting countries have in place appropriate controls over their meat and poultry inspection systems. Such countries (1) must undergo a rigorous review process before they can become eligible to export meat and poultry to the United States and (2) must receive periodic reviews by FSIS to maintain such eligibility. Only plants operating under FSIS approved national inspection programs may qualify to export meat and poultry products into the United States. Meat and poultry products inspected under regional or provincial (i.e., state) inspection programs in foreign countries are *not* eligible for export to the United States.

The second part of our import control program is reinspection at the port of entry, on a sample basis, of meat and poultry products as they enter the United States. Reinspection is a check to make sure that the foreign country's inspection system is working. Seventy-four import inspection personnel carry out import reinspection at approximately 160 official import establishments.

The program for determining the eligibility of a foreign country to export to the United States is based on a systems approach. FSIS focuses on a country's overall inspection system as a means of ensuring consumer protection. For instance, the Agency examines whether the country has the legal authority to impose requirements equivalent to those of the United States in areas such as sanitation and antemortem and postmortem inspection. We examine the organizational structure and staffing of its inspection program. We also conduct on-site reviews of the country's inspection operations to evaluate the effectiveness of all aspects of the country's program.

Once a country becomes eligible, FSIS conducts on-site reviews of its inspection system—usually one or more times a year. The frequency of the reviews is determined by a country's performance history, including previous plant reviews as well as product reinspection at United States ports-of-entry. If a country does not continue to operate an inspection system that