

*OMB Desk Officer:* Jerry Coffey, (202) 395-7314.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Linda Engelmeier, Acting DOC Forms Clearance Officer, (202) 482-3272, 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 within 30 days of publication of this notice to Jerry Coffey, OMB Desk Officer, room 10201, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

Dated: May 7, 1996.

Linda Engelmeier,

*Acting Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.*

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## Bureau of the Census

### 1997 Census of Agriculture

**ACTION:** Proposed agency information collection activity; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before July 12, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Acting Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to: Joseph Reilly, Bureau of the Census, AGFS Division, Room 437, Iverson Mall, Washington, DC 20233. Phone: (301) 763-8557.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Abstract

A census of agriculture is taken to obtain measures of agricultural activity and productivity for each county or county equivalent and state in the United States and the outlying areas.

The census of agriculture is conducted on the same 5-year cycle as the other economic censuses. The 1997 Census of Agriculture covers all agricultural operations in each state, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands which meet the census farm definition. The farm definition for the 1997 Census of Agriculture for the 50 states is any place that produced and sold, or normally would produce and sell, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during 1997. This is the identical definition used for the 1992 Census of Agriculture. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico farm definition has been changed from the 1992 definition, and will be the same as the definition used in the United States. The farm definition for Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will stay at its 1992 level of \$100 in sales.

To minimize respondent burden, the Census Bureau limits the items asked on the report forms for all farms to just these basic subjects: land use and ownership, irrigated land, crop acreages and quantities harvested, livestock and poultry inventories and value of products sold, acres set aside under Federal acreage-reduction programs, payment for participation in Federal farm programs, the amount received from Commodity Credit Corporation loans, number of injuries and deaths, and operator characteristics. Additionally, 25 percent of the report forms include additional questions on number of hired farm workers, production expenses, fertilizer and chemicals, machinery and equipment, market value of land and buildings, and income from farm-related sources. The Census Bureau designs regionalized report forms that are tailored for various parts of the country and are specific to the crops grown in a farmer's particular area.

The census of agriculture is authorized by law under Title 13, United States Code, sections 142(a) and 191. Individual farm operators are guaranteed by this same law that their individual information will be kept confidential. The Census Bureau uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes data only as tabulated totals. The census of agriculture is the only comprehensive source of agricultural statistics at the county level. These agricultural statistics are used by Congress in developing and changing farm programs. Many national and state programs are designed or allocated on the basis of census data such as funds

for extension services, research, and soil conservation projects. Private industry uses census statistics to provide a more effective production and distribution system for the agricultural community.

##### II. Method of Collection

The 1997 Census of Agriculture for the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico will be conducted primarily using mailout/mailback procedures for data collection. For Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands direct enumeration methods will be used for data collection.

##### III. Data

*OMB Number:* Not Available.

*Form Number:* 97-A0101-97-A0111, 97-A0114, 97-A0201-97-A0216, 97-0216(SP), 97-A1(G), 97-A1(VI), 97-A1(NM), and 97-A46.

*Type of Review:* Regular.

*Affected Public:* Farms.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 3,590,000.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* 22.5 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 1,346,250.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost:* \$113.2 million over a 6-year cycle (1995-2000).

##### IV. Request for 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 shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (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 respondents, including through the use of automated-collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: May 7, 1996.

Linda Engelmeier,

*Acting Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organization.*

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