

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. 99-009-1]

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request an extension of approval of an information collection in support of the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program.

DATES: We invite you to comment. We will consider all comments that we receive by May 10, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send comments regarding the accuracy of burden estimate, ways to minimize the burden (such as through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology), or any other aspect of this collection of information to: Docket No. 99-009-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please send an original and three copies, and state that your comments refer to Docket No. 99-009-1. Comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information regarding the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program,

contact Dr. Diane Sutton, Senior Staff Veterinarian, National Animal Health Programs, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737-1237, (301) 734-6954; or e-mail: diane.l.sutton@usda.gov. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Cheryl Groves, Agency Support Services Specialist, at (301) 734-5086.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Scrapie Flock Certification and Identification Procedures.

OMB Number: 0579-0101.

Expiration Date of Approval: September 30, 1999.

Type of Request: Extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The United States Department of Agriculture is responsible for preventing the spread of contagious, infectious, or communicable animal diseases from one State to another, and for eradicating such diseases from the United States when feasible.

In connection with our mission of controlling and eradicating scrapie in the United States, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has promulgated regulations establishing the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program. It consists primarily of identifying and certifying flocks that are free of scrapie in order to prevent the disease from spreading.

Generally, the presence of the disease cannot be detected until the animal becomes clinically ill. Due to the lack of a validated live animal diagnostic test for scrapie, efforts to control and eliminate the disease depend upon the cooperation of flock owners and veterinarians in reporting clinically ill animals.

This process requires that participating flock owners communicate vital information to us (via mail or telephone) concerning the health of their animals.

Collecting this information necessitates the use of a number of information-gathering documents that are critical to our ability to locate flocks infected with scrapie and to prevent the interstate spread of scrapie. The collection of this information is therefore crucial to the success of our Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to

approve the continued use of these information collection activities.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection activity. We need this outside input to help us:

(1) Evaluate 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;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other collection technologies, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2.5049 hours per response.

Respondents: Flock owners, State animal health officials, accredited veterinarians, State and Federal veterinary medical officers, and State and Federal diagnostic laboratory personnel.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 1,180.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 5.3610.

Estimated annual number of responses: 6,326.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 15,846 hours. (Due to rounding, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the average reporting burden per response.)

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.

Done in Washington, DC, this 3rd day of March 1999.

Joan M. Arnoldi,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99-5781 Filed 3-8-99; 8:45 am]

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