

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

Office of the Secretary

Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology

AGENCY: Research, Education, and Economics, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to establish the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture proposes to establish the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology (ACAB). The Secretary of Agriculture is requesting nominations for qualified persons to serve as members of the ACAB.

DATES: Written nominations must be received on or before July 7, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Nominations should be sent to Michael Schechtman, Designated Federal Official, Office of the Deputy Secretary, USDA, 202B Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Schechtman, Designated Federal Official, telephone (202) 720-3817; fax (202) 690-4265; email michael.g.schechtman@usda.gov. To obtain form AD-755 ONLY please contact Dianne Harmon, Office of Pest Management Policy, telephone (202) 720-4074, fax (202) 720-3191; email dharm@ars.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Advisory Committee Purpose

The Secretary of Agriculture is establishing the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Biotechnology (ACAB) to advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the broad array of issues related to the expanding dimensions and importance of agricultural biotechnology. USDA has complex and crucial roles in protecting public health and safety, the natural environment, and a competitive,

vibrant, and diverse farm economy; ensuring the quality and availability of our food and fiber supply; and maintaining the competitive position of American agricultural products in the international marketplace. These topics are of critical concern in the conduct of agricultural biotechnology research, regulation, and commercialization. Some of the topics that the Secretary of Agriculture has identified for the ACAB's initial consideration include: effects of industry concentration and consolidation on farmers; intellectual property rights and grower autonomy; effects of biotechnology on small farmers; ways to maximize or encourage potential benefits of biotechnology in different agricultural sectors; and USDA's role in assuring that farmers have an array of choices for future agricultural technology and practices. The ACAB will meet in Washington, DC, up to four (4) times per year.

Task Force Membership

The ACAB will consist of 25 members of whom no more than five (5) will be federal employees. Members of ACAB should have recognized expertise in one or more of the following areas: Recombinant-DNA (rDNA) research and applications using plants; rDNA research and applications using animals; rDNA research and applications using microbes; food science; silviculture and related forest science; fisheries science; ecology; veterinary medicine; the broad range of farming or agricultural practices; weed science; plant pathology; small farm advocacy; biodiversity issues; applicable laws and regulations relevant to agricultural biotechnology policy; risk assessment; consumer advocacy and public attitudes; public health/epidemiology; occupational health; ethics, including bioethics; human medicine; biotechnology industry activities and structure; intellectual property rights systems; and international trade. Members will be selected by the Secretary of Agriculture in order to achieve a balanced representation of viewpoints to address effectively USDA biotechnology policy issues under consideration.

Nominations for ACAB membership must be in writing and provide the appropriate background documents required by USDA policy, including background disclosure form AD-755.

Neither the form nor the information it contains may be released to the public, except under an order issued by a Federal court or as otherwise provided under the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C.552a).

No member may serve on the ACAB for more than three (3) consecutive terms. Nominees will initially serve for terms of 1 or 2 years for purposes of continuity.

Members of the ACAB and its subcommittees shall serve without pay, but with reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem for attendance at ACAB and subcommittee functions for those ACAB members who require assistance in order to attend the meetings. While away from home or their regular place of business, those members will be eligible for travel expenses paid by REE, USDA, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at the same rate as a person employed intermittently in the government service is allowed under section 5703 of Title 5, United States Code.

Submitting Nominations

Nominations should be typed and include the following:

1. A brief summary of no more than two (2) pages explaining the nominees suitability to serve on the ACAB.
2. A resume or curriculum vitae.
3. A completed copy of form AD-755.

Nominations should be sent to Michael Schechtman at the address listed above, and be post marked no later than July 7, 1999.

USDA is actively soliciting nominations of qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities and members of low income populations through outreach to minority-focused media outlets, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, including Clark Atlanta University, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, the National Congress of Native American Indians, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, Gallaudet and Purdue Universities, and the Rural Coalition. To ensure that recommendations of the ACAB take into account the needs of underserved and diverse communities served by the USDA, membership shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent

minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

I.M. Gonzalez,

Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics.

[FR Doc. 99-14308 Filed 6-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Request to Extend a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Agricultural Research Service's intent to request an extension of a currently approved information collection, the Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII) 1999-2002.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received August 11, 1999 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Alanna J. Moshfegh, Research Leader, Food Surveys Research Group, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 4700 River Road, Unit 83, Riverdale, MD 29737, (301) 734-8457.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII) 1999-2002.

OMB Control Number: 0518-0023.

Expiration Date of Approval: October 31, 1999.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection, the Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII).

Abstract: USDA has been conducting nationwide food surveys since the 1930's as one means of fulfilling its responsibility to ensure the health and well-being of Americans through improved nutrition. USDA food consumption surveys measure the levels and shifts in the food and nutrient content and the nutritional adequacy of U.S. diets over time, and provide other information pertinent to understanding diets and their determinants.

The Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals (CSFII) is a major component of the National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Program (NNMRRP), established by the

National Nutrition Monitoring and Related Research Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-445). The CSFII addresses the requirement of the 1990 Act for continuous monitoring of the dietary and nutritional status of the U.S. population and trends with respect to such status by obtaining information on food intakes by individuals. Another component of the NNMRRP, the Diet and Health Knowledge Survey (DHKS), is included in the CSFII. The DHKS is the first national survey designed so that data on individuals' attitudes and knowledge about nutrition and health can be linked directly to data on their food and nutrient intakes.

The primary public policy applications of USDA's food consumption survey data include evaluating the adequacy of American diets in relationship to scientific and Federal dietary recommendations and goals. Applications include monitoring the dietary status of at-risk population subgroups including children, the elderly, low-income, etc; assessing the nutritional impact of Federal food assistance programs; estimating exposure to pesticide residues, food additives, and contaminants; and monitoring and evaluating food use across the population specifically as it relates to food safety issues. Under the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996, the CSFII provides food consumption data for use in improving the accuracy and quality of EPA dietary risk assessments. Other applications include developing food fortification, enrichment, and labeling policies and assessing the nutritional impact of those policies; and assessing demand for agricultural products.

Accurate and timely food consumption data in an electronic, user-friendly format is a goal essential for meeting the information needs of these applications. The CSFII 1999-2002 interviews will use a computer-assisted telephone mode of collection. A newly developed USDA multiple-pass 24-hour recall method will be used to collect the dietary information. The sample will be drawn through a list-assisted random-digit dialing approach with the full U.S. population covered each year. Future plans include integrating the CSFII with the DHHS' National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, allowing for a significant increase in sample size and coverage of population subgroups and use of a common dietary methodology and nutrient data base.

For the past two years extensive methodologic research has been conducted to develop an improved USDA multiple-pass 24-hour recall method to collect the dietary

information by telephone. Both cognitive research and field tests have been conducted as components of this research. Activities also have been ongoing to automate the recall method and other survey questionnaires for administration by telephone. During the next year, development and testing of the computer-assisted recall method and other questionnaires will continue. The computer-assisted telephone interviews will be tested and evaluated in two nationwide pilot studies. Data collection for the main CSFII will begin January 2001.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 90 minutes per response.

Respondents: Non-institutionalized individuals of all ages residing in private households in the U.S.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 5,000 over 1 year.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 7,500 hours.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Lori G. Borrud, Food Surveys Research Group, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 4700 River Road, Unit 83, Riverdale, MD 20737, (301) 734-8457.

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 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 Alanna J. Moshfegh, Food Surveys Research Group, Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 4700 River Road, Unit 83, Riverdale, MD 20737, (301) 734-8457.

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.