

electronic, mechanical, or other technologies.

Comments should reference this docket number and the appropriate marketing order, and be mailed to the Docket Clerk, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, P.O. Box 96456, Room 2523-S, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Comments should reference the docket number and the date and page number of this issue of the Federal Register. All comments received will be available for public inspection in the Office of the Docket Clerk during regular USDA business hours at 14th and Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, D.C., Room 2523 South Building.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: October 2, 1996.

Robert C. Keeney,

Director, Fruit and Vegetable Division.

[FR Doc. 96-25703 Filed 10-7-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

[DA-96-14]

Notice of Request for Extension and Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), this notice announces the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) intention to request an extension for and revision to a currently approved information collection for the Dairy Inspection and Grading Program. **DATES:** Comments must be received by December 9, 1996 to be assured consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent to: Office of the Director, USDA/AMS/Dairy Division, Room 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Comments received will be available for public inspection at this location during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: F. Tracy Schonrock, USDA/AMS/Dairy Division, Dairy Grading Branch, Room 2750-South Building, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; Tel: (202) 720-3171, Fax (202) 720-2643.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Regulations Governing the Inspection and Grading of Manufactured or Processed Dairy Products—Record Keeping. OMB Number: 0581-0110.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 1997.

Type of Request: Extension and revision of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The Agricultural Marketing Act (AMA) of 1946 directs the Department to develop programs which will provide and enable a more orderly marketing of agricultural products. One of these programs is the USDA voluntary inspection and grading program for dairy products where these dairy products are graded according to U.S. grade standards by a USDA grader. The dairy products so graded may be identified with the USDA grade mark. Dairy processors, buyers, retailers, institutional users, and consumers have requested that such a program be developed to assure the uniform quality of dairy products purchased. In order for any service program to perform satisfactorily, there must be written guides and rules, which in this case are regulations for the provider and user. For the above reasons, these regulations were developed and issued under the authority of the Act. These regulations are essential to administer the program to meet the needs of the user and to carry out the purposes of the Act.

The information collection requirements in this request are essential to carry out the intent of the AMA, to insure that dairy products are produced under sanitary conditions and that buyers are purchasing a quality product. In order for the Regulations Governing the Inspection and Grading of Manufactured or Processed Dairy Products to serve the government, industry, and the consumer, laboratory test results must be recorded.

Respondents are not required to submit information to the agency. The records are to be evaluated by a USDA inspector at the time of an inspection. As an off-setting benefit, the records required by USDA are also records which are routinely used by the inspected facility for their own supervisory and quality control purposes.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this Record keeping is estimated to average 3.002 hours per year per individual record keeper.

Record Keepers: Dairy products manufacturing facilities.

Estimated Number of Record Keepers: 508.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Record Keepers: 1525 hours.

Comments are invited on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of the information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency; (2) the accuracy of the

collection burden estimate and the validity of the methodology and assumptions used in estimating the burden on record keepers; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information requested; and (4) ways to minimize the burden, including use of automated or electronic technologies.

Comments should reference OMB No. 0581-0110 and the Dairy Inspection and Grading Program, and be sent to USDA in care of the Office of the Director, USDA/AMS/Dairy Division, Room 2968-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456. Comments received will be available for public inspection at this location during regular business hours.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated: September 26, 1996.

Richard M. McKee,

Director, Dairy Division.

[FR Doc. 96-25705 Filed 10-07-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

[CN-96-006]

Cotton Research and Promotion Program: Determination of Whether To Conduct a Referendum Regarding 1990 Amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the Department's view, based on a review by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), that it is not necessary to conduct a referendum among producers and importers on continuation of the 1990 amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act. The 1990 amendments require the Secretary of Agriculture, once every five years, to conduct a review to determine whether to hold a referendum. The two major changes to the Cotton Research and Promotion Program made by the 1990 amendments were the elimination of assessment refunds to producers and a new assessment levied on imported cotton and the cotton content of imported products. Although USDA is of the view that a referendum is not needed, it will initiate a sign-up period as required by the Act, to allow cotton producers and importers to request a referendum.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Craig Shackelford, Chief, Cotton Research and Promotion Staff, Cotton

Division, AMS, USDA, Stop 0224, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington D.C., 20250-0224. Telephone number (202) 720-2259.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In July 1991, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) implemented the 1990 amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act. These amendments provided for: (1) importer representation on the Cotton Board by an appropriate number of persons to be determined by the Secretary who import cotton or cotton products into the U.S., and are selected by the Secretary from nominations submitted by importer organizations certified by the Secretary; (2) assessments levied on imported cotton and cotton products at a rate determined in the same manner as for U.S. cotton; (3) increasing the amount the Secretary can be reimbursed for conduct of a referendum from \$200,000 to \$300,000; (4) reimbursing government agencies who assist in administering the collection of assessments on imported cotton and cotton products; and (5) terminating the right of producers to demand a refund of assessments.

Results of the July 1991 referendum showed that of the 46,220 valid ballots received; 27,879, or 60 percent of the persons voting, favored the amendments to the Order, and 18,341 or 40 percent opposed the amendments. AMS developed implementing regulations for the import assessment effective August 1, 1992, the elimination of the producer refund effective September 1, 1991, and provided for importer representation on the Cotton Board effective January 1, 1993. The addition of these new members brought the Cotton Board's membership to 25 (21 producer members and 4 importer members).

The Department has prepared a report which describes the impact of the Cotton Research and Promotion Program on the cotton industry and the views of those receiving its benefits. The report is based on a review conducted by AMS to determine whether to hold a referendum of producers and importers on continuation of the 1990 Act amendments. The review report is available upon written request to the Chief of the Cotton Research and Promotion Staff at the address provided above. Information included in the report was gathered from a variety of sources in order to develop a broad-base of opinion and data. Comments were solicited from persons who pay assessments as well as from organizations representing the cotton industry. Economic data was reviewed in order to report on the general climate of the cotton industry. Finally, a number

of independent sources of information were reviewed to help identify perspectives from outside the program.

The review report cited that the 1990 amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Act were successfully implemented and are operating as intended. The General Accounting Office found that USDA implemented rules and regulations consistent with the intention of the 1990 Act amendments, but criticized some of the procedures USDA implemented for exemptions and reimbursements of import assessments. However, USDA addressed these concerns and considered alternatives during the implementing rulemaking process. The U.S. Trade Representative found that the framework for implementing the import assessment was consistent with trade policy.

The report also noted that there is a general consensus within the cotton industry that the Cotton Research and Promotion Program and, in particular, the import assessment and the elimination of refunds are operating as intended. Written comments, survey responses and economic data support this conclusion. Industry comments cited examples of how the additional funding has already yielded benefits by increasing the demand for cotton and by the successful introduction of new cotton apparel products.

USDA found no compelling reason to conduct a referendum regarding the 1990 Act amendments to the Cotton Research and Promotion Order although certain program participants support a referendum. Therefore, USDA will allow all eligible persons to request the conduct of a continuance referendum on the 1990 amendments through a sign-up period. The sign-up period will be conducted November 25, 1996 through February 22, 1997. Eligible producers and importers may sign-up to request such a referendum at the county office of the Farm Service Agency (FSA), or by mailing such a request to the Secretary. The Secretary will conduct a referendum if requested by 10 percent or more of the number of cotton producers and importers voting in the most recent (July 1991) referendum, with not more than 20 percent of such requests from producers in one state or importers of cotton.

Eligible producers who wish to participate in the sign-up period to request a referendum may visit the FSA county office or county agent, serving the county in which the producer's farm is located. Importers who wish to request a referendum should mail such a request to USDA, AMS, Cotton Division, Stop 0224, 1400 Independence

Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC, 20250-0224. All requests must be made in person or postmarked by February 22, 1997.

The Secretary will announce the results of the sign-up period in a separate notice in the Federal Register.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 2101-2118.

Dated: September 30, 1996.

Lon Hatamiya,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-25704 Filed 10-07-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

Quarterly Survey of the Finances of Public Employee Retirement Systems

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 December 9, 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 William C. Hulcher, Bureau of the Census, Governments Division, Washington, DC 20233-6800, (301) 457-1502.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This quarterly survey was initiated by the Bureau of the Census at the request of both the Council of Economic Advisors and the Federal Reserve Board. It gathers data on the assets of the 104 largest State and local government public employee retirement systems. These systems hold over three quarters of a trillion dollars in assets, which represents approximately 80 percent of all State and Local government public employee retirement system assets.