

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

September 24, 1998.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (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 should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Washington, DC 20503 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, D.C. 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission (s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-6746.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it

displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Title: Papaya, Carambola, and Litchi from Hawaii.

OMB Control Number: 0579-0123.

Summary of Collection: The United States Department of Agriculture is responsible for preventing plant diseases or insect pests from spreading within the United States. The Plant Quarantine Act authorizes the Department to carry out this mission. Chapter 8 of the Plant Quarantine Act (7 U.S.C. 161) provides authority for the Secretary of Agriculture and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to quarantine any State, Territory, or District of the United States to prevent the spread of plant diseases and insect pests (such as fruit flies) new or widely distributed throughout the United States. APHIS regulates the interstate movement of fruits and vegetables from Hawaii to prevent the spread of the Mediterranean fruit fly, the melon fly, the Oriental fruit fly, and the Malaysian fruit fly, pests that occur in Hawaii and can cause millions of dollars in damage to U.S. agriculture. APHIS will collect information using several forms to ensure fruits from Hawaii are free from pests and disease.

Need and Use of the Information: APHIS will collect information using forms PPQ 540, PPQ 530, PPQ 519 to ensure abui, atemoya, bananas, longan, rambutan, sapodilla, and durian from Hawaii are brought safely into the United States.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 426.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 997.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Title: Gypsy Moth Identification Worksheet.

OMB Control Number: 0579-0104.

Summary of Collection: The Department of Agriculture is responsible for preventing plant diseases or insect pests (such as Gypsy Moth) from entering the United States, preventing the spread of pests not widely distributed in the United States, and eradicating those imported pests when eradication is feasible. The Plant

Quarantine Act and the Federal Plant Pest Act authorize the Department to carry out this mission. The Plant Protection and Quarantine Service (PPQ) of the Animal and Plant Health Protection Service (APHIS), engages in detection surveys to monitor for the presence of the European Gypsy moth and the Asian Gypsy moth. The European Gypsy moth is one of the most destructive pests of shade, fruit, and ornamental trees as well as hardwood forests. The Asian Gypsy moth is an exotic strain of Gypsy moth that is closely related to the European variety already established in the United States. In order to determine the presence and extent of a European gypsy moth or an Asian gypsy moth, traps are set in high risk areas to collect specimens. APHIS will collect information using the Gypsy Moth Identification Worksheet to monitor, detect, and eradicate gypsy moth infestations.

Need and Use of the Information: APHIS collects information from the worksheet that includes the name of the submitter, the submitter's agency, the date collected, the trap number, the trap's location (including the nearest port of entry), the number of specimens in the trap, and the date the specimen was sent to the laboratory. The worksheet enables both Federal and State regulatory officials to identify and track specific specimens through the DNA identification tests that are conducted.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government; Federal Government.

Number of Respondents: 120.

Frequency of responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 18.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: FS Redemption Certificate.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0085.

Summary of Collection: The Food Stamp Act of 1977 requires the Department of Agriculture to issue regulations that provide for the redemption of coupons accepted by retail food stores through approved wholesale food concerns or through insured financial institutions. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will provide authorized retail stores and wholesale food concerns with redemption certificates. The Redemption Certificate and Wholesaler Redemption Certificate (RCs) are used by all authorized

wholesalers or retailers when depositing food stamp coupons, and are processed by financial institutions when they are presented for credit or for cash. The issuance of food stamp benefits through the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system is replacing the issuance of food coupons. FNS will collect information using form FCS-278B.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS will collect information on the verification of the amount of coupons forwarded to the bank for redemption. RCs are distributed to each authorized retailer or wholesaler by FNS for completion. FNS uses the deposit information from the RC to monitor (1) deposits by retailer and wholesale food concerns, and (2) for store monitoring and compliance purposes.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 510,470.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 325,483.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Title: 7 CFR Part 319 (Docket No. 97-107-1) Importation of Fruits and Vegetables.

OMB Control Number: 0579-NEW.

Summary of Collection: The United States Department of Agriculture is responsible for preventing plant diseases or insect pests from entering the United States. The Plant Protection Quarantine Act and the Federal Plant Pest Act authorizes the Department and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to carry out this mission. Implementing the laws is necessary to prevent injurious insect pest and plant diseases from entering the United States, a situation that could produce serious consequences for U.S. agriculture. APHIS is publishing a proposed rule (97-107-1) that would recognize a number of fruits and vegetables from certain parts of the world as eligible (under specified conditions) for importation into the United States. These would include cantaloupe, honeydew melon, and watermelon from Brazil and Venezuela. All fruits and vegetables would be inspected and subject to disinfection at their first port of arrival in the United States. APHIS will use several forms to collect information for the safe importation of fruits and vegetables.

Need and Use of the Information: APHIS will collect information from permit applications to determine if the fruits meet their requirements for importation and also this enables them to evaluate potential risks associated with the proposed movement of these

fruits and vegetables into the United States. The information is used to determine whether a permit can be issued, and also to develop risk-mitigating conditions for the proposed movement.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Farms; Individuals or households; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 32.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 1,209.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Title: 7 CFR Part 340 Introduction of Organisms and Products Altered or Produced Through Genetic Engineering Which are Plant Pests or Which There is Reason to Believe are Plant Pests.

OMB Control Number: 0579-0085.

Summary of Collection: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is charged with preventing the introduction into, and dissemination and establishment of plant pests in the United States. The statutory requirements for the information collection activity are found in the Federal Plant Pest Act (FPPA) and the Plant Quarantine Act (PQA). The regulations in 7 CFR part 340 implement the provisions of the FPPA and PQA by providing the information necessary to establish conditions for proposed introductions of certain genetically engineered organisms and products which present a risk of plant pest introduction. APHIS will collect information using APHIS Form 2000.

Need and Use of the Information: APHIS will collect information to ensure that certain genetically engineered organisms, when imported, moved interstate, or released into the environment, will not present risk of plant pest introduction. The information collected through the petition process is used to determine whether a genetically engineered organism will pose a risk to agriculture or the environment if grown in the absence of regulation by APHIS. The information is also provided to State departments of agriculture for review, and made available to the public and private sectors on the Internet to ensure that all sectors are kept informed concerning any potential risks posed through the use of genetic engineering technology.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; State, Local or Tribal Government; Not-for-profit institutions;

Number of Respondents: 150.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 4,176.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Disaster Assistance—General (7 CFR Part 1945-A).

OMB Control Number: 0560-0170.

Summary of Collection: Subtitle C of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act of 1972, as amended, authorizes emergency loss (EM) loans for the purpose of assisting farmers and ranchers who have suffered weather-related physical or production losses in areas declared by the President, designated by the Secretary of Agriculture, or named for physical loss loans by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator. For EM production loss loans, applicants must show a 30 percent loss in at least one basic farming enterprise. For physical losses, applicants must show that the property damaged or destroyed is essential to the continued operation of the farming or ranching operations. Applicants must be unable to obtain commercial credit or recover from the disaster and meet other specific eligibility and repayment requirements. FSA will collect information to evaluate requests for a Secretarial natural disaster designation.

Need and Use of the Information: FSA will collect information on determining whether sufficient losses have been suffered to warrant a Secretarial natural disaster designation, determine whether extenuating circumstances exist to grant a natural disaster designation under the Secretary's discretionary authority. The information will be used by FSA to process State Governor requests for Secretarial natural disaster designations.

Description of Respondents: Farms; Federal Government.

Number of Respondents: 1,960.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 1,230.

Food Safety Inspection Service

Title: Food Supply Working Group Partnerships.

OMB Control Number: 0583-NEW.

Summary of Collection: The President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion, established on February 4, 1998 by Executive Order 13073, is responsible for coordinating the Federal Government's efforts to address the year 2000 problem. The Council has created approximately three dozen working groups to help U.S. economic or public sectors address Year 2000 computer problems. In late May, the Food Supply Working Group was created and asked to assume the lead for the sector involved in producing and distributing the nation's food supply. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has

been charged with chairing this group. The goal of the Food Supply Working Group is to raise the level of Year 2000 problem awareness (Y2K) among those who have a stake in an uninterrupted food supply. It is the working group's aim to ensure that these organizational groups understand the importance of early action, and that they know where they can get assistance in finding appropriate solutions. The strategy of the Food Supply Working Group involves a combination of awareness and assessment outreach. The Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) will collect information through phone conversations and consultations with food sector trade and membership organizations.

Need and Use of the Information: The Food Supply Working Group will collect information from sector groups to determine their willingness to form partnerships with senior leaders of the Department of Agriculture to promote public and private sector action on the Y2K problem. The respondents will also be asked if they have conducted a Y2K awareness/assessment survey of their membership and if they would share the results with the Food Supply Working Group. The information will be invaluable in determining what assessment work has already been completed in order to avoid duplication and what areas need further work.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions.

Number of Respondents: 200.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 33.

Emergency approval for this information collection has been requested by September 25, 1998.

National Appeals Division

Title: National Appeals Division Customer Service Survey.

OMB Control Number: NEW.

Summary of Collection: The National Appeals Division (NAD) proposes to conduct a customer service survey by mail pursuant to Executive Order No. 12862. The NAD of the Department of Agriculture was established by the Secretary of Agriculture on October 20, 1994, by Secretary's Memorandum 1010-1, pursuant to the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994. The Act consolidated the appellate functions of five USDA agencies and provided for the independent hearing and review of adverse decisions of various USDA agencies. Hearing officers conduct evidentiary hearings on adverse decisions or, when an appellant

requests, they review the agency's record of the adverse decision without a hearing. Although NAD maintains a database to track appeal requests, the database contains only that information necessary to process the appeal request, such as names, address, filing dates, final results etc. NAD will collect information using a survey.

Need and Use of the Information: NAD will collect information to evaluate the locations of appeal hearing sits and gauge the appellants' preference for face-to-face or telephone hearings, the perception of the fairness of the appeal process itself; how the hearing was conducted, how impartial was the proceeding, how understandable the final determination. The results of the annual survey will be used by NAD managers to set Customer Service Standards and make adjustments and improvements to NAD processes, including location of appeal hearing, use of teleconferences for appeal hearing and the clarity of NAD notices and determinations.

Description of Respondents: Farm; Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local or Tribe Government.

Number of Respondents: 210.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 52.5.

Economic Research Service

Title: Survey of Multifamily Rental Housing Funded through USDA's Rural Rental Housing Program.

OMB Control Number: 0536-NEW.

Summary of Collection: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (ERS) has the responsibility for providing social and economic intelligence on changing rural housing needs in the United States and the relationship between Federal housing assistance policies and rural development. Housing has a major influence on the quality of life of rural residents, and is an important focus of the Department's rural economic development efforts. USDA's Section 515 Rural Rental Housing Program provides affordable rental housing to very low-, low-, and moderate-income rural families, including the elderly and the disabled. The program, administered by USDA's Rural Housing Service, employs a public-private partnership by providing loans to developers to construct or renovate modest-cost rental complexes in rural areas. The loans are direct, competitive mortgage loans made to individuals, partnership, for-profit corporations, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and others to provide

affordable multifamily rental housing in rural areas. Tenants pay basic rent or 30 percent of adjusted income, whichever is greater. ERS will collect information from property managers on issues related to the availability of adequate and affordable rental housing for low-income rural residents using a survey.

Need and Use of the Information: The data ERS will collect will enhance the agency's ability to answer questions related to the supply and demand for rental housing in rural areas, particularly for low-income residents, and to assess the operation, use, and effectiveness of USDA rural rental assistance programs. The data collected from property managers overseeing the Rural Rental Housing Program will enable ERS to provide information to the Administration, USDA, and the Congress on the design and efficacy of public policies and programs aimed at fostering economic development in rural areas.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; individual or households; Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 1,750.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 578.

Food Nutrition Service

Title: Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program Study.

OMB Control Number: 0584-NEW.

Summary of Collection: The Food and Nutrition (FNS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, has contracted with Health Systems Research, Inc. and Research Triangle Institute to conduct a survey with the Directors of the State Sponsoring Agencies who administer and manage the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) in their state (may be called Food Nutrition Program). The purpose of the survey is to inform the FNS of what activities took place in each state's FSNEP during Fiscal Year. FNS will collect information using a survey.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS will collect information from data abstracted from State National Education Plan documents and data gathered during mail and telephone surveys of State FSNEP officials. The information gathered in the study will be compiled into a Microsoft Access 2.0 database, a final report and a presentation to FNS of study findings. The database will be created so that FNS can update it after this project ends and use it to generate informative reports about the FSNEPs.

Descriptions of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 152.
Frequency of Responses: Reporting:
Other (one time).
Total Burden Hours: 247.

Nancy Sternberg,

Departmental Information Clearance Officer.
[FR Doc. 98-26090 Filed 9-29-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 98-105-1]

User Fees; Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Services

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice pertains to user fees charged for agricultural quarantine and inspection services we provide in connection with commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States. The purpose of this notice is to remind the public of the user fees for fiscal year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information concerning program Operations, contact Mr. Jim Smith, Operations Officer, Program Support, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 60, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236, (301) 734-8295.

For information concerning rate development, contact Ms. Donna Ford, User Fees Section Head, FSSB, BAD, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 54, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234, (301) 734-8351.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 7 CFR 354.3 (referred to below as the "regulations") contain provisions for the collection of user fees for agricultural quarantine and inspection (AQI) services provided by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). These services include, among other things, inspecting commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States from points outside the United States. (The Customs territory of the United States is defined in the regulations as the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.)

These user fees are authorized by section 2509(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (21 U.S.C. 136a). This statute, known as the Farm Bill, was amended by section 504 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-127) on April 4, 1996.

On July 24, 1997, we published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 39747-39755, Docket No. 96-038-3) a final rule to amend the regulations by adjusting our user fees for servicing commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States and by setting user fees for these services for fiscal years 1997 through 2002. When we established the user fees for fiscal years 1997 through 2002, we stated that, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, we would publish a notice to remind the public of the user fees for that fiscal year. This document provides notice to the public of the user fees for fiscal year 1999.

We inspect commercial vessels of 100 net tons or more.¹ As specified in § 354.3(b)(1), our user fee for inspecting commercial vessels will be \$454.50 during fiscal year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999).

We inspect commercial trucks² entering the Customs territory of the United States. Commercial trucks may pay the APHIS user fee each time they enter the Customs territory of the United States from Mexico³ or purchase a prepaid APHIS permit for a calendar year. Since commercial trucks are also subject to Customs user fees, our regulations provide that commercial trucks must prepay the APHIS user fee if they are prepaying the Customs user fee. In that case, the required APHIS user fee is 20 times the user fee for each arrival, and is valid for an unlimited number of entries during the calendar year (see § 354.3(c)(3)(i) of the regulations). The truck owner or operator, upon payment of the APHIS and the Customs user fees, receives a decal to place on the truck windshield. This is a joint decal, indicating that both

¹ Those commercial vessels subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(b)(2).

² Those commercial trucks subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(c)(2).

³ Section 354.3(c)(2)(i) of the regulations states that commercial trucks entering the Customs territory of the United States from Canada are exempt from paying an APHIS user fee.

the Customs and APHIS user fees for the truck have been paid for that calendar year. As specified in § 354.3(c)(1), our user fee for inspecting commercial trucks will be \$4.00 for individual arrivals and, as specified in § 354.3(c)(2), \$80.00 for a calendar year 1999 decal.

We inspect commercial railroad cars⁴ entering the Customs territory of the United States. These user fees may be paid per inspection or prepaid. Prepaid user fees cover one calendar year's worth of AQI inspections. As specified in § 354.3(d)(1), the user fee for this service will be \$6.50 per loaded commercial railroad car for each arrival or, if user fees are prepaid, \$130 (20 times the individual arrival fee) for each loaded rail car during fiscal year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999).

We inspect international commercial aircraft⁵ arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States. As specified in § 354.3(e)(1), the user fee will be \$59.75 during fiscal year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999).

We also inspect international airline passengers⁶ arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States. As specified in § 354.3(f)(1), the international airline passenger user fee will be \$2.00 during fiscal year 1999 (October 1, 1998 through September 30, 1999).

Done in Washington, DC, this 25th day of September, 1998.

Joan M. Arnoldi,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 98-26251 Filed 9-29-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Oregon Coast Provincial Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

⁴ Those commercial railroad cars subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(d)(2).

⁵ Those commercial aircraft subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(e)(2).

⁶ Those international airline passengers subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(f)(2).