

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

National Food and Agriculture Council (Service Center Initiative); Notice of Request for Approval of Information Collection

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Service Center Initiative's (SCI) intention to request approval for information collection. This information collection consists of a limited customer survey in support of project pilot development prior to national deployment. This support is part of the Service Center reorganization authorized by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (Pub. L. 103-354)—the 1994 Act.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before February 28, 2000 to be assured consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Dave McSween, Senior Financial Analyst, Business Case Team, Service Center Initiative, USDA, 5602 Sunnyside Avenue; Beltsville, MD 20705-5000; telephone (301) 504-7554; e-mail: dave_mcsween@soza.com; or facsimile (301) 504-4103.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Customer Feedback from USDA Service Center Initiative Pilot Sites.

OMB Control Number: Not assigned—this is a new request.

Expiration Date of Approval: Not assigned—this is a new request.

Abstract: This request is to conduct customer interviews as to the quality, effectiveness, and utility of piloted projects. The 1994 Act authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to reorganize the Department. Within the goals and priorities of the National Partnership for

Reinventing Government, a business process reengineering initiative was begun. USDA Service Centers nationwide are the backbone for providing USDA programs to rural America. The Service Center agencies are: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Rural Development. Internal Department studies identified business processes and information technology at the Service Centers as having major deficiencies that impeded customer service. This Service Center Initiative (SCI) was formed to spearhead changes in service delivery.

Nine national pilot sites were selected to be the test sites for new processes. Criteria for selection of the pilot sites included diversity of geographic, production, program and customer factors to ensure the full range of USDA's customers, partners and programs were represented. The nine pilot sites are: Snow Hill, MD; Okeechobee, FL; Scottsburg, IN; Paola, KS; Abilene, TX; Sacramento, CA; The Dalles, OR; Rolla, ND and Los Lunas, NM. As a result of business area analysis, specific projects were chartered to test new ideas at the pilot sites prior to nationwide deployment. The evaluation of the projects is scheduled to include internal USDA process savings and customer benefits. The Service Centers exist to provide customer service. There is no substitute for the opportunity to speak with customers and receive their candid thoughts on how well a specific project did or did not meet their needs. Without this information, projects may be deployed to 2500 Service Centers nationwide that do not meet basic customer requirements.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response.

Respondents: Service Center customers and partners.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 200.

Estimated number of responses per respondent: 1.0.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 400 hours.

Proposed topics for comment include: (a) whether the information to be collected is necessary for the proper performance of the agency's functions, 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 clarity, quality, and usefulness of the information to be collected; or (d) ways to minimize further the burden of information collection for those who respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments must be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC and to Dave McSween, Senior Financial Analyst, Business Case Team, Service Center Initiative, USDA, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue; Beltsville, MD 20705-5000; telephone (301) 504-7445; e-mail: dave_mcsween@soza.com; or facsimile (301) 504-4103.

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.

Signed at Washington, DC on December 16, 1999.

Greg Carnill,

Executive Officer, National Food and Agriculture Council.

[FR Doc. 99-33510 Filed 12-27-99 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-VS-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket No. FV00-901-1NC]

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 generic information collection for vegetables and specialty crops.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by February 28, 2000.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:

Contact Valerie L. Emmer-Scott, Marketing Specialist, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, room 2525-S., P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090-6456; Tel: (202) 205-2829, Fax: (202) 720-5698, or E-mail: moabdocket_clerk@usda.gov.

Small businesses may request information on this notice by contacting Jay Guerber, Regulatory Fairness Representative, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, room 2525-S., P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 720-2491, Fax: (202) 720-5698, or E-mail: Jay.Gueber@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Vegetable and Specialty Crop Marketing Orders.

OMB Number: 0581-0178.

Expiration Date of Approval: July 31, 2000.

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

Abstract: The following marketing orders are covered under this information collection: Irish Potatoes Grown in Certain Designated Counties in Idaho, and Malheur County, Oregon, Marketing Order 945; Irish Potatoes Grown in Washington, Marketing Order 946; Irish Potatoes Grown on Modoc and Siskiyou Counties, California, and in all Counties in Oregon, except Malheur County, Marketing Order 947; Irish Potatoes Grown in Colorado, Marketing Order 948; Irish Potatoes Grown in Southeastern States, Marketing Order 953; Vidalia Onions Grown in Georgia, Marketing Order 955; Sweet Onions Grown in the Walla Walla Valley of Southeastern Washington and Northeastern Oregon, Marketing Order 956; Onions Grown in Certain Designated Counties in Idaho, and Malheur County, Oregon, Marketing Order 958; Onions Grown in South Texas, Marketing Order 959; Tomatoes Grown in Florida, Marketing Order 966; Melons Grown in South Texas, Marketing Order 979; Hazelnuts Grown in Oregon and Washington, Marketing Order 982; Walnuts Grown in California, Marketing Order 984; Domestic Dates Produced or Packed in Riverside County, California, Marketing Order 987; Raisins Produced from Grapes Grown in California, Marketing Order 989; and, Dried Prunes Produced in California, Marketing Order 993. Also included in this request are forms applicable to imported raisins, dates, and dried prunes. Marketing order programs provide an opportunity for

producers of fresh fruit, vegetables, and specialty crops, in specified production areas, to work together to solve marketing problems that cannot be solved individually. Order regulations help ensure adequate supplies of high quality products for consumers and adequate returns to producers. Under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (Act), as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), industries enter into marketing order programs. The Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to oversee the order operations and issue regulations recommended by a committee or board of representatives from each commodity industry.

The information collection requirements in this request are essential to carry out the intent of the Act, to provide the respondents the type of service they request, and to administer the marketing order programs. Under the Act, orders may authorize the following: production and marketing research including paid advertising, volume regulations, reserves including pools and producer allotments, container regulations, and quality control. Production and marketing research activities are paid for by assessments levied on handlers regulated under the marketing orders. Also pursuant to section 8e of the Act, importers of raisins, dates, and dried prunes are required to submit certain information.

Under the marketing orders, producers and handlers are nominated by their respective peers. These nominees then serve as representatives on their respective committees/boards and must file nomination forms with the Secretary.

Formal rulemaking amendments to the orders must be approved in referenda conducted by the Secretary. Also, the Secretary may conduct a continuance referendum to determine industry support for continuation of these marketing order programs. Handlers are asked to sign an agreement to indicate their willingness to abide by the provisions of the respective orders whenever an order is amended.

The orders and their rules and regulations authorize the respective commodities' Committees/Boards, the agencies responsible for local administration of the orders, to require handlers and producers to submit certain information. Much of the information is compiled in aggregate and provided to the respective industries to assist in marketing decisions. The Committees/Boards have developed forms as a means for persons to file required information.

The forms covered under this information collection require the minimum information necessary to effectively carry out the requirements of the orders, and their use is necessary to fulfill the intent of the AMAA as expressed in the orders, and the rules and regulations issued under the orders.

The information collected is used only by authorized employees of the committees/boards and authorized representatives of the USDA, including AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Programs' regional and headquarter's staff. Authorized committee/board employees are the primary users of the information and AMS is the secondary user.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.07718 hours per response.

Respondents: Producers, handlers, processors and importers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 17,463.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 6.72508.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 9,064 hours.

Comments are invited on: (1) 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) 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; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) 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.

Comments should reference this docket number and the appropriate marketing order, and be mailed to the Docket Clerk, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, P.O. Box 96456, room 2525-S., Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; Fax: (202) 720-5698; or E-mail: moabdocket_clerk@usda.gov. Comments should also reference 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 Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., room 2525-South Building.

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: December 21, 1999.

James R. Frazier,

Acting Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

[FR Doc. 99-33641 Filed 12-27-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee will hold a tele conference meeting on January 6, 2000. This Committee, established by the Secretary of Agriculture on December 15, 1998, (64 FR 2876) is chartered to provide advice to the Secretary on implementing the terms of the Federal Interagency Partnership on the Lake Tahoe Region and other matters raised by the Secretary.

DATES: The meeting will be held January 13, 2000, beginning at 2 p.m. and ending at 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via tele conference. To access this call please follow instructions: You must have a touch tone phone. Dial 1 (888) 769-8514 at the tone please give the password number 13885.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ed Gee or Jeannie Stafford, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, Forest Service, 870 Emerald Bay Road Suite 1, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150, (530) 573-2642.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The committee will meet jointly with the Lake Tahoe Basin Executives Committees. Items to be covered on the agenda include: [1] Watershed Assessment Recommendations. [2] Public comments. All Lake Tahoe Basin Federal Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Interested citizens are encouraged to obtain tele conference information. Issues may be brought to the attention of the Committee during the open public comment period during the meeting or by filing written statements with the secretary for the Committee before or after the meeting. Please refer any written comments to the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit at the contact address stated above.

Dated: December 20, 1999.

Edmund Gee,

Acting Forest Supervisor.

[FR Doc. 99-33561 Filed 12-27-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-11-M

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

[Docket No. 990114014-9317-02]

RIN: 0605-XX05

Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records

AGENCY: Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of amendment of privacy act system of records; commerce/patent and trademark system 14.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce is amending the system of records listed under Commerce-Patent and Trademark System 14: User of Public Search Room of the Patent and Trademark Office. This action has been taken to update the user pass system privacy act notice. We invite public comment on the proposed changes announced in this publication.

DATES: *Effective Date:* The amendments will become effective as proposed January 27, 2000.

Comment Date: To be considered, written comments must be submitted on or before January 27, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be sent via United States Mail delivery to Nancy Slutter, Office of the Solicitor, United States Patent and Trademark Office, Box 8, Washington, DC 20231; or via facsimile at 703-305-9373. All comments received will be available for public inspection at the Public Search Facilities, Crystal Plaza 3, 2021 South Clark Place, Arlington, VA 22202.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy Slutter, Office of the Solicitor, Box 8, Washington, DC 20231, 703-305-9035.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) will modify its current user pass system for persons using the Public Search Facilities and other offices at the PTO. The user pass system will be modified from a system that is currently collected on paper to a system that stores records electronically. The PTO maintains numerous search facilities for the use of members of the public. Patent applications are available to applicants and their designees and all trademark files are available to the public. Additionally, application files for issued United States patents are available for inspection and duplication at the PTO. Thus, members of the public have a need to access certain areas of the PTO

facilities. The PTO has become aware of problems associated with improper use, removal, loss, or theft of application files and other PTO property and, therefore, plans to modernize its user pass system to better preserve its resources. Additionally, the user pass system will help the PTO understand the public's use of PTO facilities and allocate sufficient resources to serve the public.

On January 6, 1998, the PTO issued a notice in its Official Gazette notifying the public that updated identification passes would be issued to public users of the PTO search facilities. On October 22, 1997, the PTO held a public hearing concerning the public's access to application files. Members of the public submitted a number of written comments concerning access to application files. All commenters objected to a proposal that would have restricted access to the application files. Four additional commenters, while expressing concern at the proposal to restrict access, praised the PTO for efforts to implement procedures to assure the integrity of the application files.

Application files are critically important to understanding the metes and bounds of the intellectual property grants that the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks issues. See, e.g., *Warner-Jenkinson Co. v. Hilton Davis Chem. Co.*, 117 S.Ct. 1040, 1049-50 (1997) (discussing prosecution history estoppel). Moreover, Congress has mandated that the PTO keep and preserve all records pertaining to patents and trademark registrations. 35 U.S.C. 1.

Changes being made to update PAT/TM-14 include amendments to the system name, categories of records in the system, policies and practices for storing records, and addresses. The system name is being amended to reflect that this system encompasses all public facilities at the Patent and Trademark Office, not just the Public Search Room as the system is currently named. The categories of records in the system is being amended: (i) To clarify that the PTO may collect addresses, including business, home and/or electronic mail addresses—the current notice merely lists home addresses; (ii) to include telephone numbers—the current system does not mention telephone numbers; (iii) to include a photograph—the current system does not mention photographs; (iv) to include record of use—the current system does not mention record of use; (v) to include government-issued identification cards and information contained therein—the current system does not mention