

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 81, No. 135

Thursday, July 14, 2016

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

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket No. AMS-LPS-16-0006]

U.S. Standards for Grades of Catfish and Catfish Products.

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice, request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) invites catfish producers, suppliers, processors, retailers, foodservice operators, and other interested stakeholders to provide background information, comments, and data to assist in the development of voluntary U.S. Standards for Grades of Catfish and Catfish Products. AMS is requesting comments concerning, but not limited to, the catfish quality standard that is currently implemented by the Department of Commerce (DOC), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

DATES: Comments, information, and data relating to this notice are due no later than September 12, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments, information, and data relating to this notice by using the electronic process available at <http://www.regulations.gov>, or email: catfishgrading@ams.usda.gov. Written comments, information, and data may also be submitted to Catfish Grade Standards, Quality Assessment Division (QAD), 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Stop 0258, Room 3932-S, Washington, DC 20250 or by facsimile to (202) 690-2746.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Bowden, Chief, Standardization Branch, QAD, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Stop 0258, Room 3932-S, Washington, DC

20250, by phone (202) 690-3148, or via email: David.Bowden@ams.usda.gov or Bucky Gwartney, Marketing Specialist, Standardization Branch, QAD, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program at (202) 720-1424 or via email: Bucky.Gwartney@ams.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 U.S. Farm Bill) directed the Secretary of Agriculture to establish, within USDA, a voluntary fee-based grading program for catfish. Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (AMA) (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627) directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture “to develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade, and packaging, and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices.” USDA is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural products. One method of achieving this objective is through the development and maintenance of voluntary standards by AMS. AMS Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program’s QAD Standardization Branch develops and maintains product and carcass standards for many different protein commodities. The development of grade standards for catfish and catfish products will assist the USDA in meeting its obligations under the 2014 U.S. Farm Bill.

Background

Since 1987, the NMFS has administered and applied the *U.S. Standards for Grades of North American Freshwater Catfish and Products Made Therefrom* (<http://www.seafood.nmfs.noaa.gov/pdfs/catfish.pdf>). While NMFS has a rigorous grading system, it may not be as recognizable to consumers as USDA graded products and is not utilized widely in the catfish industry. The longstanding USDA commodity grade standards are recognized, understood, valued, and expected by the consuming public.

AMS voluntary grade standards exist for many commodities, including a wide range of fruits, vegetables, poultry, meat, shell eggs, dairy, cotton, and other agricultural commodities. The application of these grade standards in their respective industries allows for the segregation and differentiation of product in accordance with quality

attributes. Furthermore, creation of a grade standard often leads to broader opportunities to develop branded products through AMS certification, which serves to expand the market for the particular commodity and allow for the marketing of premium products.

The purpose of this Notice is to identify what the industry requires and needs in a catfish quality standard. We are seeking any recent research, industry data, and background information that will assist in the possible revision of or development of new catfish quality standards. Specific information is needed about catfish products, including both domestically produced and imported catfish, and how quality standards would promote value differentiation and create more objective market signals up and down the product and processing chain. Product standards also assist producers, processors, and retail segments in making informed management and marketing decisions. Additionally, any information regarding the use of quality specifications for value differentiation would be helpful.

To assist AMS in the potential development of catfish grade standards, background information, comments, and data are requested concerning the following:

1. Is there a need for AMS to develop a new voluntary catfish grade standards? If yes:

a. What key components should be included in the new voluntary standards for grades of catfish and catfish products?

b. What catfish and catfish product factors are currently being used by catfish producers, processors, and marketers to determine value?

c. Should voluntary grade standards for catfish include both quality and cutability (yield) determinations?

d. Are there currently any established industry catfish and catfish products standards being used by producers, processors, or marketers that could be useful in developing new AMS catfish and catfish products grade standards?

e. What are the consumer’s expectations of catfish quality and how should a standard reflect those expectations?

f. How many tiers or levels of quality and/or yield should a catfish standard set forth?

g. Are there any additional species of farm-raised fish or farm-raised shellfish

that AMS should take into consideration for a voluntary grading program?

AMS is soliciting comments from stakeholders about whether changes in the catfish quality grade standards should be made, and if so, what specific changes should be made. If after analyzing the comments, AMS determines that changes are warranted, a notice will be published in the **Federal Register** proposing specific changes. Interested parties will have an opportunity to comment prior to a final decision adopting any changes.

Therefore, we request your input regarding any catfish and catfish products background information, technical data, or research that you think will assist us on this matter.

Dated: June 11, 2016.

Elanor Starmer,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-16703 Filed 7-13-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2016-0023]

Notice of Request for Approval of an Information Collection; National Animal Health Monitoring System; Antimicrobial Use Studies

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: New 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 approval of a new information collection associated with the National Animal Health Monitoring System's studies on antimicrobial use in cattle feedlot and swine operations.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before September 12, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2016-0023>.
- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2016-0023, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket

may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/>

#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2016-0023 or in our reading room, which is located in Room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the Antimicrobial Use Studies, contact Mr. William Kelley, Supervisory Management and Program Analyst, Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health, VS, APHIS, 2150 Centre Avenue, Building B, MS 2E6, Fort Collins, CO 80526; (970) 494-7270. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Kimberly Hardy, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 851-2727.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: National Animal Health Monitoring System; Antimicrobial Use Studies.

OMB Control Number: 0579-XXXX.

Type of Request: Approval of a new information collection.

Abstract: Under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is authorized, among other things, to protect the health of U.S. livestock and poultry populations by preventing the introduction and interstate spread of serious diseases and pests of livestock and by eradicating such diseases from the United States when feasible. In connection with this mission, APHIS operates the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), which collects data on the prevalence and economic importance of livestock diseases and associated risk factors.

NAHMS' national studies are a collaborative industry and government initiative to help determine the most effective means of preventing and controlling diseases of livestock. APHIS is the only agency responsible for collecting data on livestock health.

On March 20, 2012, NAHMS was recognized by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as a statistical unit under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection provisions of Title V, Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347, and other applicable Federal laws, all data provided to NAHMS under the antimicrobial use

studies will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in any identifiable form. Only NAHMS staff and designated agents will be permitted access to individual-level data. All information acquired under antimicrobial use studies will be used for statistical purposes only.

APHIS plans to initiate two annual antimicrobial use studies, one on cattle feedlots and one on swine operations. The studies' objectives are to describe antimicrobial use practices on livestock operations annually, including the impacts of U.S. Food and Drug Administration policy changes. The antimicrobial use studies will consist of Antimicrobial Use Producer Agreements and questionnaires administered by National Agricultural Statistics Service personnel. Information collected will be analyzed and organized by NAHMS into one or more descriptive reports containing summary statistics. The information will be used to describe current antimicrobial use practices; help policymakers and industry make informed decisions; assist researchers and private enterprise in identifying and focusing on vital issues related to antimicrobial use; facilitate education of future producers and veterinarians; and collect data capable of informing responses to objectives 2.4.3 and 2.4.4 of the National Action Plan for Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria.

We are asking OMB to approve our use of these information collection activities for 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. These comments will help us:

- (1) Evaluate 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;
- (2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the 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, and 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 0.4276 hours per response.

Respondents: Cattle feedlot personnel and swine owners and operators.