

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

December 5, 1997.

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, Pub. L. 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, D.C. 20503 and to Department 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.

• Natural Resources Conservation Service

Title: Application for Payment.

OMB Control Number: 0578-0018.

Summary of Collection: Respondents submit an application for payment when a conservation practice as prescribed by their contract is completed.

Need And Use Of The Information:

The information is used to provide cost-share payments to program participants.

Description of Respondents: Farms; Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 21,500.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 8,062.

Emergency Processing of This Submission Has Been Requested by December 17, 1997.

• Agricultural Marketing Service

Title: Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements under Regulations (Other than Rules of Practice) under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, 1930.

OMB Control Number: 0581-0031.

Summary Of Collection: The Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act establishes a code of fair trading practices covering the marketing of fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables. It protects growers, shippers, and distributors by prohibiting unfair practices.

Need And Use Of The Information:

The Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act requires nearly all commission merchants, dealers, and brokers buying or selling fruits and/or vegetables in interstate or foreign commerce to be licensed. The information collected is used to administer licensing provisions under the Act.

Description Of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Individuals or households; Farms.

Number Of Respondents: 25,550.

Frequency Of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 118,806.

• Food and Consumer Service

Title: Food Distribution Forms.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0293.

Summary of Collection: Information collected includes agreements and

contracts with recipient agencies and storage facilities, inventory reports and audits.

Need and Use of the Information: The information is used to ensure the efficient and effective administration of Food Distribution Programs at Federal, State, and local levels.

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

Number of Respondents: 396,893.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Monthly; Quarterly; Semi-annually; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 1,157,508.

• Food and Consumer Service

Title: Annual Report NET Program, 7 CFR Part 3016.40.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0062.

Summary of Collection: State agencies submit an annual performance report of the Nutrition and Education Training Program.

Need and Use of the Information: The information is used to monitor accomplishments.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 56.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 896.

• Agricultural Marketing Service

Title: Fresh Bartlett Pears Grown in Oregon and Washington, M.O. 931.

OMB Control Number: 0581-0092.

Summary of Collection: Information is collected from handlers and growers for appointing committee members, conducting referendums, and reporting on shipments and disposition of product.

Need and Use of the Information: The information is used to administer Marketing Order 931.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 1,565.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Weekly; Biennially; Semi-Monthly.

Total Burden Hours: 1,176.

• Agricultural Marketing Service

Title: Apricots Grown in Designated Counties in Washington, M.O. No. 922.

OMB Control Number: 0581-0095.

Summary of Collection: Information is collected from respondents for appointing committee members, conducting referendums, and requesting waivers for inspection.

Need and Use of the Information: The information is used to administer Marketing Order 922.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 430.

Frequency of Responses: Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Biennially.

Total Burden Hours: 39.

Donald Hulcher,

Departmental Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-32032 Filed 12-5-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Consumer Service

RIN 0584-AC58

Food Stamp Program: Maximum Allotments for Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Virgin Islands

AGENCY: Food and Consumer Service, USDA.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: By this notice, the Department of Agriculture is updating for Fiscal Year 1998 the maximum food stamp allotments for participating households in Alaska, Hawaii, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. These annual adjustments, required by law, take into account changes in the cost of food and statutory adjustments since the amounts were last calculated.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This notice is effective December 8, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Margaret Werts Batko, Assistant Branch Chief, Certification Policy Branch, Program Development Division, Food and Consumer Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302, or telephone at (703) 305-2516. The e-mail address is Margaret_Batko@FCS.USDA.GOV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Implementation

As required by Section 3(o) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (the Act), 7 U.S.C. 2012 (o), State agencies should have implemented this action on October 1, 1997, based on advance notice of the new amounts. As required by regulations published at 47 FR 46485 (October 19, 1982), annual statutory adjustments to the maximum allotment levels and income eligibility standards

are issued by General Notices published in the **Federal Register** and not through rulemaking proceedings.

Executive Order 12866

This notice has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 and therefore has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Executive Order 12372

The Food Stamp Program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.551. For the reasons set forth in the Final rule and related notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29916, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of Executive Order No. 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services has certified that this action will not have a significant economic impact and will not have an impact on a substantial number of small entities. The action will increase the amount of money spent on food through increases in food stamp benefits. However, this money will be distributed among all eligible food stamp vendors, so the effect on any one vendor will not be significant.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This action does not contain reporting or record keeping requirements subject to review by OMB pursuant to the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3507.

Unfunded Mandate Reform Act of 1995 (UMRA)

Title II of UMRA establishes requirements for Federal agencies to assess the effects of their regulatory actions on State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector. Under Section 202 of the UMRA, FCS generally must prepare a written statement, including a cost-benefit analysis, for proposed and final rules with "Federal mandates" that may result in expenditures to State, local, or tribal governments, in the aggregate, or to the private sector, of \$100 million or more in any one year. When such a statement is needed for a rule, section 205 of the UMRA generally requires FCS to identify and consider a reasonable number of regulatory alternatives and adopt the least costly, more cost-effective or least burdensome alternative that achieves the objectives of the rule.

This notice contains no Federal mandates (under the regulatory

provisions of Title II of the UMRA) for State, local, and tribal governments or the private sector of \$100 million or more in any one year. Thus today's rule is not subject to the requirements of Sections 202 and 205 of the UMRA.

Background

Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) and Allotments

As provided for in Section 3(o) of the Act, the TFP is a plan for the consumption of foods of different types (food groups) that families might use to provide nutritious meals and snacks for family members. The plan provides for a diet required to feed a family of four persons consisting of a man and woman aged 20 to 50, a child 6 to 8 and a child 9 to 11. The cost of the TFP is adjusted monthly to reflect changes in the costs of the food groups.

The TFPs for Alaska and Hawaii are based on an adjusted average for the six-month period that ends with June 1997. Since the Bureau of Labor Statistics (the source of food price data) no longer publishes monthly information to compute Alaska and Hawaii TFPs, the adjusted average provides a proxy for actual June 1997 TFP costs. The adjusted average is equal to January-June 1997 TFP costs for Alaska and Hawaii increased by the average percentage difference between the cost of the TFP in Alaska and Hawaii in June and the January-June average in 1986 (a 1.53 percent increase over January-June costs in Alaska and 1.82 percent increase in Hawaii).

For the period January through June 1997, the average cost of the TFP was \$502.90 in Alaska, and \$645.50 in Hawaii. The proxy in Alaska for actual June 1997 TFP costs was \$510.59. This proxy is multiplied by three separate adjustment factors to create three TFPs for Urban Alaska, Rural I Alaska, and Rural II Alaska. The proxy in Hawaii for actual June 1997 TFP costs was \$657.24. The June 1997 cost of the TFP was \$602.20 in Guam and \$525.30 in the Virgin Islands.

The maximum food stamp allotment is paid to households that have no net income. For households with some type of income, their allotments are determined by reducing the maximum allotment for their household size by 30 percent of the household's net income in accordance with Section 8 (a) of the Act, 7 U.S.C. 2017 (a). To obtain the maximum food stamp allotment for each household size, the TFP costs are divided by four, multiplied by the appropriate household size and economy of scale factor, and the final result rounded down to the nearest dollar.