

# Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 64, No. 111

Thursday, June 10, 1999

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 Chief Economist; Notice of Intent To Establish an Advisory Committee on Small Farms and Solicit Nominations for the Committee

**AGENCY:** Office of the Chief Economist, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to establish and solicitation of nominations for Advisory Committee on Small Farms.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) proposes to establish an Advisory Committee on Small Farms. The purpose of the Committee is to gather and analyze information regarding small U.S. farms and ranches and recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture actions to take to ensure their continued viability and to enhance their economic livelihood. The Committee is in the public interest and within the duties and responsibilities of the Department of Agriculture. Establishment of the Committee also ensures the continued implementation and consideration of the recommendations made by the National Commission on Small Farms in its report, "A Time to Act."

**DATES:** Written comments and nominations must be received on or before June 25, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and nominations should be sent to Alfonzo Drain, Deputy Director of Small Farms, Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 112-A, Jamie L. Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-3810. Telephone: 202-720-3238; Fax: 202-690-4915.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Alfonzo Drain, 202/720-3238. E-mail address: [adrain@nass.usda.gov](mailto:adrain@nass.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app. 2), notice is hereby given that the Secretary of Agriculture intends

to establish the Advisory Committee on Small Farms, hereinafter referred to as the Committee.

The Committee will monitor government and private sector actions and policy and program proposals that relate to small farms and ranches, including limited-resource farms and ranches; evaluate the impact such actions and proposals may have upon the growth and continuation of small farms and ranches; review USDA programs and strategies to implement small farm policy; advise the Secretary on actions to strengthen USDA programs; and evaluate other approaches that the Committee would deem advisable or which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Director of Sustainable Development and Small Farms may request the Committee to consider.

The Committee will have 15 members, one of whom will serve as chair and be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, and one of whom will serve as a vice-chair and be appointed by the Committee. Members will represent small farms and ranches, and the diverse groups USDA programs serve, including but not limited to, finance, commerce, conservation, cooperatives, nonprofit organizations, rural communities, academia, state and local governments, Native Americans, farm workers, and other interests as the Secretary determines. USDA will follow equal opportunity practices in making appointments to the Committee. To ensure that recommendations of the Committee take into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall make all appointments to the Committee and the members will serve at the Secretary's discretion. Members will serve staggered terms. Initially, the Secretary will appoint 5 members to one-year terms, 5 members to two-year terms, and 5 members to three-year terms. As vacancies expire, the Secretary will appoint members as appropriate. The Committee may establish subcommittees as it determines necessary subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory

Committee Act and the approval of the chair or the chair's designee.

Persons nominated for the Advisory Committee on Small Farms will be required to complete and submit an Advisory Committee Membership Background Information Questionnaire (form AD 755).

The duties of the Committee are solely advisory. The Committee will meet at least once a year and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture regarding USDA's small farms program and other matters related to small farms. The first meeting is planned for September 1999, and all meetings will be open to the public. Committee members will be reimbursed for official travel expenses only.

Nominations are being sought through the media, the **Federal Register**, and other appropriate methods. Nominations should include the following information: name, title, address, telephone number, and organization, and may be submitted by e-mail to: [adrain@nass.usda.gov](mailto:adrain@nass.usda.gov) or faxed to (202) 690-4915. The required Advisory Committee Membership Information Questionnaire is also available on the Internet (see instructions below) and may be requested by telephone, fax, or e-mail using the information above. The completed questionnaire may be faxed to the number above, mailed, or e-mailed directly from the Internet web site.

All mailed correspondence should be sent to Alfonzo Drain, Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 112-A, Jamie L. Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250-3810. You may access the Advisory Committee Membership Background Information Questionnaire (form AD 755) on-line at: <http://www.usda.gov/oce/osfsd/advisorynotice.htm>. You will have a choice of completing and submitting the Questionnaire on-line or printing it from an Adobe PDF file and mailing or faxing the completed Questionnaire to the above address or fax number.

Signed at Washington, DC, June 1, 1999.

**Keith Collins,**

*Chief Economist, Office of the Chief Economist.*

[FR Doc. 99-14777 Filed 6-9-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-P