

# Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 64, No. 226

Wednesday, November 24, 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

### Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

November 19, 1999.

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, DC 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:* Request for State Technical Committee Membership.

*OMB Control Number:* 0578-0027.

*Summary of Collection:* Section 1261 of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, (the 1985 Act) requires the Secretary to establish a technical advisory committee in each State to assist in making technical considerations related to the implementation of the 1985 Act's conservation provisions. The authority to implement these committees was delegated to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It is the responsibility of each NRCS State Conservationist to chair the State Technical Committee (STC). Non-profit organizations, agricultural producers, other individuals and government agencies may become members if they demonstrate that they have conservation expertise. Individuals desiring membership on the STC are required to submit a written request to NRCS for consideration.

*Need and Use of the Information:* NRCS will collect information on the names, addresses, telephone numbers, educational background, a detailed description of their conservation expertise, and participation details on any local environmental and/or conservation planning group. The information collected is used by the NRCS State Conservationist to determine STC membership.

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

*Number of Respondents:* 240.

*Frequency of Responses:* Reporting; On occasion; Other: Once only upon request for participation.

*Total Burden Hours:* 240.

### Foreign Agricultural Service

*Title:* Sugar to be Imported and Re-exported in Refined Form or in Sugar-containing Products or used in Production of Certain Polyhydric Alcohols.

*OMB Control Number:* 0551-0015.

*Summary of Collection:* Regulation 7 CFR Part 1530 Part 1530 authorizes the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to

issue import licenses to enter raw cane sugar (exempt from the tariff-rate quota for the raw cane sugar imports and the related requirements) on the condition that an equivalent quantity of refined sugar be: (1) exported as refined sugar; (2) exported as an ingredient in sugar containing products; or (3) used in production of certain polyhydric alcohols. The purpose of the sugar import licensing program is to assist U.S. sugar manufacturers, refiners, and processors in making U.S. products price competitive on the world market; and facilitate the use of domestic refining capacity.

*Need and Use of the Information:* FAS will collect information to: (1) determine whether applicants for the program meet the Regulation's eligibility criteria; (2) monitor sugar imports, transfers, exports, and use in order to confirm that transactions are conducted and completed within the requirements of the Regulations; (3) audit participants' compliance with the Regulation; and (4) prevent entry of world-priced program sugar from entering the higher-priced domestic commercial sugar market. The information collected is needed by the Sugar Licensing Authority to manage, plan, evaluate, and account for program activities.

*Description of Respondents:* Business or other for-profit; individuals or households;

*Number of Respondents:* 250.

*Frequency of Responses:* Reporting; Quarterly.

*Total Burden Hours:* 4,590.

### Rural Housing Service

*Title:* 7 CFR 1965-E, "Prepayment and Displacement Prevention of Multiple Family Housing Loans".

*OMB Control Number:* 0575-0155.

*Summary of Collection:* The Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 required that when Rural Rental Housing borrowers wished to prepay their loans, Rural Development (RD) must first decide if the housing continues to be needed to serve low- and moderate-income tenants, and if so to offer the borrower a fair incentive to prepay the loan. If the borrower rejects the incentive, the housing must be offered for sale to a non profit organization or public agencies. Only if no nonprofit organization or public agencies can be found to purchase the

project at the market value can the loan be prepaid.

*Need and Use of the Information:*

When a request to prepay a rural rental housing loan is received, RD will collect information to determine the need for the housing to remain in the low-income program. RD will also determine the extent of any incentive offer to keep the housing within the Rural Development program. If RD does not have current and appropriate information, the decision to accept or reject the prepayment request and the amount of an incentive offer, would be made inappropriately.

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

*Number of Respondents:* 800.

*Frequency of Responses:*

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion.

*Total Burden Hours:* 687.

### Rural Utilities Service

*Title:* 7 CFR 1717 Subpart D, Mergers and Consolidations of Electric Borrowers.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572-0114.

*Summary of Collection:* The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) is a credit agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It makes mortgage loans and loan guarantees to finance electric, telecommunications, and water and waste water facilities in rural areas. Loan programs are managed in accordance with the Rural Electrification Act (RE Act) of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, as amended and as prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-129, Policies for Federal Credit Programs and Non-tax Receivable, which states that agencies must, based on a review of a loan application, determine that an applicant complies with statutory, regulatory, and administrative eligibility requirements for loan assistance.

*Need and Use of the Information:*

RUS will collect information to streamline procedures and allow borrowers the flexibility to meet new business challenges and opportunities.

*Description of Respondents:* Business or other for-profit.

*Number of Respondents:* 18.

*Frequency of Responses:*

Reporting: On occasion.

*Total Burden Hours:* 184.

### Rural Housing Service

*Title:* 7 CFR 1944-N, "Housing Preservation Grant Program"

*OMB Control Number:* 0575-0115.

*Summary of Collection:* The Rural Housing Service (RHS) is authorized to make grants to eligible applicants to

provide repair and rehabilitation assistance so that very low- and low-income rural residents can obtain adequate housing. Such assistance is made by grantees to very low- and low-income persons, and to co-ops. Grant funds are used by grantees to make loans, grants, or other comparable assistance to eligible homeowners, rental unit owners, and co-ops for repair and rehabilitation of dwellings to bring them up to code or minimum property standards. These grants were established by Public Law 98-181, the Housing Urban Rural Recovery Act of 1983, which amended the Housing Act of 1949 (Pub. L. 93-383). RHS will collect a "Statement of Activity" from the applicant describing their proposed program.

*Need and Use of the Information:*

RHS will collect information to determine eligibility for a grant to justify its selection of the applicant for funding; to report program accomplishments and to justify and support expenditure of grant funds. RHS uses the information to determine if the grantee is complying with its grant agreement and to make decisions regarding continuing with, modifying, or terminating grant assistance. If the information is not collected and presented to RHS, the Agency could not monitor the program or justify disbursement of grant funds.

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

*Number of Respondents:* 2,050.

*Frequency of Responses:*

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Quarterly.

*Total Burden Hours:* 10,814.

### National Agricultural Statistics Service

*Title:* Floriculture Survey.

*OMB Control Number:* 0535-0093.

*Summary of Collection:* The primary function of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production. Since 1985, Congress has provided funds to conduct an annual Commercial Floriculture Survey which provides basic data on this important and growing industry. General authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204. This statute specifies that "The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which can be obtained by the collection of statistics \* \* \* and shall distribute them among agriculturists". The floriculture industry accounts for about 5 percent of

agricultural cash receipts at the U.S. level. The survey is conducted in 36 states, which ensures 97 percent coverage of the U.S. value of production. NASS will collect information using a survey.

*Need and Use of the Information:*

NASS will collect information to assess alternative agriculture opportunities. Data from the survey will provide statistics for Federal and State agencies to monitor the use of agricultural chemicals. If the information is not collected data users could not keep abreast of changes.

*Description of Respondents:* Farms; Business or other for-profit.

*Number of Respondents:* 16,100.

*Frequency of Responses:* Reporting: Annually.

*Total Burden Hours:* 6,883.

### National Agricultural Statistics Service

*Title:* Vegetables.

*OMB Control Number:* 0535-0037.

*Summary of Collection:* The primary function of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production. Vegetable estimates are an integral part of this function. The vegetable program is complex in that some crops are processing only, some are fresh market only, and others are dual crops (both processing and fresh market). Vegetable processors are surveyed the first week of April for their intended acreage of vegetables for processing and the first week of July for acreage contracted. The fresh market vegetable program consists of weekly estimates during the growing season for tomatoes in Florida. NASS will collect information using a survey.

*Need and Use of the Information:*

NASS will collect information to estimate acreage planted and harvested, production, and utilization for the various crops. The estimates provide vital statistics for growers, processors, and marketers to use in making production and marketing decisions.

*Description of Respondents:* Farms; Business or other for-profit.

*Number of Respondents:* 13,906.

*Frequency of Responses:* Reporting: On occasion; Weekly; Annually.

*Total Burden Hours:* 2,710.

### National Agricultural Statistics Service

*Title:* Agricultural Resource Management, Chemical Use and Postharvest Chemical Use Survey.

*OMB Control Number:* 0535-0218.

*Summary of Collection:* The Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS) is a one-time information collection. General

authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204. This statute specifies that "The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which he can obtain \* \* \* by the collection of statistics \* \* \* and shall distribute them among agriculturists." National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) received new funding in FY 1997 to start collecting pesticide usage information on chemicals applied after harvest of a commodity. These data are needed to provide accurate information on the type of chemicals and amounts of chemicals applied postharvest. This information collection obtains chemical use and postharvest chemical use data in addition to agricultural resource management survey data. NASS will collect information using a survey.

**Need and Use of the Information:** NASS will collect information to provide estimates on the extent of residue of chemicals on fruits and vegetables and to produce environmental and economic estimates of the costs of farming. If the information is not collected NASS would not be able to update the Index of Prices Paid by Farmers.

**Description of Respondents:** Farms.

**Number of Respondents:** 108,183.

**Frequency of Responses:** Reporting: On occasion; Annually.

**Total Burden Hours:** 38,274.

#### Rural Utilities Service

**Title:** Accounting Requirements for RUS Electric and Telecommunications Borrowers.

**OMB Control Number:** 0572-0003.

**Summary of Collection:** Rural Utilities Service (RUS) manages loan programs in accordance with the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*, as amended. Currently 800 rural electric and 830 telecommunications systems have outstanding loans from RUS. RUS does not own or operate rural electric facilities. Its function is to provide, through self-liquidating loans and technical assistance, adequate and dependable electric and telecommunications service to rural people under rates and conditions that permit productive use of these utility services. RUS borrowers, as all businesses, need accounting systems for their own internal use as well as external use. Such records are maintained as part of normal business practices. Without systems, no records would exist, for example, or what they own or what they owe. Such records systems provide borrowers with information that is required by the manager and board of directors to

operate on a daily basis, to complete their tax returns, and to support requests to state regulatory commissions for rate approvals.

#### **Need and Use of the Information:**

RUS collects information to evaluate a borrower's financial performance, to determine whether current loans are at risk, and to determine the credit worthiness of future loans. If basic financial records were not maintained, the borrower, its investors, and RUS would be unable to evaluate a borrower's financial performance.

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

**Number of Respondents:** 1,630.

**Frequency of Responses:**

Recordkeeping.

**Total Burden Hours:** 45,520.

**Nancy B. Sternberg,**

*Departmental Clearance Officer.*

[FR Doc. 99-30582 Filed 11-23-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-01-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Agricultural Marketing Service

[FV-98-305]

#### **United States Standards for Grades of Oranges (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Grapefruit (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Tangerines and the United States Standards for Grades of Lemons**

**AGENCY:** Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This document gives notice of the availability of revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Oranges, Grapefruit, Tangerines and Lemons. The changes will provide a minimum 25-count sample to be applied to tolerances for defects, revise the grades to make them uniform and consistent with each other and other recently revised U.S. grade standards, and, delete references to outdated industry practices and terminology.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This notice is effective December 27, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** The revised standards are available from Kenneth R. Mizelle, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 2065, South Building, STOP 0240, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090-6456; or at [www.ams.gov/standards/frutmrkt.htm](http://www.ams.gov/standards/frutmrkt.htm).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth R. Mizelle (202) 720-2185.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended, 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 \* \* \*." AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and to making copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Oranges (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Grapefruit (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Tangerines and the United States Standards for Grades of Lemons no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR); however, they are maintained by USDA.

AMS is revising the United States Standards for Grades of Oranges (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Grapefruit (California and Arizona), United States Standards for Grades of Tangerines and the United States Standards for Grades of Lemons using the procedures it published in the August 13, 1997, **Federal Register** and that appear in Part 36 of Title 7 of the CFR.

The notice, with a request for comments on the proposed changes, was published in the **Federal Register** on June 17, 1999 (64 FR 32666-32703).

The petitioner (Sunkist Growers), which represents the majority of citrus growers and packers in California, requested that the standards be revised to provide a minimum 25-count sample applied to tolerances for defects. In addition, AMS proposed several other changes to promote greater uniformity and consistency in application of the standard. These standards have not been changed within the last 34 to 50 years, depending on the commodity. These changes are needed to bring the standards into conformity with current cultural and marketing practices and to promote more uniform application of the U.S. grade standards.

AMS published the notice in the **Federal Register** with an outline of the specific proposed changes and provided for a comment period of 60 days, which ended August 16, 1999. No comments were received on the notice during that time. However, a request from industry to reopen and extend the comment period was received on August 16, 1999. The request was granted, and the comment period was extended through September 20, 1999. A total of 2