

agricultural food, fiber, and specialty commodities and collect data relating to rural America for other Federal agencies. In this capacity, NASS prepares estimates for trout sales, catfish processed, inventory, acreage, and sales. 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." Congress has mandated the collection of basic data for aquaculture and provides funding for these surveys. Aquaculture is an alternative method to produce a high protein, low fat product demanded by the consumer. Information on the producing areas and quantities is very limited. The Census of Aquaculture, which NASS completed earlier this year, provides detail information relating to on-farm aquaculture practices. NASS will collect information using a survey.

Need and use of the Information: NASS will collect information to demonstrate the growing importance of aquaculture to officials of Federal and State government agencies who manage and direct policy over programs in agriculture and natural resources. The type of information collected and reported provides extension educators and research scientists with data that indicates important areas that require special educational and/or research efforts, such as causes for losses of fish and pond inventories of fish of various sizes.

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

Number of Respondents: 3,025.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Semi-annually.

Total Burden Hours: 825.

Nancy B. Sternberg,

Departmental Information Collection Officer.
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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Chief Economist

Notice of Appointment of the Advisory Committee on Small Farms

AGENCY: Office of the Chief Economist, USDA.

ACTION: Notification of appointment to the Advisory Committee on Small Farms

SUMMARY: The Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, in accordance with the

Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, announces members appointed to the Advisory Committee on Small Farms. Nineteen members were appointed from nominations of more than 100 well-qualified individuals, representing owners and operators of small farms, ranches and woodlots and the diverse groups USDA programs serve. Four of the appointed members served on the USDA's National Commission on Small Farms whose term expired in July 1999. Inclusion of previous Commission members will ensure the continued consideration and implementation of the recommendations made by the Commission in its report, "A Time to Act." Equal opportunity practices were followed in appointing committee members. To ensure that the recommendations of advisory committee take into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership includes, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women and persons with disabilities

The following appointments to the Advisory Committee on Small Farms have been made:

Dr. James Harness, will serve as chair of the Committee. He is the Director of Special Programs and Associate Extension Administrator of Alcorn State University in Fayette, Mississippi, and member of the National Commission on Small Farms;

Dayle Larue Aldridge, Director of Small Farms Outreach for the Oklahoma Landowners and Tenants Association in Taft, Oklahoma;

Jon W. Anderson, Executive Secretary at the Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets in Montpelier, Vermont;

Karen S. Armstrong-Cummings, Director, Commodity Growers Cooperative Association in Frankfort, Kentucky and member of the National Commission on Small Farms;

Suzanne L. Bertrand, Small Farms Special Project Coordinator, Heifer Project International in Little Rock, Arkansas;

Marion Long Bowlan, Farmer and Executive Director of Pennsylvania Farm Link, Inc. in Manheim, Pennsylvania and member of the National Commission on Small Farms;

Don R. Crittenden, Farmer/Rancher, Cherokee National Tribal Council Member in Taklequah, Oklahoma;

Harold Eugene Garrett, Professor and Director of the Center for Agroforestry, University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri;

Helen Gonzalez, Farmer and Director of Farmers Feed Cooperative, St. Croix, Virgin Islands;

Luz Bazan Gutierrez, President, Washington Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, Inc., in Yakima, Washington;

Neil D. Hamilton, Director of Agricultural Law Center and Professor of Law, Drake University Law School in Waukee, Iowa;

Golden J. Hardy, Farmer and member of Jefferson County Farm Service Agency Committee in Beaumont, Texas;

Archilus L. Hart, Assistant to the Commissioner of Agriculture on Small Farms Agricultural Policy in Knightdale, North Carolina;

Edgar J. Hicks, President, DHV Inc., a farmers commodities corporation in Omaha, Nebraska;

Majorie Jarrett, Rancher in Wray, Colorado;

Calvin R. King, Sr., Founder and Executive Director, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation in Aubrey, Arkansas;

George L. Siemon, Farmer and CEO, Organic Valley Cooperative in Viroqua, Wisconsin;

Ranuir Singh, Fruit farmer in Marysville, California;

Thomas Joseph Trantham, Jr., Dairy farmer in Pelzer, South Carolina and member of the National Commission on Small Farms.

Committee members will serve two-year terms. In the event of a vacancy, the Secretary will appoint a new member as appropriate and subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The duties of the Committee are solely advisory. The Committee will monitor government and private sector actions, policy and program proposals that relate to small farms, ranches and woodlots, including limited-resource farms, ranches and woodlots, and evaluate the impact such actions and proposals may have upon their viability and economic livelihood. The Committee will 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 advise the Secretary through an annual report and other means as necessary and appropriate.

The Committee will hold at least one public meeting per year, and conduct working sessions and teleconference calls as determined by the Chair.

Committee members will serve without pay. Reimbursement of travel expenses and per diem costs shall be made to Committee members who would be unable to attend Committee meetings without such reimbursement.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions should be e-mailed to adrain@oce.usda.gov or adrain@nass.usda.gov, faxed to 202-720-0443, or telephoned to Alfonzo Drain, 202-720-3238; 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 20250-310.

Dated: December 1, 1999.

Keith Collins,

Chief Economist, Office of the Chief Economist.

[FR Doc. 99-32012 Filed 12-9-99 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Rural Utilities Service

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCIES: Rural Housing Service (RHS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), and Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; Comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the above-named Agencies to request an extension for the currently approved information collection in support of the servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by February 8, 2000 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For inquiries on the Information Collection Package, contact Tracy Gillin, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, contact Tracy Gillin, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0039. For program content, contact Beth Jones, Senior Loan Specialist, Community Programs Servicing and Special Authorities Branch, RHS, USDA, 1400

Independence Ave., SW, Mail Stop 0787, Washington, DC 20250-0787, Telephone (202) 720-1498, E-mail epjones@rdmail.rural.usda.gov. Comments should be submitted to Ms. Gillin at USDA—Rural Development, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Mail Stop 0742, Washington, DC 20250-0742.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 7 CFR 1951-E, Servicing of Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants.

OMB Number: 0575-0066.

Expiration Date of Approval: February 28, 2000.

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

Abstract: The following Community and Direct Business Programs Loans and Grants are serviced by this currently approved docket (0575-0066): The Community Facilities loan and grant program is authorized by Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926) to make loans to public entities, nonprofit corporations, and Indian tribes through the Community Facilities programs for the development of essential community facilities primarily servicing rural residents.

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Title 3 (Pub. L. 88-452), authorizes Economic Cooperative Loans to assist incorporated and unincorporated associations to provide to low-income rural families essential processing, purchasing, or marketing services, supplies, or facilities.

The Food Security Act of 1985, Section 1323 (Pub. L. 99-198), authorizes loan guarantees and grants to Nonprofit National Corporations to provide technical and financial assistance to for-profit or nonprofit local businesses in rural areas.

The Water and Waste Disposal program is authorized by Section 306(a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)) to provide basic human amenities, alleviate health hazards, and promote the orderly growth of the rural areas of the Nation by meeting the need for new and improved water and waste disposal systems.

The Business and Industry program is authorized by Section 310 B (7 U.S.C. 1932) (Pub. L. 92-419, August 30, 1972) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to improve, develop, or finance business, industry, and employment and improve the economic and environmental climate in rural communities, including pollution abatement control.

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Section 310 B(c) (7

U.S.C. 1932(c)), authorizes Rural Business Enterprise Grants to public bodies and nonprofit corporations to facilitate the development of private business in rural areas.

The Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, Section 310 B(f)(i) (7 U.S.C. 1932(c)), authorized Rural Cooperative Development Grants to nonprofit institutions for the purpose of enabling such institutions to establish and operate centers for rural cooperative development.

The FSA is authorized by 25 U.S.C. §§ 488-494 to make loans through its Indian Tribal Land Acquisition loan program to individuals, tribes, or tribal corporations, within tribal reservations and Alaskan communities. The authority for FSA to make loans for grazing, irrigation and drainage, and farm ownership recreation loans is provided by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT) (7 U.S.C. 1926 330-381).

The purpose of the loan and grant servicing function for the above programs is to assist recipients to meet the objectives of the loans and grants, repay loans on schedule, comply with agreements, and protect the Government's financial interest. Routine servicing responsibilities include collection of payments, compliance reviews, security inspections, review of financial reports, determining applicant/borrower eligibility and project feasibility for various servicing actions, and supervision activities.

Supervision by the Agencies include, but is not limited to: review of budgets, management reports, audits and financial statements; performing security inspections and providing, arranging, or recommending technical assistance; evaluating environmental impacts of proposed actions by the borrower; and performing civil rights compliance reviews.

Information will be collected by the field offices from applicants, borrowers, consultants, lenders, and attorneys.

Failure to collect information could result in improper servicing of these loans.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .75 hours per response.

Respondents: State, local or tribal Governments, Not-for-profit institutions, businesses, and individuals.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 78.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 2.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 118.