

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

October 17, 2017.

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 are requested regarding (1) 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) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) 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.

Comments regarding this information collection received by November 20, 2017 will be considered. Written comments should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax (202) 395–5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250–7602. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720–8958.

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.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: Special Nutrition Programs Quick Response Surveys.

OMB Control Number: 0584–0613.

Summary of Collection: FNS is submitting a revision to this generic clearance to include more detailed information concerning the sample frame data collection. This generic clearance, which allows the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to quickly collect and analyze specific information from State and local administrators of the Special Nutrition Programs (SNP), includes two data collections: (1) An annual sample frame data collection and (2) quick response surveys. FNS conducts lengthy, large, and complex studies on broad topics about the SNPs, which often take several years to complete. The Quick Response Surveys provides a mechanism for succinct, quick-turnaround studies to complement the larger SNP studies. Collecting sample frame data on an annual basis provides FNS the flexibility to conduct these shorter, quick-turnaround studies. This generic clearance enables FNS to administer the SNPs more effectively by providing a mechanism for rapidly collecting current information on specific time-sensitive features or issues.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS will use the data collected for the sample frames to identify the universe of entities that can be sampled for the quick-response surveys. These surveys will collect information from key administrators of the SNPs at the State, local, and site level in response to various program and research questions resulting from the larger and more complex SNP studies. The data collected from these quick turnaround studies will be used to answer policy and implementation questions posed by the larger studies and will enable FNS to monitor program funding, comply with statutes and regulations, and adopt program changes.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions and State, Local, or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 107,740 over the three-year approval.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On Occasion; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 34,523 over the three-year approval.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–22767 Filed 10–19–17; 8:45 am]

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displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: Evaluation of Alternatives to Improve Elderly Access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Study.

OMB Control Number: 0584–NEW.

Summary of Collection: The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), under authorization of SEC. 17. [7 U.S.C. 2026] of the FOOD AND NUTRITION ACT OF 2008, as amended, intends to conduct the Evaluation of Alternatives to Improve Elderly Access. FNS is interested in exploring whether policy options designed to improve access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for the elderly are effective. The objective of the study is to better understand how to maximize elder (60+) access to SNAP.

Need and Use of the Information: This study will provide FNS with a better understanding of the barriers to serving elderly populations in SNAP and the extent to which available policy options improve program access, whether certain program models or combinations are more effective than others, and what tradeoffs exist between program simplification/access goals and ensuring benefit adequacy.

Description of Respondents: Individuals/Households (681); Business-not-for-profit (90) and State, Local & Tribal agencies (253).

Number of Respondents: 1,024.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Once.

Total Burden Hours: 1,380.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2017–22793 Filed 10–19–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2008–0119]

Implementation of Revised Lacey Act Provisions

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amended the Lacey Act to provide, among other things, that importers submit a declaration at the time of importation for certain plants and plant products. The declaration requirements of the Lacey Act became

effective on December 15, 2008, and enforcement of those requirements is being phased in. In 2009, we initiated a blanket declaration pilot program for participants in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's expedited border release programs. In this notice, we are announcing the end of the blanket declaration pilot program and providing guidance on how participants in the program may continue to file declarations as required by the Lacey Act.

DATES: The blanket declaration pilot program will end on April 18, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Richard Schading, Regulatory Policy Specialist, Permitting and Compliance Coordination, Compliance and Environmental Coordination Branch, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 60, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 851–2045.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Lacey Act (16 U.S.C. 3371 *et seq.*), first enacted in 1900 and significantly amended in 1981, is the United States' oldest wildlife protection statute. The Act combats trafficking in illegally taken wildlife, fish, and plants. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, effective May 22, 2008, amended the Lacey Act by expanding its protections to a broader range of plants and plant products (Section 8204, Prevention of Illegal Logging Practices). As amended, the Lacey Act now makes it unlawful to, among other things, import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce any plant, with some limited exceptions, taken, possessed, transported, or sold in violation of any Federal, State, tribal, or foreign law that protects plants or that regulates the theft of plants; the taking of plants from a park, forest reserve, or other officially protected area; the taking of plants from an officially designated area; or the taking of plants without, or contrary to, required authorization.

In addition, Section 3 of the Lacey Act, as amended, makes it unlawful, beginning December 15, 2008, to import plants and plant products without an import declaration. The declaration must contain, among other things, the scientific name of the plant, value of the importation, quantity of the plant, and the name of the country in which the plant was harvested. Currently, enforcement of the declaration requirement is being phased in, as

described in five notices published in the **Federal Register**.¹

Commenters on these notices asked that we consider establishing a program through which importers could submit periodic blanket declarations instead of submitting declarations with each shipment. The commenters noted that such declarations would reduce the paperwork burden on affected entities, reduce costs, and could, in addition, improve the quality and usefulness of the information collected. Some commenters provided detailed descriptions of possible blanket declaration programs.

In response to these comments, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) began a pilot blanket declaration program on May 1, 2009 for participants in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP's) expedited border release programs, Automated Line Release (ALR) or Border Release Advance Screening and Selectivity (BRASS) in CBP's Automated Commercial System (ACS). This pilot program tested the feasibility of collecting the required information through the use of a monthly "blanket" declaration, with subsequent reconciliation reports. Blanket declarations could be used to declare routine and/or repeat shipments. The pilot program for the Lacey Act blanket declaration was open only to those entities participating in ALR or BRASS. Eligible importers who wished to participate in the pilot were required to send a letter to APHIS specifically requesting participation in the program. Eighty-two individual companies registered a total of 119 participants with the pilot program. We note that by January 2017, only eight companies were still participating in the program.

Executive Order 13659 required CBP to create a "single window" for trade to file entries through its Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). As a result, the ACS was discontinued and entries are no longer filed in that system.

Due to the development of the ACE system, and a diminishing number of participants, APHIS has decided to end the pilot program on April 18, 2018. CBP's BRASS program will continue to operate as it did prior to the creation of the pilot program, and participants in the blanket declaration pilot program will not lose their line release status in the expedited border release programs. When the program ends, importers whose products are subject to the Lacey

¹ To view these notices and the comments we received, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#/docketDetail;D=APHIS-2008-0119>.