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functions. No delegation or authorization in this part shall preclude the Administrator or each Deputy Administrator or Director from exercising any of the powers or functions or from performing any of the duties conferred upon each, respectively. Any delegation or authorization is subject, at all times, to withdrawal or amendment by the Administrator, and in their respective fields, by each Deputy Administrator or Director. The officers to whom authority is delegated in this part shall:

(1) Maintain close working relationships with the officers to whom they report.

(2) Keep them advised with respect to major problems and developments.

(3) Discuss with them proposed actions involving major policy questions or other important considerations or questions, including matters involving relationships with other Federal agencies, other agencies of the Department, other divisions, staffs, or offices of the agency, or other governmental, private organizations, or groups.

(b) *Prior authorizations and delegations.* All prior delegations and redelegations of authority relating to any function, program, or activity covered by the statement of Organization, Functions, and Delegations of Authority, shall remain in effect except as they are inconsistent with this part or are amended or revoked. Nothing in this part shall affect the validity of any action taken previously under prior delegations or redelegations of authority or assignments of functions.

§ 371.13 Reservation of authority.

The following are reserved to the Administrator, or to the individual designated to act for the Administrator:

(a) The initiation, change, or discontinuance of major program activities.

(b) The issuance of regulations pursuant to law.

(c) The transfer of functions between Deputy Administrators and Directors.

(d) The transfer of funds between Deputy Administrators and Directors.

(e) The transfer of funds between work projects within each Deputy Administrator's or Director's area, except those not exceeding 10 percent of base funds or $50,000 in either work project, whichever is less.

(f) The approval of any change in the formal organization, including a section, its equivalent, or higher level.

(g) The making of recommendations to the Department concerning establishment, consolidation, change in location, or abolishment of any regional, State, area, and other field headquarters, and any region or other program area that involves two or more States, or that crosses State lines.

(h) Authority to establish, consolidate, change a location, abolish any field office, or change program area boundaries not included in paragraph (g) of this section.

(i) Approval of all appointments, promotions, and reassignments at the GS–14 level and above.

(j) Authorization for foreign travel and for attendance at foreign and international meetings, including those held in the United States.

(k) Approval of all appointments, promotions, and reassignments of employees to foreign countries.

(l) Approval of program budgets.

(m) Authority to determine the circumstances under which commuted traveltime allowances may be paid to employees performing inspections and necessary auxiliary services after normal working hours or on holidays, when these services come within the scope of the Act of August 28, 1950 (7 U.S.C. 2260).

§ 371.14 Availability of information and records.

Any person desiring information or to comment on the programs and functions of the agency should address correspondence to the appropriate Deputy Administrator or Director, APHIS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. The availability of information and records of the agency is governed by the rules and regulations in part 370 of this chapter.

PART 372—NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT IMPLEMENTING PROCEDURES

Sec.

372.1 Purpose.

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372.9 Processing and use of environmental documents.
372.10 Supplementing environmental impact statements.

AUTHORITY: 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*; 40 CFR parts 1500–1508; 7 CFR parts 1b, 2.22, 2.80, and 371.9.

SOURCE: 60 FR 6002, Feb. 1, 1995, unless otherwise noted.

§ 372.1 Purpose.

These procedures implement section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act by assuring early and adequate consideration of environmental factors in Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service planning and decisionmaking and by promoting the effective, efficient integration of all relevant environmental requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act. The goal of timely, relevant environmental analysis will be secured principally by adhering to the National Environmental Policy Act implementing regulations (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), especially provisions pertaining to timing (§ 1502.5), integration (§ 1502.25), and scope of analysis (§ 1508.25).

§ 372.2 Designation of responsible APHIS official.

The Administrator of APHIS, or an agency official to whom the Administrator may formally delegate the task, is responsible for overall review of APHIS' NEPA compliance.

§ 372.3 Information and assistance.

Information, including the status of studies, and the availability of reference materials, as well as the informal interpretations of APHIS' NEPA procedures and other forms of assistance, will be made available upon request to Environmental Analysis and Documentation, Biotechnology, Biologics, and Environmental Protection, APHIS, USDA, P.O. Drawer 810, Riverdale MD 20738, (301) 436–8565 (Hyattsville) or (301) 734–8565 (Riverdale).

§ 372.4 Definitions.

The terminology set forth in the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) implementing regulations at 40 CFR part 1508 is incorporated herein. In addition, the following terms, as used in these procedures, are defined as follows:

APHIS. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

Decisionmaker. The agency official responsible for executing findings of no significant impact in the environmental assessment process and the record of decision in the environmental impact statement process.

Department. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Environmental unit. Environmental Analysis and Documentation, the analytical unit in Biotechnology, Biologics, and Environmental Protection responsible for coordinating APHIS' compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other environmental laws and regulations.

§ 372.5 Classification of actions.

(a) *Actions normally requiring environmental impact statements.* This class of policymakings and rulemakings seeks to establish programmatic approaches to animal and plant health issues. Actions in this class typically involve the agency, an entire program, or a substantial program component and are characterized by their broad scope (often global or nationwide) and potential effect (impacting a wide range of environmental quality values or indicators, whether or not affected individuals or systems may be completely identified at the time). Ordinarily, new or untried methodologies, strategies, or techniques to deal with pervasive threats to animal and plant health are the subjects of this class of actions. Alternative means of dealing with those threats usually have not been well developed. Actions in this class include:

(1) Formulation of contingent response strategies to combat future widespread outbreaks of animal and plant diseases; and

(2) Adoption of strategic or other long-range plans that purport to adopt

for future program application a preferred course of action.

(b) *Actions normally requiring environmental assessments but not necessarily environmental impact statements.* This class of APHIS actions may involve the agency as a whole or an entire program, but generally is related to a more discrete program component and is characterized by its limited scope (particular sites, species, or activities) and potential effect (impacting relatively few environmental values or systems). Individuals and systems that may be affected can be identified. Methodologies, strategies, and techniques employed to deal with the issues at hand are seldom new or untested. Alternative means of dealing with those issues are well established. Mitigation measures are generally available and have been successfully employed. Actions in this class include:

(1) Policymakings and rulemakings that seek to remedy specific animal and plant health risks or that may affect opportunities on the part of the public to influence agency environmental planning and decisionmaking. Examples of this category of actions include:

(i) Development of program plans that seek to adopt strategies, methods, and techniques as the means of dealing with particular animal and plant health risks that may arise in the future;

(ii) Implementation of program plans at the site-specific, action level, except for actions that are categorically excluded, as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.

(2) Planning, design, construction, or acquisition of new facilities, or proposals for modifications to existing facilities.

(3) Disposition of waste and other hazardous or toxic materials at laboratories and other APHIS facilities, except for actions that are categorically excluded, as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.

(4) Approvals and issuance of permits for proposals involving genetically engineered or nonindigenous species, except for actions that are categorically excluded, as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.

(5) Research or testing that:

(i) Will be conducted outside of a laboratory or other containment area (field trials, for example); or

(ii) Reaches a stage of development (e.g., formulation of premarketing strategies) that forecasts an irretrievable commitment to the resulting products or technology.

(c) *Categorically excluded actions.* This class of APHIS actions shares many of the same characteristics—particularly in terms of the extent of program involvement, as well as the scope, effect of, and the availability of alternatives to proposed actions—as the class of actions that normally requires environmental assessments but not necessarily environmental impact statements. The major difference is that the means through which adverse environmental impacts may be avoided or minimized have actually been built right into the actions themselves. The efficacy of this approach generally has been established through testing and/or monitoring. The Department of Agriculture has also promulgated a listing of categorical exclusions that are applicable to all agencies within the department unless their procedures provide otherwise. Those categorical exclusions, codified at 7 CFR 1b.3(a), are entirely appropriate for APHIS. Other actions in this class include:

(1) *Routine measures.* (i) Routine measures, such as identifications, inspections, surveys, sampling that does not cause physical alteration of the environment, testing, seizures, quarantines, removals, sanitizing, inoculations, control, and monitoring employed by agency programs to pursue their missions and functions. Such measures may include the use—according to any label instructions or other lawful requirements and consistent with standard, published program practices and precautions—of chemicals, pesticides, or other potentially hazardous or harmful substances, materials, and target-specific devices or remedies, provided that such use meets all of the following criteria (insofar as they may pertain to a particular action):

(A) The use is localized or contained in areas where humans are not likely to be exposed, and is limited in terms

of quantity, i.e., individualized dosages and remedies;

(B) The use will not cause contaminants to enter water bodies, including wetlands;

(C) The use does not adversely affect any federally protected species or critical habitat; and

(D) The use does not cause bioaccumulation.

(ii) Examples of routine measures include:

(A) Inoculation or treatment of discrete herds of livestock or wildlife undertaken in contained areas (such as a barn or corral, a zoo, an exhibition, or an aviary);

(B) Pesticide treatments applied to infested plants at a nursery; and

(C) Isolated (for example, along a highway) weed control efforts.

(2) *Research and development activities.* (i) Activities that are carried out in laboratories, facilities, or other areas designed to eliminate the potential for harmful environmental effects—internal or external—and to provide for lawful waste disposal.

(ii) Examples of this category of actions include:

(A) The development and/or production (including formulation, repackaging, movement, and distribution) of previously approved and/or licensed program materials, devices, reagents, and biologics;

(B) Research, testing, and development of animal repellents; and

(C) Development and production of sterile insects.

(3) *Licensing and permitting.* (i) Issuance of a license, permit, or authorization to ship for field testing previously unlicensed veterinary biological products;

(ii) Permitting, or acknowledgment of notifications for, confined field releases of genetically engineered organisms and products; and

(iii) Permitting of:

(A) Importation of nonindigenous species into containment facilities,

(B) Interstate movement of nonindigenous species between containment facilities, or

(C) Releases into a State's environment of pure cultures of organisms that are either native or are established introductions.

(4) *Rehabilitation of facilities.* Rehabilitation of existing laboratories and other APHIS facilities, functional replacement of parts and equipment, and minor additions to such existing APHIS facilities.

(d) *Exceptions for categorically excluded actions.* Whenever the decisionmaker determines that a categorically excluded action may have the potential to affect "significantly" the quality of the "human environment," as those terms are defined at 40 CFR 1508.27 and 1508.14, respectively, an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement will be prepared. For example:

(1) When any routine measure, the incremental impact of which, when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions (regardless of what agency or person undertakes such actions), has the potential for significant environmental impact;

(2) When a previously licensed or approved biologic has been subsequently shown to be unsafe, or will be used at substantially higher dosage levels or for substantially different applications or circumstances than in the use for which the product was previously approved;

(3) When a previously unlicensed veterinary biological product to be shipped for field testing contains live microorganisms or will not be used exclusively for *in vitro* diagnostic testing; or

(4) When a confined field release of genetically engineered organisms or products involves new species or organisms or novel modifications that raise new issues.

[60 FR 6002, Feb. 1, 1995; 60 FR 13212, Mar. 10, 1995]

§ 372.6 Early planning for applicants and non-APHIS entities.

Each prospective applicant who anticipates the need for approval of proposed activities classified as normally requiring environmental documentation is encouraged to contact, at the earliest opportunity, APHIS' program staff.

[60 FR 6002, Feb. 1, 1995; 60 FR 13212, Mar. 10, 1995]

§ 372.7 Consultation.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact APHIS program officials to determine what types of environmental analyses or documentation, if any, need to be prepared. NEPA documents will incorporate, to the fullest extent possible, surveys and studies required by other environmental statutes, such as the Endangered Species Act.

[60 FR 6002, Feb. 1, 1995; 60 FR 13212, Mar. 10, 1995]

§ 372.8 Major planning and decision points and public involvement.

(a) *Major planning and decisions points.* The NEPA process will be fully coordinated with APHIS planning in cooperation with program personnel. Specific decision points or milestones will be identified and communicated to the public and others in a notice of intent and in the context of the public scoping process.

(b) *Public involvement.* There will be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the environmental impact statement process.

(1) A notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER as soon as it is determined that a proposed major Federal action has the potential to affect significantly the quality of the human environment. The notice may include a preliminary scope of environmental study. All public and other involvement in APHIS' environmental impact statement process, including the scoping process, commenting on draft documents, and participation in the preparation of any supplemental documents, will be pursuant to CEQ's implementing regulations.

(2) Opportunities for public involvement in the environmental assessment process will be announced in the same fashion as the availability of environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact.

(3) Notification of the availability of environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact for proposed activities will be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, unless it is determined that the effects of the action are primarily of regional or local concern. Where the effects of the action are primarily of regional or local concern, notice will normally be provided through publication in a local or area newspaper of general circulation and/or the procedures implementing Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

(4) All environmental documents, comments received, and any underlying documents, including interagency correspondence where such correspondence transmits comments of Federal agencies on the environmental impact of proposals for which documents were prepared (except for privileged or confidential information (50 FR 38561)), will be made available to the public upon request. Materials to be made available will be provided without charge, to the extent practicable, or at a fee not more than the actual cost of reproducing copies required to be sent to other Federal agencies, including CEQ.

§ 372.9 Processing and use of environmental documents.

(a) Environmental assessments will be forwarded immediately upon completion to the decisionmaker for a determination of whether the proposed action may have significant effects on the quality of the human environment, and for the execution, as appropriate, of a finding of no significant impact or a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

(1) The availability of environmental assessments will be announced by publishing a notice consistent with the notification provisions of § 372.8.

(2) Comments, if any, will be transmitted, together with any analyses and recommendations, to the APHIS decisionmaker who may then take appropriate action.

(3) Changes to environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact that are prompted by comments, new information, or any other source, will normally be announced in the same manner as the notice of availability (except that all commenters will be mailed copies of changes directly) prior to implementing the proposed action or any alternative.

(b) Environmental impact statements will be processed from inception (publication of the notice of intent) to completion (publication of a final environmental impact statement or a supplement) according to the Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations.

(c) For rulemaking or adjudicatory proceedings, relevant environmental documents, comments, and responses will be a part of the administrative record.

(d) For all APHIS activity that is subject to the NEPA process, relevant environmental documents, comments, and responses will accompany proposals through the review process.

(e) The APHIS decisionmaker will consider the alternatives discussed in environmental documents in reaching a determination on the merits of proposed actions.

(f) APHIS will implement mitigation and other conditions established in environmental documentation and committed to as part of the decisionmaking process.

§ 372.10 Supplementing environmental impact statements.

Once a decision to supplement an environmental impact statement is made, a notice of intent will be published. The administrative record will thereafter be open. The supplemental document will then be processed in the same fashion (exclusive of scoping) as a draft and a final statement (unless alternative procedures are approved by CEQ) and will become part of the administrative record.

PART 380—RULES OF PRACTICE GOVERNING PROCEEDINGS UNDER CERTAIN ACTS

Subpart A—General

Sec.

380.1 Scope and applicability of rules of practice.

Subpart B—Supplemental Rules of Practice

380.10 Stipulations.

AUTHORITY: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772 and 7781–7786; 16 U.S.C. 1540(a), 3373(a) and (b); 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Subpart A—General

§ 380.1 Scope and applicability of rules of practice.

(a) The Uniform Rules of Practice for the Department of Agriculture promulgated in subpart H of part 1, subtitle A, title 7 CFR are the Rules of Practice applicable to adjudicatory administrative proceedings under the following statutory provisions:

(1) The Plant Protection Act, section 424 (7 U.S.C. 7734),

(2) Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1973, as amended, section 11(a), 16 U.S.C. 1540(a), and

(3) Lacey Act Amendments of 1981, as amended, section 4(a) and (b), (16 U.S.C. 3373 (a) and (b)).

(b) In addition, the Supplemental Rules of Practice set forth in subpart B of this part are applicable to such proceedings.

[66 FR 21061, Apr. 27, 2001]

Subpart B—Supplemental Rules of Practice

§ 380.10 Stipulations.

(a) At any time prior to the issuance of a complaint seeking a civil penalty under any of the Acts listed in § 380.1, the Administrator, in his discretion, may enter into a stipulation with any person in which:

(1) The Administrator or the Administrator's delegate gives notice of an apparent violation of the applicable Act, or the regulations issued thereunder, by such person and affords such person an opportunity for a hearing regarding the matter as provided by such Act;

(2) Such person expressly waives hearing and agrees to pay a specified penalty within a designated time; and

(3) The Administrator agrees to accept the specified penalty in settlement of the particular matter involved if the penalty is paid within the designated time.

(b) If the specified penalty is not paid within the time designated in such a stipulation, the amount of the stipulated penalty shall not be relevant in any respect to the penalty which may