

Done at Washington, DC, on February 28, 1995.

Michael R. Taylor,

Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

[FR Doc. 95-5830 Filed 3-9-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DM-P

[Docket No. 95-009N]

Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems—Notice of Scientific/ Technical Conference and Request for Papers

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) will hold a scientific/technical conference, "New Technology to Improve Food Safety," on April 12-13, 1995, at the Holiday Inn O'Hare Airport, Rosemont, Illinois. The purpose of the conference is to discuss ways of developing and subsequently introducing new technologies to improve food safety.

ADDRESSES: Papers should be sent to: Dr. Pat Basu, Director, Technology Transfer and Coordination Staff, Science and Technology, FSIS, USDA, Room 302 Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Pat Basu at (202) 720-8623.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On February 3, 1995, FSIS published a proposed rule "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems" (60 FR 6774). In that document, the Agency proposed a number of regulatory changes applicable to Federal- and State-inspected meat and poultry establishments. The proposed changes were designed to reduce the occurrence and numbers of pathogenic microorganisms in meat and poultry products, thereby reducing the incidence of foodborne illness associated with the consumption of these products.

In the proposed rule, FSIS stated its intent to review its current policies and procedures governing review and approval of in-plant technologies that improve the safety of meat and poultry products, and to convene a public meeting to gain information on ways the Agency might improve its role in fostering and overseeing the implementation of such technologies. FSIS believes that the development and proper use of technology can contribute significantly to improving the safety of the food supply. FSIS recognizes that

members of the regulated industry have complained that some of the Agency's control mechanisms stifle innovation, potentially impeding progress that could improve food safety. The Agency also recognizes consumer groups' concern that technologies be proven effective and safe before use, and that the scientific processes used by FSIS to evaluate technologies be open to public scrutiny and participation. To discuss these issues, FSIS is hosting a scientific/technical conference.

The first conference, "New Technology to Improve Food Safety" will be held on April 12-13, 1995, at the Holiday Inn O'Hare Airport, 5440 North River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018, (708) 671-6350. The conference will begin each day at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. on April 12th; at noon on April 13th.

Conference Agenda

The conference will consist of three sessions as follows:

Session I: "The Role of Innovation in Enhancing the Safety of Meat and Poultry Products"

Speakers will give examples of new food safety technologies that have been introduced.

Session II: "Models for Government Facilitation of Technology Development and Transfer"

U.S. Government representatives and a representative from a foreign country will discuss various government models used in the United States and abroad to encourage the development and implementation of new technologies.

Session III: "New Technologies for Reducing Pathogens, Especially *Escherichia coli* O157:H7"

Speakers will address promising new technologies developed to reduce food pathogens.

Thomas J. Billy, Associate Administrator, FSIS will moderate and be joined by a panel consisting of: Patricia Stolfa, Associate Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology, FSIS; Gene Lyons, Research Leader, Richard Russell Research Center, Agricultural Research Service; a consumer representative; and an industry representative.

At each session, invited speakers from FSIS, other government agencies, industry, and academia groups will give presentations relevant to that session's topic. At Sessions I and III, selected participants that have sent papers to FSIS (see below for details of paper submission) will give a 5 minute presentation. Finally, the panel will have an opportunity to ask the presenters questions.

Submission of Papers

For Sessions I and III, interested persons may submit a paper to FSIS. For Session I, FSIS solicits papers detailing experiences and examples of innovative technologies that have improved food safety. For Session III, FSIS solicits papers presenting information on new technologies for reducing pathogens, especially *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Papers should present information pertaining to effectiveness and cost of the technology, employee safety, and consumer acceptance of the technology. Session II consists of presentations from representatives from U.S. government agencies and a representative from a foreign country, and papers will not be presented.

Selected persons submitting papers will be invited to give a 5 minute presentation summarizing their paper. If the same subject is covered in more than one paper, FSIS will have the authors combine their presentation for a single 5 minute presentation or select the first paper submitted on the issue and have that author give a presentation.

All papers must be received by March 31, 1995, to be considered for the conference. Please indicate if the paper is for Session I or Session III. Two copies of each paper should be submitted (See ADDRESSES), along with hard copies of any slides to be used in the presentation.

Availability of Information

After the conference, the panel will prepare a report of the proceedings addressing the issues presented. This report will include information on how FSIS can assist in the development and introduction of new technologies to improve food safety. Any reports by the panel, transcripts of the conference, and copies of all the papers received will be available in the FSIS Docket Clerk's Office, Room 3171, South Agriculture Building, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

Attendance and Hotel Reservations

Please call Ms. Betsy Kogan at (202) 205-0699 if you plan to attend the conference. Additionally, FSIS has reserved a block of rooms at the hotel for \$85 per night. Reservations may be made by contacting the hotel at (708) 671-6350.

Done at Washington, DC, on March 6, 1995.

Michael R. Taylor,

Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

[FR Doc. 95-5995 Filed 3-9-95; 8:45 am]

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Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Pilot Programs Allowing More Than One Official Agency To Provide Official Services Within A Single Geographic Area

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice With Comment Period.

SUMMARY: Amendments in 1993 changed the United States Grain Standards Act, as amended (Act). One of these changes provides that GIPSA may conduct pilot programs allowing more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area. GIPSA is requesting comments on the two proposed pilot programs described below.

DATES: Comments must be postmarked, or sent by telecopier (FAX) or electronic mail by May 5, 1995.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be submitted in writing to Neil E. Porter, Director, Compliance Division, GIPSA, USDA, Room 1647 South Building, P.O. Box 96454, Washington, DC 20090-6454. SprintMail users may respond to [A:ATTMAIL,O:USDA,ID:A36CPDIR]. ATTMAIL and FTS2000MAIL users may respond to !A36CPDIR. Telecopier (FAX) users may send comments to the automatic telecopier machine at 202-720-1015, attention: Neil E. Porter. All comments received will be made available for public inspection during regular business hours at the above address located at 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Neil E. Porter, telephone 202-720-8262.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Sections 7(f) and 7A of the Act were amended by the U.S. Grain Standards Act Amendments of 1993 (Public Law 103-156) on November 24, 1993, to authorize GIPSA's Administrator to conduct pilot programs allowing more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area without undermining the declared policy of the Act. The purpose of the pilot programs is to evaluate the impact of allowing more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area.

Comments were requested on five possible pilot programs in the March 14, 1994, *Federal Register* (59 FR 11759). Comments were due by April 22, 1994. Forty-one comments were received on these possible pilot programs: fifteen official agencies and two licensed inspectors opposed pilot programs; six

official agencies supported pilot programs, and two official agencies were neutral; five trade associations, ten grain firms, and one laboratory supported pilot programs.

The comments submitted by official agencies expressed their concern over being pressured to grade more leniently or risk losing customers, the possible issuance of multiple original grades on a single lot of grain, losing major customers to competing official agencies, being forced to give preferential treatment to large customers over small customers, maintaining a relatively uniform inspection volume sufficient to preserve their personnel base, and minimizing their management and supervision problems.

Comments from the grain trade noted difficulty in getting services when needed to avoid additional charges and the possibility of better service and/or lower cost if they could choose the official agency to provide such services. They also indicated a desire for pilot programs encompassing all services, a more specific proposal to comment on, and a concern that the structure of a pilot program could determine its success or failure.

After considering these comments and other information, GIPSA has developed and is asking for comments on two proposed pilot programs, one of which was proposed in the March 14, 1994, notice. The remaining four proposed pilot programs; barges on selected rivers or portions of rivers; exceptions; commercial inspections, and submitted samples were determined to be too narrow in scope to conduct an appropriate pilot program. Comments are requested on the following two proposed pilot programs.

1. **Timely Service.** This pilot program would allow official agencies to provide official services outside their assigned geographic area when these official services can not be provided in a timely manner by the official agency designated to serve that area. A timely manner would be considered to be:

- 6 hours - When a service request is received between 6 a.m., and noon Monday through Friday by the official agency designated to provide service;

- 12 hours - When a service request is received any other time by the official agency designated to provide service.

Customers unable to obtain service within these time limits may request such services from another official agency. Customers using this provision to request official services from an official agency not designated to serve them must maintain sufficient information to establish that they could not receive timely service from the

agency designated to serve them. Customers must submit requests for service under this pilot program by FAX. This includes both the initial request for service that could not be provided in a timely manner and any subsequent request for the same service to an official agency not designated to serve them. Official agencies must handle customer requests for service in the order received where practicable. Official agencies and customers using this pilot program must maintain sufficient records to verify eligibility to use this option.

The definition of timeliness in this pilot program supersedes the definition currently stated in section 800.46(b)(5) of the regulations (7 CFR 800.46(b)(5)). This section states that official personnel may not be available to provide requested services if the request is not received by 2 p.m., the preceding business day.

2. **Open Season.** This pilot program would allow official agencies an open season during which they may attempt to sell their services to customers outside their assigned geographic area where no official sample-lot or official weighing services have been provided in the previous 6 months. Official agencies would submit their plans to provide official services to customers outside their assigned geographic area to Compliance Division for review in consultation with the field office supervising the agency. Upon approval, official agencies would be permitted to provide such official services.

Official agencies participating in these pilot programs would be allowed to provide, during the test period, any official services for which they are designated. Official agencies participating in pilot programs must arrange for any equipment (including laboratories and access to D/Ts) that may be needed to provide official services at each site outside the area they are currently designated to serve.

These pilot programs will be for a maximum of 1 year. If, after this time period, GIPSA determines that these programs strengthen the official system, GIPSA will consider extending the time period or recommending other appropriate action.

GIPSA will monitor these pilot programs. If, at any time, GIPSA determines that a pilot program is having a negative impact on the official system, the pilot program will be discontinued.

Commenters are encouraged to submit reasons and pertinent data for support or objection to the pilot programs described above. All comments and suggestions must be submitted to the

Compliance Division at the above address. Comments and other available information will be considered in determining which pilot programs to conduct. FGIS will publish notice of any pilot programs to be conducted.

Any information collection or recordkeeping requirements that may result from a pilot program will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for approval under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

Authority: Pub. L. 94-582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*)

Dated: March 3, 1995.

Neil E. Porter,

Director, Compliance Division.

[FR Doc. 95-5996 Filed 3-9-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-EN-F

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Agency Form Under Review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

DOC has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Title: West Coast Salmon Northwest Emergency Assistance Plan.

Agency Form Number: None.

OMB Approval Number: None.

Type of Request: New Collection.

Burden: 11,706 burden hours.

Number of Respondents: 5,445.

Avg Hours Per Response: Varies depending on the requirement but ranges between 1 and 40 hours.

Needs and Uses: A Federal financial assistance program has been established for fishermen in the Northwest who can document losses resulting from the resource disaster in the salmon fishery. Fishermen will be able to apply for two short-term job programs or apply for participation in a fishing permit buy-back program.

Affected Public: Individuals, businesses or other for-profit organizations, not-for-profit institutions, state, local or tribal government.

Frequency: Varies by requirement from one-time to quarterly.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain benefits.

OMB Desk Officer: Don Arbuckle, (202) 395-7340.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by

calling or writing Gerald Tache, DOC Forms Clearance Officer, (202) 482-3271, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent to Don Arbuckle, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10202, New Executive Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20503.

Dated: March 6, 1995.

Gerald Tache,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of Management and Organizations.

[FR Doc. 95-5932 Filed 3-9-95; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-CW-F

Bureau of Economic Analysis

[Docket 950-3020-64-5064-01]

Final Redefinition of the BEA Economic Areas

AGENCY: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of final changes.

SUMMARY: This is the third and final Federal Register notice relating to the redefinition of the BEA economic areas (EA's). In the first notice (56 FR 13049, March 9, 1993), BEA announced its "Intent to Revise the Boundaries of the BEA Economic Areas" and presented the procedures used to define the then-current EA's. In the second notice (59 FR 55416, November 7, 1994), BEA presented for public comment a "Proposed Redefinition of the BEA Economic Areas," which reduced their number from 183 to 174. This third notice presents the 172 EA's of the final redefinition, which reflects changes based on the comments received. In Alaska and western Montana, BEA is combining two EA's into one; and in Washington and Minnesota, BEA is reassigning a county from one EA to another.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 10, 1995, BEA's regional economic measurement, analysis, and projections programs will use the new set of 172 EA's whenever EA data are presented.

ADDRESSES: Written inquiries may be sent to Kenneth Johnson, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis BE-61, Regional Economic Analysis Division, Washington, DC 20230; fax (202) 606-5321. Inquiries also may be sent by electronic mail on the Internet to "kenneth.johnson@bea.doc.gov".

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth Johnson, (202) 606-9219; fax (202) 606-5321.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Part I: Background

Under authority granted in 15 U.S.C. ¶ 175 *et seq.*, BEA develops and presents geographically detailed economic data and facilitates regional economic analysis. As part of this obligation, in 1977, BEA defined 183 economic areas (EA's) covering the entire nation. The 1995 redefinition is necessary to maintain the analytical usefulness of the areas in light of the substantial changes in area commuting patterns shown by the 1990 Census of Population.

Each EA consists of one or more economic nodes—metropolitan areas or similar areas that serve as centers of economic activity—and the surrounding counties that are economically related to the nodes. (Metropolitan areas include metropolitan statistical areas (MSA's), primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSA's), and New England county metropolitan areas (NECMA's).) Commuting patterns are the main factor used in determining the economic relationship among counties. The EA definition procedure requires that, as far as possible, each area include both the place of work and the place of residence of its labor force.

For some analyses, government agencies and businesses need data that are more geographically detailed than EA data. Government agencies often use relatively small areas for design of their program regulations or implementation of their licensing programs. Businesses need such detail for determining plant locations and for defining sales and marketing territories. BEA is responding to these needs as part of the EA redefinition by first defining a set of 348 "Component Economic Areas" (CEA's) and then using these as building blocks for redefining the larger EA's.

Each CEA consists of a single economic node and the surrounding counties that are economically related to the node. Of the nodes, 90 percent are metropolitan, and 10 percent are nonmetropolitan. Each metropolitan area is the node of a different CEA; with minor exceptions, the nonmetropolitan nodes are nonmetropolitan counties where newspapers widely read in these areas are published.

In general, the procedure used to redefine the EA's is similar to that used in 1977. First, nodes are identified. Then, non-nodal counties are assigned to nodes, mainly based on commuting patterns and on newspaper circulation. A procedural difference is that now node identification and the assignment to nodes of non-nodal counties are done in a more systematic way and at a more