

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

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

National Sheep Industry Improvement Center; Solicitation of Nominations of Board Members

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice: Invitation to submit nominations.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) announces that it is accepting nominations for the Board of the National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. Board members shall manage and oversee the Center's activities. Nominations may be submitted by any qualified organization in the national sheep or goat industry. Nominators should state the qualifications of the nominating organization in their submission, as well as the qualifications of individual nominees. Qualification statements for the nominating organizations must substantiate their national status and include (1) the number and percent of members that are active sheep or goat producers and (2) the primary interests of the organization. Individuals proposed as nominees for the Board must complete an Advisory Committee Membership Background Information form. This action is taken to carry out section 759 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 for the establishment of a National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. The intended effect of this notice is to obtain nominations for the Board.

DATES: RBS hereby announces that it will receive nominations, statements on qualification of nominee, and qualifications of the nominating organization. The closing date for acceptance by RBS of nominations is July 25, 1996. Nominations must be received by, or postmarked, on or before, this date.

ADDRESSES: Submit nominations and statements on qualifications to Cooperative Services, RBS, USDA, Ag Box 3252, Washington, DC 20250-3252, Attn.: National Sheep Improvement Center, Nominations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Thomas H. Stafford, Director, Cooperative Marketing Division, Cooperative Services, RBS, USDA, Ag Box 3252, Washington, DC 20250-3252, telephone (202) 690-0368. (This is not a toll free number.) FAX 202-690-2723, or e-mail tstaff@rurdev.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, known as the 1996 Farm Bill, directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a National Sheep Industry Improvement Center. The Center shall (1) promote strategic development activities and collaborative efforts by private and State entities to maximize the impact of Federal assistance to strengthen and enhance production and marketing of sheep or goat products in the United States; (2) optimize the use of available human capital and resources within the sheep or goat industries; (3) provide assistance to meet the needs of the sheep or goat industry for infrastructure development, business development, production, resource development, and market and environmental research; (4) advance activities that empower and build the capacity of the United States sheep or goat industry to design unique responses to special needs of the sheep or goat industries on both a regional and national basis; and (5) adopt flexible and innovative approaches to solving the long-term needs of the United States sheep or goat industry. The Center will have a Revolving Fund established in the Treasury to carry out the purposes of the Center. Management of the Center will be vested in a Board of Directors, which may appoint an Executive Director, other officers, and employees.

The Board shall be composed of 7 voting members of whom 4 shall be active producers of sheep or goats in the United States, 2 shall have expertise in finance and management, and 1 shall have expertise in lamb, wool, goat or goat product marketing. The Board will include 2 non-voting members, the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development and the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics. Board members will not

receive compensation for serving on the Board, but shall be reimbursed for travel, subsistence, and other necessary expenses.

National organizations eligible to make nominations shall (1) consist primarily of active sheep or goat producers in the United States and (2) have as their primary interest the production of sheep or goats in the United States.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall appoint the voting members from submitted nominations. Member's term of office shall be 3 years. Board members shall initially serve staggered terms of 1, 2, or 3 years, as determined by the Secretary. Voting members are limited to two terms. The Board shall meet not less than once each fiscal year. On or before April 4, 1997, the Board shall hold public hearings on policy objectives of the Center.

The statement of qualifications of the individual nominees is being obtained by using Form AD-755, Advisory Committee Membership Background Information. The requirements of this form are incorporated under OMB number 0505-0001.

Dated: May 31, 1996.

Dayton J. Watkins,
Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

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BILLING CODE 3410-32-P

Inviting Preapplications for Technical Assistance for Rural Transportation Systems

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) announces the availability of approximately \$500,000 in competing Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) funds for fiscal year (FY) 1996 specifically for technical assistance for rural transportation systems. The funds are designed to assist public bodies and private nonprofit corporations serving rural areas in providing technical assistance, for planning and developing transportation systems, and for training for rural communities needing improved passenger transportation systems or facilities in order to promote economic development through a link