

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

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency and Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) intends to request an extension for currently approved collection of information pertaining to FSA administered cost-share programs which have the common goal of conserving the Nation's basic soil and water resources and preserving the local environment. The programs that require forms covered by this request for extension are the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) for which the authority to engage in new activities was repealed by Section 336 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, the interim Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which provided temporary authority to engage in new ACP activities and those of three other programs through September 30, 1996, the Emergency Conservation Program, the Conservation Reserve Program, and the Forestry Incentives Program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before August 12, 1997 to be assured consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Cheryl Zavodny, Branch Chief, Conservation Programs Branch, Conservation and Environmental Protection Division, USDA, FSA, STOP 0513, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0513, (202) 720-7333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Conservation and Environmental Programs OMB Number: 0560-0082

Expiration Date: July 31, 1997

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

Abstract: The FSA, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Forest Service, and other agencies and organizations, provides eligible producers and landowners cost-share incentives through a number of conservation and environmental programs to help farmers, ranchers and other eligible landowners and operators conserve soil, improve water quality, maintain the fertility of the land, develop and improve forest areas, provide wildlife habitat, and rehabilitate land damaged by natural disasters. The conservation programs using these forms requires producers to provide information used to determine the producer's eligibility to participate and for payment purposes. Although the ACP was repealed by Section 336 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, and the period for the interim EQIP program has ended, there are existing ACP as well as existing interim EQIP long-term agreements in effect which continue to obligate the participants to perform conservation practices and other contract requirements in future years. The CRP (which is CCC funded) has significant activity because of the continuous and recent general CRP signups. A considerable increase is possible in ECP activity due to the many severe natural disasters recently occurring all over the country. The FIP is estimated to have about the same activity as previous years.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average: .25 hours for AD-245; .20 hours for FSA-18, and .5 hours for ACP-311.

Respondents: Farm and ranch owners and operators, farm managers, or attorneys.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 510,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 2 (average).

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 205,000 hours.

Proposed topics for comment include: (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; and (c) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of the information on those who are to respond. Comments should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503 and to Cheryl Zavodny, Branch Chief, Conservation Programs Branch, Conservation and Environmental Protection Division, USDA, FSA, STOP 0513, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0513, (202) 720-7333.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on June 8, 1997.

Bruce R. Weber,

Acting Administrator, Farm Service Agency and Acting Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

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BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

1997-1998 Marketing Year Penalty Rates for All Kinds of Tobacco Subject to Quotas

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the determination of the 1997-1998 marketing year penalty rate for excess tobacco for all kinds of tobacco subject to marketing quotas. In accordance with section 314 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended, (the 1938 Act) marketing quota penalty for a kind of tobacco is assessed at the rate of 75 percent of the average market price for that kind of tobacco for the immediately preceding marketing year.

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 13, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Tobacco and Peanuts Division, STOP 0514, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-0514.