

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service**

[Docket No. 97-064-1]

Boll Weevil Control Program; Availability of Environmental Assessments and Findings of No Significant Impact**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has prepared two environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact for proposed programs to eradicate the boll weevil in Mississippi and in the Red River Valley area of Arkansas and Louisiana. The environmental assessments provide the basis for our conclusion that the implementation of the proposed boll weevil eradication programs in Mississippi and in the Red River Valley area of Arkansas and Louisiana will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact are available for public inspection at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect those documents are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Bill Grefenstette, Senior Operations Officer, National Boll Weevil Eradication Program, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 138, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236, (301) 734-8676. Copies of the environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact may be obtained by contacting Mr. Grefenstette.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

In accordance with 7 U.S.C. 147a, 148, and 450, the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to cooperate with the States and certain other organizations and individuals to control and eradicate plant pests.

The boll weevil (*Anthonomus grandis Boheman*) is a destructive pest of cotton which causes annual economic losses to the agricultural industry and consumers. Since its introduction in southern Texas in the late 1800's, the boll weevil has spread across the area of

the United States known as the Cotton Belt. Since the early 1950's, the United States agricultural community has acknowledged the need for a beltwide strategy for controlling the boll weevil. Since the first pilot program in 1971, programs implemented in an incremental fashion have been successful in eradicating the boll weevil from over 3.5 million acres in major areas of the Cotton Belt.

On December 24, 1991, we published in the **Federal Register** (56 FR 66615-66616, Docket No. 91-173) a notice announcing the availability of a final environmental impact statement for the National Boll Weevil Cooperative Control Program (national program). This comprehensive programmatic environmental impact statement evaluated the impacts of the national program to eradicate boll weevil.

The national program relies on integrated control methods, including the use of chemicals, on cotton crops. Therefore, as the national program expands to include new areas, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) prepares site specific environmental assessments to analyze the potential effects of eradication program alternatives and actions on the quality of the human environment in the local area of the proposed eradication program.

APHIS, in cooperation with the other Federal and State agencies, cotton growers, and cotton grower organizations in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, proposes to add Mississippi and the Red River Valley area of Arkansas and Louisiana to the national program to eradicate boll weevil from cotton fields in these areas.

APHIS has prepared site specific environmental assessments for the proposed eradication activities in Mississippi and in the Red River Valley area of Arkansas and Louisiana. The analyses for these sites focused on potential effects of chemical pesticides and potential outbreaks of secondary pests. In addition to the routine operational procedures and mitigation measures that are followed in all areas of the national program, these site specific environmental assessments recommend additional protective measures to further reduce the potential for adverse environmental effects.

These site specific environmental assessments and the programmatic environmental impact statement provide the basis for our conclusion that the implementation of the proposed boll weevil eradication programs in Mississippi and in the Red River Valley area of Arkansas and Louisiana will not have a significant impact on the quality

of the human environment in either area.

The environmental assessments and findings of no significant impact have been prepared in accordance with: (1) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 17th day of July 1997.

Terry L. Medley,*Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-19362 Filed 7-22-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Food and Consumer Service****Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request, Food Stamp Program Form FCS-521, Food Coupon Deposit Document****AGENCY:** Food and Consumer Service, USDA.**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on proposed information collection. The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (the Act) requires that all verified and encoded redemption certificates accepted by insured financial institutions from authorized retail food stores shall be forwarded with the corresponding coupon deposits to the Federal Reserve Bank along with the accompanying Food Coupon Deposit Document (Form FCS-521). Requirements in the Food Stamp Regulations are the basis for the information collected on Form FCS-521, Food Coupon Deposit Document.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before September 22, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of