

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

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-007-1]

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request an extension of approval of an information collection in support of the Horse Protection Program.

DATES: We invite you to comment. We will consider all comments that we receive by June 21, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Send comments regarding the accuracy of burden estimate, ways to minimize the burden (such as through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology), or any other aspect of this collection of information to: Docket No. 99-007-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, suite 3C03, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please send an original and three copies, and state that your comments refer to Docket No. 99-007-1. Comments received may be inspected 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 comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information regarding the Horse Protection Program, contact Dr. Richard Watkins, Initiatives Coordinator,

Animal Care, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 84, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234, (301) 734-7833; or e-mail: richard.h.watkins@usda.gov. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Cheryl Groves, Agency Support Services Specialist, at (301) 734-5086.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Horse Protection.

OMB Number: 0579-0056.

Expiration Date of Approval: September 30, 1999.

Type of Request: Extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The practice known as "soring" is the causing of pain in Tennessee Walking horses and other gaited horses in order to affect their performance. The Horse Protection Act (HPA) (15 U.S.C. 1821 *et seq.*) was enacted to eliminate soring by prohibiting the showing, exhibition, transport, or sale of sore horses. Exercising its rulemaking and enforcement authority under the HPA, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) issues and enforces regulations regarding horse protection.

In 1979, in response to an amendment to the HPA, APHIS issued regulations under which horse show management must hire individuals to conduct preshow inspections, in order to avoid liability under the HPA if sore horses are shown or exhibited. These individuals are referred to as designated qualified persons (DQPs). DQPs are trained and licensed only under industry-sponsored DQP programs that APHIS certifies and monitors, and that are currently run by horse industry organizations.

Enforcement of the HPA and its related regulations depends on inspections of horses by DQPs and by APHIS officials. In order for APHIS to monitor whether enforcement by DQPs and Department-certified DQP programs is effective, it is necessary that DQPs, DQP programs, and horse show management maintain or submit to APHIS records related to inspections at horse shows, as well as information regarding the certified programs.

No official government form is necessary for the reporting and recordkeeping required.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning such information collection. These comments are invited to help us:

(1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other collection technologies e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .177 hours per response.

Respondents: Horse industry organizations, DQP programs, and horse show management.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 650.

Estimated annual number of responses for respondent: 11.07.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 7,195 hours. (Due to rounding, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the average reporting burden per response.)

All responses to this notice will be summarized and include in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 15th day of April 1999.

Joan M. Arnoldi,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99-9848 Filed 4-19-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 99-020N]

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection; Public Meeting

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.