

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 66, No. 169

Thursday, August 30, 2001

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

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Federal Invention Available for Licensing and Intent To Grant Exclusive License

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability and intent.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the rice variety designated "Bolivar" is available for licensing and that the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, intends to grant to the Texas A&M University System of College Station, Texas, an exclusive license to this variety.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before November 28, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to: USDA, ARS, Office of Technology Transfer, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Room 4-1158, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5131.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: June Blalock of the Office of Technology Transfer at the Beltsville address given above; telephone: 301-504-5257.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Government's intellectual property rights to this invention are assigned to the United States of America, as represented by the Secretary of Agriculture. The prospective exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective exclusive license may be granted unless, within ninety (90) days from the date of this published Notice, the Agricultural Research Service receives written evidence and argument which establishes that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the

requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7.

Michael D. Ruff,

Assistant Administrator.

[FR Doc. 01-21983 Filed 8-29-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 01-009-3]

Wildlife Services; Availability of an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that an environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact have been prepared by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service relative to oral rabies vaccination programs in several States. The environmental assessment analyzes the potential environmental effects of the continuation and expansion of the Agency's involvement in programs to stop the spread of certain wildlife-borne rabies strains in the States of New York, Ohio, Texas, Vermont, and West Virginia, and examines similar efforts that may be conducted in New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia, and Alabama. The environmental assessment provides a basis for our conclusion that the implementation of these oral rabies vaccination programs will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Based on its finding of no significant impact, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that an environmental impact statement need not be prepared.

ADDRESSES: To obtain copies of the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact, contact Elizabeth Harris, Operational Support Staff, Wildlife Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 87, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234; phone (301) 734-7921, fax (301) 734-5157, or e-mail: elizabeth.harris@aphis.usda.gov.

You may also read the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Martin Mendoza, Jr., Director, Operational Support Staff, Wildlife Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 87, Riverdale, MD 20737-1234; phone (301) 734-7921.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Wildlife Services (WS) program in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) cooperates with Federal agencies, State and local governments, and private individuals to research and implement the best methods of managing conflicts between wildlife and human health and safety, agriculture, property, and natural resources. Wildlife-borne diseases that can affect domestic animals and humans are among the types of conflicts that APHIS-WS addresses. Wildlife is the dominant reservoir of rabies in the United States.

On December 7, 2000, a notice was published in the **Federal Register** (65 FR 76606-76607, Docket No. 00-045-1) in which the Secretary of Agriculture declared an emergency and transferred funds from the Commodity Credit Corporation to APHIS-WS for the continuation and expansion of oral rabies vaccination (ORV) programs to address rabies in the States of Ohio, New York, Vermont, Texas, and West Virginia.

On March 7, 2001, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 13697-13700, Docket No. 01-009-1) to solicit public involvement in the planning of a proposed cooperative program to stop the spread of rabies in the States of New York, Ohio, Texas, Vermont, and West Virginia. The notice also stated that a small portion of northeastern New Hampshire and the western counties in Pennsylvania that border Ohio could also be included in these control efforts, and discussed the possibility of APHIS-WS cooperating in

smaller-scale ORV projects in the States of Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia, and Alabama. The March 2001 notice contained detailed information about the history of the problems with raccoon rabies in eastern States and with gray fox and coyote rabies in Texas, along with information about previous and ongoing efforts using ORV baits in programs to prevent the spread of the rabies strains of concern.

Subsequently, on May 17, 2001, we published in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 27489, Docket No. 01-009-2) a notice in which we announced the availability, for public review and comment, of an environmental assessment (EA) that examined the potential environmental effects of the ORV programs described in our March 2001 notice. We solicited comments on the EA for 30 days ending on June 18, 2001. We received one comment by that date. The comment was from an animal protection organization and supported APHIS' efforts toward limiting or eradicating rabies in wildlife populations. The commenter did not, however, support the use of lethal monitoring methods or local depopulation as part of an ORV program.

In this document, we are advising the public of APHIS' record of decision and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) regarding the use of oral vaccination to control specific rabies virus variants in raccoons, gray foxes, and coyotes in the United States. This decision will allow APHIS-WS to purchase and distribute ORV baits, monitor the effectiveness of the ORV programs, and participate in implementing contingency plans that may involve the reduction of a limited number of local target species populations through lethal means (i.e., the preferred alternative identified in the EA). The decision is based upon the final EA, which reflects our review and consideration of the comments received from the public in response to our March 2001 and May 2001 notices and information gathered during planning/scoping meetings with State health departments, other State and local agencies, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The EA and FONSI have been prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (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 1); and (4) APHIS' NEPA

Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 24th day of August 2001.

Craig A. Reed,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 01-21928 Filed 8-29-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 97-093-9]

Scrapie Eradication Uniform Methods and Rules; Reopening and Extension of Comment Period

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are reopening and extending the comment period for a notice seeking public comments on the draft Scrapie Eradication Uniform Methods and Rules. This action will allow interested persons additional time to prepare and submit comments.

DATES: We invite you to comment on the draft Scrapie Eradication Uniform Methods and Rules. We will consider all comments on Docket 97-093-7 that we receive by September 20, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 97-093-7, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 97-093-7.

You may read any comments that we receive on Docket No. 97-093-7 in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690-2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

You may request a copy of the draft Scrapie Eradication Uniform Methods and Rules by writing to the person listed

under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

CONTACT. The document is also available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/scrapie>, and we may post revised versions to this website for additional comment in the future.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Diane Sutton, National Scrapie Program Coordinator, National Animal Health Programs Staff, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-6954.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Scrapie is a degenerative and eventually fatal disease affecting the central nervous systems of sheep and goats. To control the spread of scrapie within the United States, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, administers regulations at 9 CFR part 79 that restrict the interstate movement of certain sheep and goats. APHIS also has regulations at 9 CFR part 54 that describe a voluntary scrapie control program.

On April 20, 2001, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 20231, Docket No. 97-093-7) soliciting comments on the draft Scrapie Eradication Uniform Methods and Rules (UM&R). The UM&R is a set of proposed cooperative procedures and standards to aid in the control and eradication of scrapie. The legal requirements for interstate movement of sheep and goats due to scrapie are contained in title 9 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The Scrapie Eradication UM&R provides guidance to the States regarding the minimum standards necessary for a State to participate in the national eradication program.

Comments on the UM&R were originally required to be received on or before June 19, 2001. On June 27, 2001, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** (66 FR 34143, Docket No. 97-093-8) reopening and extending the comment period until August 20, 2001. We are reopening and extending the comment period on Docket No. 97-093-7 again, until September 20, 2001. This action will allow interested persons additional time to prepare and submit comments.

Comments received before September 20, 2001, will be reviewed and considered before another draft is put out for review by States, industry, and the public. APHIS will continue to accept comments on the UM&R on an ongoing basis and will open it for revision at least annually, as indicated in the introduction to the UM&R. Additional input may be provided directly to the national scrapie program coordinator at any time, at the address