

# 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.

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Commodity Credit Corporation

#### Domestic Sugar Program—Revisions of 2002-Crop Cane Sugar Marketing Allotments and Allocations

**AGENCY:** Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is issuing this notice to advise the public that CCC has reassigned the unused cane sugar allocations from processors in Hawaii and Puerto Rico to processors in Florida, Louisiana and Texas. State cane allotments were updated to be consistent with revised 2002-crop cane sugar production forecasts. Hurricanes in Louisiana last October caused distortions in mill production levels relative to processor allocations and unexpectedly prevented the marketing of sugar. To correct these distortions and resume marketing Louisiana cane sugar, CCC realigned mill allocations earlier than the May 1 regulatory deadline. CCC also distributed the Talisman allocation among the Florida processors according to the statutory requirement.

The Hawaiian cane allotment was reduced 22,951 short tons, raw value (STRV); Puerto Rico's allotment was reduced 5,946 STRV. Florida gained 15,864 STRV, Louisiana gained 9,280

STRV and Texas gained 3,753 STRV. In addition, the entire Talisman allocation of 58,713 STRV was reassigned to three Florida processors.

**ADDRESSES:** Barbara Fecso, Dairy and Sweeteners Analysis Group, Economic Policy and Analysis Staff, Farm Service Agency, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0516, Washington, DC 20250-0516; telephone (202) 720-4146; FAX (202) 690-1480; e-mail: [barbara.fecso@usda.gov](mailto:barbara.fecso@usda.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Barbara Fecso at (202) 720-4146.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 359e(a) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 requires the Secretary to periodically determine whether (in view of current sugar inventories, estimated sugar production, expected marketings and other pertinent factors) any processor will be unable to market the sugar covered by the portion of the State cane sugar allotment allocated to the processor. Section 359e(b)(1)(B) further directs the Secretary to reassign the estimated quantity of a State deficit proportionately to the allotments for other cane sugar States (depending on each State's capacity to market) when a State does not have the capacity to absorb its allocation among its own processors.

In February 2003, the Department of Agriculture surveyed cane sugar processors asking for revisions to 2002-crop production and ending stock estimates for the purpose of calculating reassignments. The allotments/allocations were calculated in two steps:

*Step 1:* Because 50 percent of cane sugar State allotments and processor allocations are based on the estimate of current crop production, updated production estimates from the February survey yielded new allotments/allocations (column C of the attached table).

*Step 2:* Survey results revealed 28,897 STRV in unused allocations to Hawaiian and Puerto Rican processors. This amount was proportionately redistributed only to those cane processors in the Mainland States, who revealed in the same survey, a shortfall in allocation for the current crop year (column D of the attached table).

Section 359d(b)(C) requires CCC to distribute the closed Talisman factory's allocation among Florida processors in accordance with the agreements of March 25 and 26, 1999, between the affected processors and the Secretary of the Interior. CCC distributed Talisman's allocation based on the distribution of Talisman's acreage between the affected processors in the 1999 agreements. The Talisman distribution was calculated after the above reassignments (column E of the attached table).

USDA will continue to closely monitor market performance and critical program variables throughout the year to ensure meeting program objectives and maintaining market balance. Cane sugar allotment/allocation reassignments will be reevaluated periodically as production estimates improve.

This notice is being issued in addition to the USDA press release entitled "USDA Announces Revisions to 2002-Crop Cane Sugar Marketing Allotments and Allocations," which was issued on March 13, 2003, and is only intended to supplement and not supplant what was announced in that release. These actions apply to all domestic cane sugar marketed for human consumption in the United States from October 1, 2002, through September 30, 2003. The revised 2002-crop cane sugar marketing allotments and allocations (in short tons, raw value) are listed in the following table:

## FISCAL YEAR 2003 SUGAR MARKETING ALLOTMENTS AND ALLOCATIONS

[Revised March, 2003]

A	B Jan 03 revised allotment/ allocation	C Change in allot- ment/allocation due ONLY to new processor production estimates	D Change in allot- ment/allocation due ONLY to reassignments	E Talisman distribution	F New allotment/ allocation
	(short tons, raw value)				
Overall Beet/Cane Allotments:					
Beet Sugar .....	4,456,700	0	0	0	4,456,700
Cane Sugar (Includes P. Rico) .....	3,743,300	0	0	0	3,743,300
Total (Overall Allotment Quantity) .....	8,200,000	0	0	0	8,200,000
State Cane Sugar Allotments:					
Florida .....	1,929,516	-6,424	22,288	0	1,945,380
Louisiana .....	1,330,912	4,673	4,607	0	1,340,192
Texas .....	157,872	1,750	2,002	0	161,625
Hawaii .....	318,829	49	-23,000	0	295,878
Puerto Rico .....	6,171	-49	-5,897	0	225
Total Cane Sugar .....	3,743,300	0	0	0	3,743,300
Florida:					
Atlantic Sugar Assoc. ....	144,869	2,573	930	0	148,371
Growers Co-op. of FL .....	350,846	-7,135	701	3,564	347,976
Okeelanta Corp. ....	389,302	-9,128	7,602	32,912	420,688
Osceola Farms Co. ....	227,315	-2,212	4,472	0	229,575
Talisman Sugar Corp. ....	59,660	-947	0	-58,713	0
U.S. Sugar Corp. ....	757,524	10,425	8,584	22,237	798,769
Florida Total .....	1,929,516	-6,424	22,288	0	1,945,380
Louisiana:					
Alma Plantation .....	77,818	-6,006	823	0	72,635
Caire & Graugnard .....	5,597	495	0	0	6,091
Cajun Sugar Co-op. ....	97,645	2,940	471	0	101,056
Cora-Texas Mfg. Co. ....	116,530	2,388	379	0	119,297
Evan Hall Factory .....	2,797	121	-2,918	0	0
Harry Laws & Co. ....	58,181	-4,054	921	0	55,048
Iberia Sugar Co-op. ....	62,798	1,746	0	0	64,543
Jeanerette Sugar Co. ....	63,305	-1,283	400	0	62,422
Lafourche Sugars Corp. ....	72,494	-8,059	5	0	64,441
Louisiana Sugarcane Co-op. ....	82,781	-1,858	83	0	81,006
Lula Westfield, LLC .....	143,145	4,678	3	0	147,826
M.A. Patout & Sons .....	173,937	5,992	3,361	0	183,290
Raceland Sugars .....	78,082	4,323	111	0	82,516
St. Mary Sugar Co-op. ....	92,875	-4,531	325	0	88,669
So. Louisiana Sugars Co-op. ....	115,098	3,268	0	0	118,366
Sterling Sugars .....	87,830	4,512	644	0	92,986
Louisiana Total .....	1,330,912	4,673	4,607	0	1,340,192
Texas: Rio Grande Valley .....	157,872	1,750	2,002	0	161,625
Hawaii:					
Gay & Robinson, Inc. ....	62,163	2,135	0	0	64,298
Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company	256,666	-2,086	-23,000	0	231,580
Hawaii Total .....	318,829	49	-23,000	0	295,878
Puerto Rico:					
Agraso .....	3,984	-32	-3,727	0	225
Roig .....	2,187	-17	-2,170	0	0
Puerto Rico Total .....	6,171	-49	-5,897	0	225

Signed in Washington, DC on April 11, 2003.

**James R. Little,**

*Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 03-009N]

#### Using Applied Epidemiology and Other Tools To Protect the Public Health

**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing that it will hold a public meeting on the use of epidemiological data, principles, and techniques, and of other public health tools, to help it achieve its public health goals. The Agency will describe how it responds to epidemiological evidence developed by States or other federal agencies; how it uses that evidence; how it conducts food safety investigations; and, in appropriate circumstances, initiates regulatory actions based on such evidence. This meeting is the second in a series of meetings that will aid FSIS in developing a framework for Agency public health investigations and integration of the scientific principles of applied epidemiology into its food safety activities. This meeting is also one of a number of public meetings FSIS is conducting at which new approaches for increasing food safety are to be discussed. This meeting is the second in an on-going series of meetings that will aid FSIS in developing a framework for how the Agency will conduct public health investigations and integrate the scientific principles of applied epidemiology into its food safety activities. It is also one of a number of public meetings FSIS has been holding in which new approaches for increasing food safety are discussed.

**DATES:** The public meeting is scheduled for April 29, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at The Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle, NW., Washington, DC 20005. A tentative agenda will be available in the FSIS Docket Room and on the FSIS Web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>. The official transcript of the meeting, when it becomes available, will be kept in the FSIS Docket Room at room 102 Cotton

Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3700, and will represent public comments. FSIS welcomes comments on the topics to be discussed at the public meeting. Please send an original and two copies of comments to the FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #03-009N, Room 102, Cotton Annex, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All comments and the official transcript, when it becomes available, will be kept in the FSIS Docket Room at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Philip Derfler at (202) 720-2709. Pre-registration for this meeting is suggested but not required. To register for the meeting, please contact Sheila Johnson at (202) 690-6498, fax: (202) 690-6500, or e-mail: [Sheila.johnson@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Sheila.johnson@fsis.usda.gov). You may also register on-site. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Ms. Johnson at the above numbers or e-mail address as soon as possible.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

FSIS administers the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act. The Agency's activities are intended to prevent the distribution in domestic or foreign commerce, of unwholesome, adulterated, or misbranded meat, poultry, and egg products, as human food, including products that may transmit diseases or that may be otherwise injurious to health.

In recent years, the Agency has placed increased emphasis on its public health protection role. FSIS has consistently sought to enhance the public health by minimizing foodborne illness from meat, poultry, and egg products. The Agency has worked toward achieving this goal by implementing measures intended to reduce pathogens on raw products, by strengthening relationships with public health agencies at the Federal and State levels; by making food safety information and training available to people at every point in the food production and marketing chain; and by promoting international cooperation in food safety. FSIS also protects the public health by investigating and curtailing foodborne illness outbreaks associated with meat, poultry, or egg products.

For many years, FSIS has used epidemiology and other methods as tools in tracking the source of outbreaks of foodborne illness. Recent improvements in outbreak investigation and genetic fingerprinting of pathogens

from persons and food products have facilitated enhancements in how the Agency uses epidemiology. It is now possible to identify otherwise unrecognized outbreaks and to develop substantive evidence to link products to illnesses. The Agency has begun using the techniques of epidemiology during in-plant assessments to help identify the source of on-going plant contamination. FSIS has also based recall requests on epidemiological data that indicated that product from a particular establishment is adulterated, but without a positive laboratory finding of product adulteration.

##### Public Meeting

At the public meeting, FSIS officials will discuss the Agency's utilization of investigations of foodborne illnesses associated with meat, poultry, and egg products. Epidemiological, environmental, microbiological, and other data gathered in the course of such investigations, as well as other public health tools, are used to determine what actions, if any, the Agency should take, including whether to request a recall of FSIS regulated products. The meeting will focus on: The progress the Agency has made using epidemiology as a basis of regulatory decisionmaking since the first epidemiologic meeting, which was held in January 2002; points to consider in reviewing epidemiologic findings; and FSIS's thinking on food safety investigations initiated in response to epidemiological evidence. FSIS will also present a hypothetical scenario based on recent cases of foodborne illnesses and in-plant contamination and describe its response to the scenario. A panel of food safety experts will then discuss the Agency's approaches. Finally, the Agency will open the discussion to include, and solicit comment from, the attendees. FSIS believes that this type of public process will assist it in achieving its goals and will enhance the understanding of the public health community.

##### Additional Public Information

Public awareness of all segments of policy development is important. Consequently, in an effort to better ensure that minorities, women, and persons with disabilities are aware of this public meeting, FSIS will announce it and provide copies of this **Federal Register** publication in the FSIS Constituent Update. FSIS provides a weekly FSIS Constituent Update, which is communicated via fax to over 300 organizations and individuals. In addition, the update is available on-line through the FSIS web page located at