

they contain gene sequences from plant pathogens.

The purpose of the proposed field trial is to produce grain, hybrid seed, and to develop a research line in a nursery. The tests will be conducted through use of a combination of biological and physical containment measures. In addition, the experimental protocols and field plot design, as well as the procedures for termination of the field tests, are designed to ensure that none of the subject corn plants persist in the environment beyond the termination of the experiments.

To provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts and plant pest risk associated with the proposed confined field test of the subject corn plants, an environment assessment (EA) has been prepared. The EA was 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 1b), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1622n and 7701–7772; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June 2004.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–14432 Filed 6–24–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04–053–1]

#### Horse Protection Technology Meeting; Animal Care

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** We are giving notice to horse industry members and other interested persons that Animal Care will host a series of educational meetings to present current information on new technology being explored for use in the enforcement of the Horse Protection Act. This notice provides the agenda for the meetings, information on the location and dates of the first meeting, and general information on subsequent meetings.

**DATES:** The first meeting will be held in Lexington, KY, on June 29, 2004.

Registration will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. and end at noon. Additional meetings are being planned for July through October 2004, for Tennessee, Missouri, and Oregon.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Four Points Sheraton, 1938 Stanton Way, Lexington, KY 40511, (859) 259–1311.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. James Tuck, Management Analyst, PPD, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Riverdale, MD 20737; (301) 734–5819.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Animal Care, is announcing a series of educational meetings on the new technology being tested to enforce the Horse Protection Act. The meetings are designed to provide a forum for information dissemination on various topics that are important for the horse industry to understand. This series of meetings will be held in various geographical locations to facilitate attendance by most of our regulated parties that maintain horses.

The first meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 29, 2004, at the Four Points Sheraton, Lexington, KY. Additional meetings are being planned for July through October 2004, for Tennessee, Missouri, and Oregon.

The series of meetings have been developed to provide current information and ideas on a variety of technological innovations Animal Care is testing to assist in the enforcement of the Horse Protection Act. Each meeting will, with the exception of possible minor modifications, follow the same agenda:

7:30 a.m.–8:30 a.m.—Registration

8:00 a.m.–8:45 a.m.—Welcome

Overview

8:45 a.m.–9:30 a.m.—Thermography

Technology

9:45 a.m.–10:45 a.m.—Sniffer

Technology

10:45 a.m.—Noon—Other Horse Protection Enforcement Issues

Meeting notices are also available on the Animal Care Web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac>.

Please note that these meetings are being held to provide and disseminate information on the technology being tested by Animal Care to enforce the Horse Protection Act and is not an opportunity to submit formal comments on proposed rules or other regulatory initiatives.

Pre-registration is requested by calling (301) 734–7833, or emailing Animal

Care at [ACE@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:ACE@aphis.usda.gov) and providing your name, number of attendees, phone number, email address or other contact address. This information is needed in the event of any changes to the meeting schedule so we may inform registrants in a timely manner. Please pre-register for the meeting by June 28, 2004.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June, 2004.

**Kevin Shea,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04–14434 Filed 6–24–04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 04–050–1]

#### National Animal Identification System; Public Meetings

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, U.S. Department of Agriculture, will host a series of listening sessions to provide livestock producers and other stakeholders with the opportunity to offer their comments regarding the Department's implementation of a National Animal Identification System.

**DATES:** The public meetings will be held in Oregon on July 1, 2004; in California on July 10, 2004; in New Mexico on July 16, 2004; in Washington (State) on July 23, 2004; in Colorado on August 10, 2004; in Montana on August 13, 2004; in Florida on August 16, 2004; in Ohio on August 18, 2004; in Iowa on August 26, 2004; in Missouri on August 27, 2004; in Wisconsin on August 30, 2004; and in Minnesota on August 31, 2004. Information regarding the specific time of each session will be made available as soon as arrangements are finalized (see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

**ADDRESSES:** The public meetings will be held in the following cities:

- Prineville, OR;
- Stockton, CA;
- Socorro, NM;
- Pasco, WA;
- Greeley, CO;
- Billings, MT;
- Kissimmee, FL;
- Columbus, OH;
- Ames, IA;
- Joplin, MO;

- Appleton, WI; and
- St. Cloud, MN.

Information regarding the specific location of each session will be made available as soon as arrangements are finalized (see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Neil Hammerschmidt, Animal Identification Officer, National Center for Animal Health Programs, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231, (301) 734-5571.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On December 30, 2003, the Secretary of Agriculture announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) would expedite the implementation of a national animal identification system for all species after the discovery of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in a cow in Washington State. On April 27, 2004, following several months of a USDA working group's efforts to develop an implementation framework for a U.S. animal identification plan, the Secretary announced the framework for implementation of a National Animal Identification System (NAIS) designed to identify any agricultural premises exposed to a foreign animal disease so that it can be more quickly contained and eradicated. The Secretary also announced that \$18.8 million would be transferred from the Department's Commodity Credit Corporation to provide initial funding for the program during fiscal year (FY) 2004. The FY 2004 funding has been earmarked for the initial infrastructure development and implementation of the national system, but both private and public support will be required to make it fully operational. The Administration's proposed FY 2005 budget includes another \$33 million for the effort.

The implementation of a NAIS will be conducted in three main phases. Under Phase I, USDA will evaluate current federally funded animal identification systems and determine which system(s) should be used for a NAIS, further the dialog with producers and other stakeholders on the operation of a NAIS, identify staffing needs, and develop any regulatory and legislative proposals needed for implementing the system.

Phase II will involve the implementation of the animal identification system at regional levels for one or more species, continuation of the communication and education effort, addressing regulatory needs, and working with Congress on any needed legislation.

In Phase III, the animal identification system(s) would be scaled up to the national level.

The first step in the process is to select an interim data repository to handle incoming national premises data. USDA has commissioned an independent analysis of repositories that are currently part of various USDA-funded animal identification projects around the country. Once the system is identified that shows greatest potential for use on a national level, USDA will enter into cooperative agreements with States, Indian tribes, and other government entities to assist them in adapting their existing systems to the new system.

USDA is committed to developing a program that is technology neutral, so as to provide producers, to the extent possible, the flexibility to use current and effective systems and technologies, as well as adopt new technologies as they are developed.

As noted previously, one element of USDA's Phase I efforts is furthering the dialog with producers and other stakeholders on the operation of a NAIS. To provide an opportunity for such a dialog, the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs, USDA, will host a series of listening sessions across the country to provide livestock producers and other stakeholders with the opportunity to offer their comments regarding the implementation of the NAIS.

In order to provide interested persons with as much advance notice of the listening sessions as possible, we are publishing this notice before we have finalized the precise locations and times of each listening session. As soon as the arrangements for the listening session in each city are finalized, we will post information regarding the location and time of the session on the NAIS Web page (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/nais/nais.html>) maintained by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). In addition, APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs staff will issue press releases and undertake other outreach activities to ensure that this information is made as widely available as possible.

The tentative agenda for each listening session is as follows:

- Opening remarks from the Under Secretary;
- Remarks from other officials who may be in attendance (e.g., Members of Congress, State agriculture secretaries or commissioners);
- An overview of the NAIS presented by APHIS' Veterinary Services program;
- Opportunity for remarks from livestock producers and other

stakeholders in attendance. If the number of persons wishing to speak warrants it, USDA may limit the time for each presentation so that everyone wishing to speak has the opportunity to do so.

A transcript will be made of each listening session, and the transcript will be placed on the NAIS Web page.

Done in Washington, DC, this 21st day of June 2004.

**W. Ron DeHaven,**

*Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 04-14433 Filed 6-24-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-34-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Forest Service

#### Information Collection; Understanding Value Trade-Offs Regarding Fire Hazard Reduction Programs in the Wildland-Urban Interface

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Forest Service is seeking comments from all interested individuals and organizations on a new research study for developing a better understanding of communities' perceived risk of losses from wildfire in the wildland-urban interface and their willingness to pay for fuels reduction programs to reduce the risk of wildfires.

**DATES:** Comments must be received in writing on or before August 24, 2004, to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments concerning this notice should be addressed to Armando González-Cabán, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Forest Service, USDA, 4955 Canyon Crest Drive, Riverside, CA 92507.

Comments also may be submitted via facsimile to (909) 680-1501, or by e-mail to [agonzalezcaban@fs.fed.us](mailto:agonzalezcaban@fs.fed.us).

The public may inspect comments received at 4955 Canyon Crest Drive, Riverside, CA 92507, building one reception area during normal business hours. Visitors are encouraged to call ahead to (909) 680-1500 to facilitate entry to the building.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Armando González-Cabán, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Forest Service, USDA, (909) 680-1525.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Understanding Value Trade-offs Regarding Fire Hazard Reduction