

submitted by the Committee and other available information, it is hereby found that this rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 955

Onions, Marketing agreements, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

PART 955—VIDALIA ONIONS GROWN IN GEORGIA

■ Accordingly, the interim final rule amending 7 CFR part 955 which was published at 70 FR 11114 on March 8, 2005, is adopted as a final rule without change.

Dated: July 14, 2005.

Kenneth C. Clayton,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 05-14261 Filed 7-19-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Natural Resources Conservation Service

7 CFR Part 1469

Conservation Security Program

AGENCY: Commodity Credit Corporation and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim final rule; extension of public comment period.

SUMMARY: The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is authorized by Title XII, Chapter 2, Subchapter A, of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) published an amendment to the interim final rule for CSP on March 25, 2005, (70 FR 15201), with a comment period expiring July 25, 2005. By this notice, NRCS is extending the period during which it will accept public comment on the amended interim final rule for CSP to September 9, 2005. This extension is to give the public additional time to comment on key issues that have been raised regarding the implementation of the program under the amended interim final rule.

DATES: Comments must be postmarked by midnight, September 9, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Send comments in writing, by mail, to Financial Assistance Programs Division, Natural Resources

Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013-2890, or by e-mail to FarmBillRules@usda.gov; Attn: Conservation Security Program.

The amended interim final rule may also be accessed via the Internet through the NRCS homepage, at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>, and by selecting Programs. All comments, including names and addresses when provided, are placed in the record and are available for public inspection.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Craig Derickson, Conservation Security Program Manager, Financial Assistance Programs Division, NRCS, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013-2890, telephone: (202) 720-1845; fax: (202) 720-4265. Submit e-mail to: craig.derickson@wdc.usda.gov, Attention: Conservation Security Program.

Signed in Washington, DC, on July 14, 2005.

Bruce I. Knight,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

[FR Doc. 05-14297 Filed 7-19-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9 CFR Parts 93, 94, and 95

[Docket No. 04-011-3]

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza; Additional Restrictions

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Affirmation of interim rule as final rule.

SUMMARY: We are adopting as a final rule, without change, an interim rule that amended the regulations concerning the importation of animals and animal products to prohibit or restrict the importation of birds, poultry, and unprocessed birds and poultry products from regions that have reported the presence of the H5N1 subtype of highly pathogenic avian influenza and to establish additional permit and quarantine requirements for U.S. origin pet birds and performing or theatrical birds and poultry returning to the United States. The interim rule was necessary to prevent the introduction of highly pathogenic avian influenza subtype H5N1 into the United States.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The interim rule became effective on February 4, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Karen A. James-Preston, Director, National Center for Import and Export, Technical Trade Services, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-8172.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Avian influenza (AI) is a disease that can cause varying degrees of clinical illness in poultry. AI viruses can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl, as well as a wide variety of other birds. Migratory waterfowl have proved to be the natural reservoir for this disease. AI viruses can be classified into low pathogenic (LP AI) and highly pathogenic (HP AI) forms based on the severity of the illness they cause. Most AI virus strains are LP AI and typically cause little or no clinical signs in infected birds. However, some LP AI virus strains are capable of mutating under field conditions into HP AI viruses, which are extremely infectious and fatal for chickens. HP AI can strike poultry quickly without any infection warning signs and, once established, the disease can spread rapidly from flock to flock. HP AI viruses can also be spread by manure, equipment, vehicles, egg flats, crates, and people whose clothing or shoes have come in contact with the virus. HP AI viruses can remain viable at moderate temperatures for long periods in the environment and can survive indefinitely in frozen material. In some instances, HP AI may even be transmitted to humans, with human infections of AI viruses on the rise in recent years.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA or the Department) regulates the importation of animals and animal products into the United States to guard against the introduction of animal diseases such as AI. The regulations in 9 CFR parts 93, 94, and 95 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals, birds, poultry, meat, other animal products and byproducts, hay, and straw into the United States in order to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases, including AI.

In an interim rule effective February 4, 2004, and published in the **Federal Register** on May 10, 2004 (69 FR 25820-25826, Docket No. 04-011-1), we amended the regulations to require that all pet birds and performing and theatrical birds and poultry of United States origin be subject to a 30-day quarantine at a USDA facility when they have spent any length of time in a