

Notices

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

February 28, 2006.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8958.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to

the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Title: Stocks Reports.

OMB Control Number: 0535-0007.

Summary of Collection: The primary function of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production. As part of this function, estimates are made for stocks of grain and including rice, oilseeds, potatoes, peanuts, hops, and dry beans. Grain and oilseed stocks in all positions are estimated quarterly. Grain stock estimates are one of the most important NASS estimates, which are watched closely by growers and industry groups. General authority for data collection is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, section 2204. The Hop Growers of America provides the data collection for much of the production information because of sensitivity issues an impartial third party, NASS, collects stocks and price information.

Need and Use of the Information: NASS collects information to administer farm program legislation and make decisions relative to the export-import programs. Estimates of stocks provide essential statistics on supplies and contribute to orderly marketing. Farmers and agribusiness firms use these estimates in their production and marketing decisions. Collecting this information less frequently would eliminate data needed by government, industry and farmers to keep abreast of changes at the State and national level.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for profit; Farms.

Number of Respondents: 12,661.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Monthly; Quarterly; Semi-annually; Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 14,388.

Charlene Parker,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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February 28, 2006.

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Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Title: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Application Kit for Research and Extension Programs.

OMB Control Number: 0524-0039.

Summary of Collection: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) administers several competitive, peer-reviewed research and extension programs, under which awards of a high-priority nature are made. These programs are authorized pursuant to the authorities contained in the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3101), the Smith-Lever Act, and a variety of other legislative authorities. Before awards can be awarded, certain information is required from applicants as part of an overall package. Because the proposals submitted are competitive in nature and necessitate review by peer panelists, it is particularly important that applicants provide the information in a standardized fashion to ensure equitable treatment for all. CSREES will collect information using several forms.

Need and Use of the Information: The fundamental purpose of the information requested is for USDA proposal evaluation, award, management, reporting, and recordkeeping, as part of the overall administration of the research, education, and extension programs administered by CSREES. CSREES will collect the following information: Program Summary and Narrative, Credentials, Budget, Identification of Conflicts of Interest, and Collect of Environmental Impact Information. The information will be used to respond to inquiries from Congress, other governmental agencies, and the grantee community.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; Business or other for-profit; Individuals or household; Federal Government; State, local or tribal government.

Number of Respondents: 9,450.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting; On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 53,776.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. E6-3047 Filed 3-2-06; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2005-0117]

National Animal Identification System (NAIS); Administration of Official Identification Devices With the Animal Identification Number

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: This notice makes available a document describing how an animal identification number (AIN) may be used in conjunction with official identification devices in the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The document includes performance and printing requirements for visual identification tags with AINs and provides an explanation of the process by which these AIN tags will be authorized for use in the NAIS. Performance standards for radio frequency identification tags or devices that may be used on cattle or bison to supplement visual AIN tags are also presented. Finally, the document describes the AIN Management System, a Web-based system for distributing and administering AINs in the NAIS, and discusses the roles and responsibilities of key participants in the system.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Neil Hammerschmidt, NAIS Coordinator, Eradication and Surveillance Team, National Center for Animal Health Programs, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 200, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-5571.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

As part of ongoing efforts to safeguard animal health, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initiated implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in 2004. The NAIS is a cooperative State-Federal-industry program administered by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). Its long-term goal is to track all animal movements, from birth to harvest, as part of USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring and Surveillance Program.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the NAIS, on November 8, 2004, we published in the **Federal Register** (69 FR 64644-64651, Docket No. 04-052-1) an interim rule that, among other things, amended the regulations to recognize additional numbering systems for the identification of animals in interstate commerce and

State/Federal/industry cooperative disease control and eradication programs and to redefine the numbering system used to identify premises where animals are managed or held.

Specifically, the interim rule recognized the animal identification number (AIN) as an official numbering system for the identification of individual animals, the group/lot identification number (GIN) for the identification of groups or lots of animals within the same production system, and the seven-character premises identification number (PIN) for the identification of premises in the NAIS. Use of the new numbering systems was not, however, required as a result of the interim rule. Finally, the interim rule amended the regulations to prohibit the removal of official identification devices and to eliminate potential regulatory obstacles to the recognition of emerging technologies that could offer viable alternatives to existing animal identification devices and methods.

In May 2005, we made available for public review and comment a Draft Strategic Plan and a Draft Program Standards document (70 FR 29269-29270, Docket No. 05-015-2, May 20, 2005). The Draft Strategic Plan described the process of developing the NAIS, in particular the timeline for full implementation, while the Draft Program Standards document presented our view of how the system would work when fully implemented.

The current document, entitled "Administration of Official Identification Devices with the Animal Identification Number," expands upon certain aspects of the NAIS that were presented in the Draft Program Standards. Specifically, we describe the use of the AIN in conjunction with official identification devices in the NAIS; present performance and printing requirements for visual AIN tags and explain the process by which these tags will be authorized for use in the NAIS; and provide performance standards for radio frequency identification (RFID) tags or devices that may be attached to cattle or bison to supplement visual AIN tags. We also describe the AIN Management System, a Web-based system for distributing and administering AINs in the NAIS, and discuss the roles and responsibilities of key participants in the system.

For producers who choose to participate in the NAIS, tags (generally eartags) imprinted with AINs will be an option for use with certain species, such as cattle, when visual, unique, individual official animal identification is necessary. These AIN tags will have to satisfy the requirements currently