

mortgage. Without the information it would be impossible for APHIS to launch its program to contain and prevent ISA outbreaks in the United States.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 2.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 644.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**Submission for OMB Review;
Comment Request**

August 25, 2008.

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.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Report of Acreage.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0004.

Summary of Collection: 7 U.S.C.

7333(b)(3) specifically requires, for crops and commodities covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), annual reports of acreage planted and prevented from being planted, as required by the Secretary, by the designated acreage reporting data for the crop and location as established by the Secretary. The report of acreage is conducted on an annual basis and is used by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices to determine eligibility for benefits that are available to producers on the farm. Respondents must provide the information each year because variables such as previous year experience, weather occurrences and projections, market demand, new farming techniques and personal preferences affect the amount of land being farmed, the mix of crops planted, and the projected harvest. Prior year information is not sufficient on its own. Therefore, respondents must supply current data on a program year basis by the final reporting date established for their country to qualify for NAP assistance.

Need and Use of the Information: FSA will collect information verbally from the producers during visits to the county offices. FSA will collect one or more of the following data elements, as required: Crop planted, planting date, crop's intended use, type or variety, practice (irrigated or non-irrigated), acres, location of the crop (tract and field), and the producer's percent share in the crop along with the names of other producers having an interest in the crop. Once the information is collected and eligibility established, the information is used throughout the crop year to ensure the producer remains compliant with program provisions. If information is not reported, FSA has no basis to calculate APH, losses could not be determined, and information for crop insurance expansion could not be provided to RMA.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 291,500.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 619,438.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Offer Forms.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0177.

Summary of Collection: The Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, as amended, (Title II, Pub. L. 480), Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended (Section 416(b)), and the Food for Progress Act of 1985, as amended (for Food for Progress) authorizes International Procurement Division to procure, sell, and transport agricultural commodities, and obtain discharge/delivery survey information. Contractors, vendors, and steamship companies submit competitive offers for agricultural commodities and services. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will collect information using several forms.

Need and Use of the Information: The information collected will enable Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO) to evaluate offers impartially, purchase or sell commodities, and obtain services to meet domestic and export program needs. Without the information KCCO could not meet program requirements.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 949.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: On occasion; Quarterly; Weekly; Semi-annually; Monthly; Annually; Other (Bi-weekly & Bi-monthly).

Total Burden Hours: 3,405.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. E8-20060 Filed 8-28-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

**Cooperative State Research,
Education, and Extension Service
Solicitation of Input From Stakeholders
Regarding the Establishment of the
Agriculture and Food Research
Initiative (AFRI)**

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and request for stakeholder input.

SUMMARY: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is creating a new research, education, and extension program called the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). By this notice, CSREES is designated to act on behalf of the Secretary of Agriculture in soliciting public comment from interested persons regarding the implementing regulation to be developed for this new program as required under section 7406 of the

Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 10, 2008, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. All comments must be received by close of business Wednesday, September 24, 2008, to be considered.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in Room 1410 A/B/C/D; Waterfront Centre Building; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; United States Department of Agriculture; 800 9th Street, SW.; Washington, DC 20024. Meeting participants will need to provide photo identification to be admitted to the building. Please allow sufficient time to go through security.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Terri Joya, (202) 401-1761 (phone), (202) 401-1782 (fax), or tjoya@csrees.usda.gov. You may submit comments, identified by CSREES-2008-0002 by any of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

E-mail: afri@csrees.usda.gov. Include CSREES-2008-0002 in the subject line of the message.

Fax: (202) 401-1782.

Mail: Paper, disk or CD-ROM submissions should be submitted to AFRI; Competitive Programs (CP) Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2240; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-2240.

Hand Delivery/Courier: AFRI; Competitive Programs (CP) Unit; Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Room 2457, Waterfront Centre; 800 9th Street, SW.; Washington, DC 20024.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name and CSREES-2008-0002. All comments received will be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional Meeting and Comment Procedures

Because of the diversity of subjects, and to aid participants in scheduling their attendance, the following schedule is anticipated for the September 10, 2008, meeting:

9:30 a.m.–10 a.m.—Introduction to AFRI.

10 a.m.–3 p.m.—General administration of AFRI including

solicitation of proposals, types of projects and awards, length of awards, evaluation criteria, and protocols to ensure the widest program participation. Allocation of funds including protocols to solicit and consider stakeholder input, determination of priority areas, and determination of activities to be supported—applied research, fundamental research, extension, education and integrated. A break is scheduled for 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

Persons wishing to present oral comments at the September 10, 2008, meeting are requested to pre-register by contacting Ms. Terri Joya at (202) 401-1761, by fax at (202) 401-1782 or by e-mail to tjoya@csrees.usda.gov. Participants may reserve one 5-minute comment period. More time may be available, depending on the number of people wishing to make a presentation and the time needed for questions following presentations. Reservations will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. All other attendees may register at the meeting. Written comments may also be submitted for the record at the meeting. All comments must be received by close of business Wednesday, September 24, 2008, to be considered. All comments and the official transcript of the meeting, when they become available, may be reviewed on the CSREES Web page for six months. Participants who require a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should contact Ms. Joya as directed above.

Background and Purpose

Section 7406 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246) amends subsection (b) of the Competitive, Special, and Facilities Research Grant Act (7 U.S.C. 450i(b)) to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a new competitive grant program to provide funding for fundamental and applied research, extension, and education to address food and agricultural sciences. Subject to the availability of appropriations to carry out this program, the Secretary may award grants to State agricultural experiment stations; colleges and universities; university research foundations; other research institutions and organizations; Federal agencies; national laboratories; private organizations or corporations; individuals; or any group consisting of two or more of the aforementioned entities. Grants shall be awarded to address priorities in United States agriculture in the following areas: (A) Plant health and production and plant

products; (B) Animal health and production and animal products; (C) Food safety, nutrition, and health; (D) Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment; (E) Agriculture systems and technology; and (F) Agriculture economics and rural communities. To the maximum extent practicable, CSREES, in coordination with the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics (REE), will make awards for high priority research, education, and extension, taking into consideration, when available, the determinations made by the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. The authority to carry out this program has been delegated to CSREES through the Undersecretary for REE.

CSREES is holding a public meeting to obtain comments to use in developing the implementing rule for the new AFRI competitive grants program. The meeting is open to the public. Written comments and suggestions on issues that may be considered in the meeting may be submitted to the CSREES Docket Clerk at the address above.

Summary of Agriculture and Food Research Initiative

The program authorizes for appropriation \$700 million in grants for FY 2008-12, of which the Secretary may retain no more than 4% for administrative costs. Funds will be available for obligation for a two-year period beginning in the fiscal year for which funds are first made available. Grants will be awarded on the basis of merit, quality, and relevance and may have terms of up to 10 years.

Of the AFRI funds allocated to research activities, section 7406 directs 60 percent toward grants for fundamental (or basic) research, and 40 percent toward applied research. Of the AFRI funds allocated to fundamental research, not less than 30 percent of AFRI grants will be directed toward research by multidisciplinary teams. In addition, the law specifies that of the total amount appropriated for AFRI, not less than 30 percent is to be used for integrated programs.

Implementation Plans

CSREES plans to consider stakeholder input received from this public meeting as well as other written comments in developing an implementing regulation for this program. CSREES anticipates releasing a Request for Applications (RFA) by mid-January 2009.

Done at Washington, DC, this 26th day of August 2008.

Colien Hefferan,

Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

[FR Doc. E8-20146 Filed 8-28-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Solicitation of Input From Stakeholders Regarding Implementation of the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and request for stakeholder input.

SUMMARY: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is soliciting stakeholder input on the implementation of the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP), which is authorized under section 1415A of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3151a). The purpose of this program is for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to enter into agreements with veterinarians under which the veterinarians agree to provide, for a specific period of time as identified in the agreement, veterinary services in veterinarian shortage situations. As part of the stakeholder input process, CSREES is conducting a public meeting to solicit comments regarding the implementing regulations to be developed for this program.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday, September 15, 2008, from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All comments must be received by close of business Tuesday, September 30, 2008, to be considered.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held in room 1410B-C-D of the Waterfront Centre Building, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, 800 9th St., SW., Washington, DC 20024. Meeting participants will need to provide photo identification to be admitted to the building. Please allow sufficient time to go through security. You may submit comments, identified by CSREES-2008-0001, by any of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

E-mail: vmllrp@csrees.usda.gov. Include CSREES-2008-0001 in the subject line of the message.

Fax: 202-401-6156.

Mail: Paper, disk or CD-ROM submissions should be submitted to VMLRP, Plant and Animal Systems (PAS) Unit, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; STOP 2220, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-2220.

Hand Delivery/Courier: VMLRP; Plant and Animal Systems (PAS) Unit, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 3153, Waterfront Centre, 800 9th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20024.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name and CSREES-2008-0001. All comments received will be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Lisa Stephens, (202) 401-6438, or lstephens@csrees.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Additional Meeting and Comment Procedures

Because of the diversity of subjects, and to aid participants in scheduling their attendance, the following schedule is anticipated for the September 15, 2008, meeting:

9-9:30 a.m.—Introduction to VMLRP.

9:30-12 p.m.—Identification and prioritization of veterinarian shortage situations (e.g., geographically and by expertise).

1-3:30 p.m.—Administration of the VMLRP including eligible applicant criteria; number, size, and length of VMLRP agreements; solicitation for VMLRP applications; application prioritization and review; execution of VMLRP agreements, including service to the Federal government in emergency situations; agreement terms and conditions; reimbursement for tax liability; and monitoring and oversight of VMLRP agreements.

Persons wishing to present oral comments at this meeting are requested to pre-register by contacting Ms. Lisa Stephens at (202) 401-6438, by fax at (202) 401-6156 or by e-mail to lstephens@csrees.usda.gov. Participants may reserve one 5-minute comment period per topic area, and should indicate the topic area(s) for which they are registering (i.e., identification of veterinarian shortage situations and/or administration of the VMLRP). For any participant who may require only one 5-minute period to fully present testimony

regarding both topic areas, the participant should indicate this intention and may reserve their 5-minute comment period under one of the two topic areas. More time may be available, depending on the number of people wishing to make a presentation and the time needed for questions following presentations. Reservations will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. All other attendees may register at the meeting. Written comments may also be submitted for the record at the meeting. All comments must be received by close of business Tuesday, September 30, 2008, to be considered. All comments and the official transcript of the meeting, when they become available, may be reviewed on the CSREES Web page for six months. Participants who require a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should contact Ms. Stephens as directed above.

Background and Purpose

In December, 2003, the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA) was passed into law adding section 1415a to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA). This law established a new Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (7 U.S.C. 3151a) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture (secretary) to carry out a program of entering into agreements with veterinarians under which they agree to provide veterinary services in veterinarian shortage situations. In November 2005, the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006 (Pub. L. 109-97), appropriated \$495,000 (after the 1 percent rescission) for CSREES to implement the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program and represented the first time funds had been appropriated for this program. In February 2007, the Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (Pub. L. 110-5), appropriated an additional \$495,000 to CSREES for support of the program, and in December 2007, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (Pub. L. 110-161), appropriated an additional \$868,875 (after the .7 percent rescission) to CSREES for support of this program. Consequently, there is approximately \$1.8 million available for CSREES to administer this program.

As enacted on June 18, 2008, section 7105 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) amended section 1415A to revise the determination of veterinarian shortage situations to consider (1) geographical areas that the Secretary determines have