

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.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Notice of the Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture Meeting

AGENCY: Office of the Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics, Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, the United States Department of Agriculture announces a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture (AC21). The committee is being convened to: Consider work of the three *ad hoc* subgroups on the progress of their analyses relevant to the new AC21 charge; listen to presentations from outside experts on topics relevant to the work of the AC21; and continue overall discussions on the committee charge and planning subsequent work.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Monday–Tuesday, March 14–15, 2016, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. This meeting is open to the public. On March 14, 2016, if time permits, reasonable provision will be made for oral presentations of no more than five minutes each in duration, starting at 3:30 p.m. Members of the public who wish to make oral statements should also inform Dr. Schechtman in writing or via Email at the indicated addresses below at least three business days before the meeting.

ADDRESSES: Room 107A, USDA Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 12th and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: General information about the committee can also be found at http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=BIOTECH_AC21&navtype=RT&parentnav=BIOTECH. However, Michael Schechtman, Designated Federal Official, Office of

the Deputy Secretary, USDA, 202B Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 12th and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250; Telephone (202) 720–3817; Fax (202) 690–4265; Email AC21@ars.usda.gov may be contacted for specific questions about the committee or this meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The AC21 has been established to provide information and advice to the Secretary of Agriculture on the broad array of issues related to the expanding dimensions and importance of agricultural biotechnology. The committee is charged with examining the long-term impacts of biotechnology on the U.S. food and agriculture system and USDA, and providing guidance to USDA on pressing individual issues, identified by the Office of the Secretary, related to the application of biotechnology in agriculture. In recent years, the work of the AC21 has centered on the issue of coexistence among different types of agricultural production systems. The AC21 consists of members representing the biotechnology industry, the organic food industry, farming communities, the seed industry, food manufacturers, state government, consumer and community development groups, as well as academic researchers and a medical doctor. In addition, representatives from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of the United States Trade Representative serve as “ex officio” members.

In its last report, issued on November 17, 2012, entitled “Enhancing Coexistence: A Report to the Secretary of Agriculture,” and available on the Web site listed below, the AC21 offered a diverse package of recommendations, among which was a recommendation that “. . . USDA should facilitate development of joint coexistence plans by neighboring farmers,” and that in a pilot program, USDA should, among other things, offer incentives for the development of such plans.

At its last meeting, on December 14–15, 2015, USDA offered a specific new charge to the AC21 building on its previous work. Recognizing that USDA currently lacks the legal authority to offer any such incentives, the committee has been charged with considering the

following two questions: Is there an approach by which farmers could be encouraged to work with their neighbors to develop joint coexistence plans at the State or local level? If so, how might the Federal government assist in that process?

In devising an approach to respond to this charge, the AC21 has established 3 *ad hoc* subgroups to gather and analyze information and options for the full committee’s consideration. These address: Development of a guidance document which could be made available to farmers and other stakeholders; potential models for facilitating conversations around coexistence and potential available incentives; and potential venues and conveners of coexistence conversations.

The three objectives for the meeting are:

- To consider work of the three *ad hoc* subgroups on the progress of their analyses relevant to the new AC21 charge;
- to listen to presentations from outside experts on topics relevant to the work of the AC21; and
- to continue overall discussions on the committee charge and planning subsequent work.

Background information regarding the work and membership of the AC21 is available on the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=AC21Main.xml&contentidonly=true>.

Register for the Meeting: The public is asked to pre-register for the meeting at least 10 business days prior to the meeting. Your pre-registration must state: The names of each person in your group; organization or interest represented; the number of people planning to give oral comments, if any; and whether anyone in your group requires special accommodations. Submit registrations to Ms. Dianne Fowler at (202) 720–4074 or by Email at Dianne.fowler@ars.usda.gov by February 26, 2016. The Agricultural Research Service will also accept walk-in registrations. Members of the public who request to give oral comments to the Committee, must arrive by 8:45 a.m. on March 14, 2016 and will be given their allotted time limit and turn at the check-in table.

Public Comments: Written public comments may be mailed to Michael Schechtman, Designated Federal

Official, Office of the Deputy Secretary, USDA, 202B Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building, 12th and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250; via fax to (202) 690-4265 or email to AC21@ars.usda.gov. All written comments must arrive by March 9, 2016. Oral comments are also accepted. To request to give oral comments, see instructions under 'Register for the Meeting' above.

Availability of Materials for the Meeting: All written public comments will be compiled into a binder and available for review at the meeting. Duplicate comments from multiple individuals will appear as one comment, with a notation that multiple copies of the comment were received. Please visit the Web site listed above to learn more about the agenda for or reports resulting from this meeting.

Meeting Accommodations: The meeting will be open to the public, but space is limited. USDA is committed to ensuring that all employees are included in our work environment, programs and events. If you are a person with a disability and request reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, please note the request in your registration. All reasonable accommodation requests are managed on a case by case basis.

Issued at Washington, DC, this 16th day of February 2016.

Catherine E. Woteki,

Under Secretary, Research, Education and Economics.

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BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Chief Financial Officer; Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

February 19, 2016.

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 are requested regarding (1) 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; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (4) 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.

Comments regarding this information collection received by March 28, 2016 will be considered. Written comments should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street NW., Washington, DC 20502. Commenters are encouraged to submit their comments to OMB via email to: OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. 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 person are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Office of the Chief Financial Officer

Title: Information Collection Request; Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants and Awardees.
OMB Control Number: 0505-0025.

Summary of Collection: The appropriations restrictions contained in all of the respective appropriations acts since fiscal year (FY) 2012 regarding financial transactions with corporations that have tax delinquencies or felony convictions were continued in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, Public Law 114-113. The restrictions are located in Division E, Title VII, sections 745 and 746, respectively. The restrictions apply to transactions with corporations that (1) have any "unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, where the awarding agency is aware of the unpaid tax liability and (2) were "convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency is aware of the conviction. The restricted transactions include contracts, grants, loans, loan guarantees, cooperative agreements, and

memoranda of understanding/ agreement). The restrictions may not apply if a Federal agency considers suspension or debarment of the corporation and determines that such action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) agencies and staff offices must comply with the restrictions.

During fiscal years 2012-2014, similar provisions were not uniform across the government. For USDA, one set of provisions applied to all agencies and staff offices except the Forest Service and a second set of slightly different provisions applied only to the Forest Service. To facilitate compliance with the appropriations restrictions, USDA created two sets of forms—one for use by all USDA agencies and staff offices (Forms AD-3030-Y and AD-3031-Y and one for use only by the Forest Service (Forms AD-3030 FS and AD-3031 FS). In FY 2015 Congress enacted slightly different government-wide provisions for all agencies and departments. In response, USDA created a new set of forms that adhered to the change for use by all of its agencies and staff offices including the Forest Service (Forms AD-3030 and AD-3031).

USDA must also comply with prior year provisions issued between FY 2012-2014 to the extent that carry over/ no year funds provided by those years' appropriations were used in awards or award adjustments.

Need and Use of the Information: To comply with the appropriations restrictions, the information collection requires corporate applicants and awardees for USDA programs to represent accurately whether they have or do not have qualifying tax delinquencies or convictions which would prevent USDA from entering into a proposed business transaction with the corporate applicant. For non-procurement programs and transactions, these representations will be submitted on the proposed information collection Forms AD-3030, AD-3031, AD-3030-Y, AD-3031-Y, AD-3030-FS and AD-3031-FS. This information collection, deals only with USDA non-procurement transactions. The categories of non-procurement transactions covered by this information collection are: non-procurement contracts, grants, loans, loan guarantees, cooperative agreements, and some memoranda of understanding/agreement. Accordingly, this information collection is not intended for use with USDA procurement transactions. For more specific information about whether a particular non-procurement program or transaction is included in this list please