

New NAPPO Standard-Setting Initiatives, Including Those in Development

The 2017 work program⁴ includes the following topics being worked on by NAPPO expert groups. APHIS intends to participate actively and fully in the 2017 NAPPO work program. The APHIS position on each topic will be guided and informed by the best technical and scientific information available, as well as on relevant input from stakeholders. For each of the following, the United States will consider its position on any draft standard after it reviews a prepared draft. Information regarding the following NAPPO projects, assignments, activities, and updates on meeting times and locations may be obtained from the NAPPO Web site or by contacting Ms. Patricia Abad (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above).

1. *Asian Gypsy Moth*: Develop a NAPPO document on validation of the specified risk periods for Asian gypsy moth in countries of origin.

2. *Biological Control*: Develop a Spanish module on preparing a petition for first release of entomophagous biological control agents, based on the English module prepared in 2016.

3. *Electronic Phytosanitary Certification*: Provide assistance and technical support to the IPPC ePhyto Steering Group.

4. *Forestry*: Work to finalize a NAPPO standard on the potential use of systems approaches to manage pest risks associated with the movement of wood, taking into account comments received from April to June 2017 country consultation period.

5. *Grains*: Develop a NAPPO discussion document on a harmonized approach to prevent introduction and spread of Khapra beetle (*Trogoderma granarium*).

6. *Lymantriids*: Develop a NAPPO Science and Technology paper on the risks associated with Lymantriids of potential concern to the NAPPO region.

7. *Phytosanitary Alert System (PAS)*: Manage the NAPPO pest reporting system.

8. *Advancing key phytosanitary concepts*: (a) Review stakeholder input on topic of diversion from intended use; (b) Finalize a discussion document on "interpretation of existing guidance" in standards on evaluation of the likelihood of establishment component of a pest risk analysis (PRA) for quarantine pests, taking into account comments received from April to May 2017 country consultation period; and (c) Organize an international

symposium on inspection sampling to support proper and harmonized implementation of ISPM 23: Guidelines for Inspection and ISPM 31: Methodologies for sampling of consignments in the NAPPO region and internationally. NAPPO, with substantial APHIS-PPQ support, welcomed 122 participants from 27 countries to the first-ever International Symposium for Risk-Based Sampling, held from June 16–21, 2017.

9. *Potato*: Continue to review RSPM 3 to align it with ISPM 33: Pest free potato (*Solanum* sp.) micropropagative material and minitubers for international trade.

10. *Seeds*: Finalize NAPPO discussion document on harmonized criteria for evaluating phytosanitary seed treatments, taking into account comments received from April to May 2017 country consultation period.

11. *Foundation and Procedure documents*: Update various foundation or procedure documents.

The PPQ Assistant Deputy Administrator, as the official U.S. delegate to NAPPO, intends to participate in the adoption of these regional plant health standards and projects, including the work described above, once they are completed and ready for such consideration.

The information in this notice contains all the information available to us on NAPPO standards under development or consideration. For updates on meeting times and for information on the expert groups that may become available following publication of this notice, visit the NAPPO Web site or contact Ms. Patricia Abad (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** above). PPQ actively works to achieve broad participation by States, industry, and other stakeholders in the development and use of international and regional plant health standards. Plant health stakeholders are strongly encouraged to comment on draft standards, documents, and specifications. APHIS posts links to draft standards on the Internet as they become available and provides information on the due dates for comments.⁵ Additional information on NAPPO standards (including the NAPPO Work Program, standard setting process, and adopted standards) is available on the NAPPO Web site.⁶ Information on official U.S. participation in NAPPO activities,

including U.S. positions on standards being considered, may also be obtained from Ms. Abad. Those wishing to provide comments on any of the topics being addressed in the NAPPO work program may do so at any time by responding to this notice (see **ADDRESSES** above) or by transmitting comments through Ms. Abad.

Done in Washington, DC, this 18th day of September 2017.

Jere L. Dick,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–20119 Filed 9–20–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0060]

Addition of Zimbabwe to the List of Regions Affected by Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that we are adding Zimbabwe to the list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service considers to be affected by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). This action follows our imposition of HPAI-related restrictions on avian commodities originating from or transiting Zimbabwe as a result of the confirmation of HPAI in Zimbabwe.

DATES: Zimbabwe was added to the list of regions under temporary restrictions on June 1, 2017. Zimbabwe is added to the list of regions considered to be affected by HPAI as of September 21, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Javier Vargas, Import Risk Analyst, National Import Export Services, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737; (301) 851–3300; Javier.Vargas@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals and animal products into the United States to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases, including Newcastle disease and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The regulations prohibit or restrict the importation of live poultry, poultry meat, and other poultry products from regions where these diseases are considered to exist.

⁴ NAPPO Work Program: <http://nappo.org/english/710/status-current-nappo-projects/>.

⁵ For more information on the NAPPO draft RSPM consultation: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/sa_international/sa_phytostandards/ct_draft_standards.

⁶ NAPPO Web site: <http://nappo.org/>.

Section 94.6 of part 94 of the regulations contains requirements governing the importation into the United States of carcasses, meat, parts or products of carcasses, and eggs (other than hatching eggs) of poultry, game birds, or other birds from regions of the world where HPAI exists or is reasonably believed to exist. HPAI is an extremely infectious and potentially fatal form of avian influenza in birds and poultry that, once established, can spread rapidly from flock to flock. A list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) considers affected with HPAI of any subtype is maintained on the APHIS Web site at https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/ct_animal_disease_status.

APHIS receives notice of HPAI outbreaks from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable. On June 1, 2017, the veterinary authorities of Zimbabwe reported to the OIE the confirmation of a highly pathogenic H5N8 strain of avian influenza in the Province of Mashonaland East that affected a commercial poultry breeding farm for broilers and layers with a total census of approximately 2 million birds.

In response to that outbreak, APHIS placed restrictions on the importation of poultry, commercial birds, other types of birds (research, performing), ratites, any avian hatching eggs, unprocessed avian products and byproducts, and certain fresh poultry products from Zimbabwe to mitigate risk of HPAI introduction into the United States. Those restrictions went into effect on June 1, 2017. With the publication of this notice, we are adding Zimbabwe to the list of regions APHIS considers affected with HPAI of any subtype.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 450, 7701–7772, 7781–7786, and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 18th day of September 2017.

Jere L. Dick,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–20120 Filed 9–20–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Information Collection Activity; Comment Request

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) invites comments on this information collection for which RUS intends to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by November 20, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Thomas Dickson, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., STOP 1522, Room 5164, South Building, Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 690–4492. Fax: (202) 720–8435 or email Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies an information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB for extension.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed 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 the burden of the collection including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (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. Comments may be sent to: Thomas Dickson, Acting Director, Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 1522, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250–1522. Telephone: (202) 690–4493, Fax: (202)

720–8435. Email: Thomas.Dickson@wdc.usda.gov.

Title: 7 CFR 1726, Electric System Construction Policies and Procedures.

OMB Control Number: 0572–0107.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: In order to facilitate the programmatic interest of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, 7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.* (RE Act), and, in order to assure that loans made or guaranteed by RUS are adequately secured, RUS, as a secured lender, has established certain standards and specifications for materials, equipment, and construction of electric systems. The use of standard forms, construction contracts, and procurement procedures helps assure that appropriate standards and specification are maintained, that RUS' loan security is not adversely affected, and the loan and loan guarantee funds are used effectively and for the intended purposes. The list of forms and corresponding purposes for this information collection are as follows:

1. RUS Form 168b, Contractor's Bond

This form is used to provide a surety bond for contracts on RUS Forms 200, 257, 786, 790, & 830.

2. RUS Form 168c, Contractor's Bond (less than \$1 million)

This form is used to provide a surety bond in lieu of RUS Form 168b, when contractor's surety has accepted a small business administration guarantee.

3. RUS Form 187, Certificate of Completion-Contract Construction

This form is used for the closeout of RUS Forms 200, 257, 786, and 830.

4. RUS Form 198, Equipment Contract

This form is used for equipment purchases.

5. RUS Form 200, Construction Contract-Generating

This form is used for generating plant construction or for the furnishing and installation of major items of equipment.

6. RUS Form 213, Certificate ("Buy American")

This form is used to document compliance with the "Buy American" requirement.

7. RUS Form 224, Waiver and Release of Lien

This form is used by subcontractors to provide a release of lien in connection with the closeout of RUS Forms 198, 200, 257, 786, 790, and 830.

8. RUS Form 231, Certificate of Contractor

This form is used for the closeout of RUS Forms 198, 200, 257, 786, and 830.