

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

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket No. AMS-LPS-17-0046]

United States Standards for Grades of Pork Carcasses

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is reopening the comment period on the notice requesting comments on revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Pork Carcasses (pork standards) published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017. The comment period for this notice closed on December 22, 2017. The revisions are intended to modernize the standards and meet stakeholder demands by segregating the population of commodity pork products into uniform groups (of similar quality, value, etc.) that can facilitate the production and marketing of pork and deliver certain eating expectations for the consumer.

DATES: Comments on the notice published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017, must be received by March 19, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments electronically at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Written comments should be sent to: Pork Carcass Revisions, Standardization Branch, Quality Assessment Division; Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 3932-S, STOP 0258, Washington, DC 20250-0258. Comments may also be emailed to porkcarcassrevisions@ams.usda.gov. All comments should reference docket number AMS-LPS-17-0046, the date of submission, the page

numbers of this issue, and the October 23, 2017, issue of the *Federal Register*. All comments received will be posted without change, including any personal information provided, and they will be made available for public inspection at the above physical address during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bucky Gwartney, International Marketing Specialist, Standardization Branch, Quality Assessment Division, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 3932-S, STOP 0258, Washington, DC 20250-0258; phone (202) 720-1424; or via email at Bucky.Gwartney@ams.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A notice was published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017, requesting comments on revisions to the pork standards. The 60-day comment period provided in the notice closed on December 22, 2017. Trade organizations submitted comments requesting a 60-day extension to enable industry stakeholders more time to evaluate the proposed changes and to submit comments. Therefore, AMS is reopening the comment period for the notice until March 19, 2018. AMS is reopening the public comment period to ensure that interested persons have sufficient time to review and comment on the notice.

Dated: January 10, 2018.

Bruce Summers,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-00627 Filed 1-16-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2017-0090]

Addition of the Philippines 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 the Philippines 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 the Philippines as a result of the confirmation of HPAI in the Philippines.

DATES: The Philippines was added to the list of regions under temporary restrictions on August 16, 2017. The Philippines is added to the list of regions considered to be affected by HPAI as of January 17, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Ingrid Kotowski, Regionalization Evaluation Services, National Import Export Services, VS, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive Suite 200, Raleigh, NC, 27606; (919) 855-7732; Ingrid.Kotowski@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.

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 website 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 August 11, 2017, the veterinary authorities of the Philippines reported to the OIE that

HPAI occurrence in that country was confirmed on August 7, 2017. Subsequent to that report, and after confirming that the HPAI occurred in commercial birds or poultry, 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 the Philippines to mitigate risk of HPAI introduction into the United States. Those restrictions went into effect on August 7, 2017, the reported date of confirmation of the HPAI occurrence in the Philippines. With the publication of this notice, we are adding the Philippines 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 10th day of January 2018.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2018–00696 Filed 1–16–18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0106]

Notice of Request for Revision to and Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Specimen Submission

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request a revision to and extension of approval of an information collection associated with livestock disease surveillance programs.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before March 19, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#/>!
- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No.

APHIS–2017–0106, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A–03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/#/>! *docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0106* or in our reading room, which is located in Room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 7997039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information regarding livestock disease surveillance programs, contact Ms. Lori Anderson, Chief of Staff, STAS, VS, APHIS, 1920 Dayton Ave., Ames, IA 50010; (515) 337–7405. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Kimberly Hardy, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 851–2483.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Specimen Submission.

OMB Control Number: 0579–0090.

Type of Request: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*) provides the Secretary of Agriculture broad authority to prohibit or restrict, through orders and regulations, the importation or entry and interstate movement of any animal, article, or means of conveyance if the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) determines that the prohibition or restriction is necessary to prevent the introduction or spread of any pest or disease of livestock within the United States.

Disease prevention is the most effective method for maintaining a healthy animal population and for enhancing the United States' ability to globally compete in the trade of animals and animal products. However, animal disease prevention cannot be accomplished without the existence of an effective disease surveillance program, which is conducted by the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Veterinary Services (VS).

The animal disease surveillance program is based on information submitted on the Specimen Submission form and the continuation sheets, as well as equivalent sources. VS forms are critical to VS' mission. They are

routinely used whenever specimens (such as blood, milk, tissue, or urine) from any animal (such as cattle, swine, sheep, goats, horses, and poultry) are submitted to the National Veterinary Services Laboratories for disease testing. If the information was not collected or collected less frequently, APHIS would not have the critical information necessary to effectively operate a disease surveillance program and identify the animals and herds from which the specimens were taken, allowing effective disease prevention and eradication.

An additional form that APHIS uses is the Parasite Submission form. This form is used by the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program and the National Tick Surveillance Program to identify the individuals submitting tick samples and the animal sources of those samples.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of these information collection activities, as described, for an additional 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. APHIS needs this outside input to help accomplish the following:

- (1) Evaluate 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) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;
- (3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and
- (4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, (such as through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques, *e.g.*, permitting electronic submission of responses.)

Estimate of Burden: The public burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.31 hours per response.

Respondents: State veterinarians and other State personnel who are qualified and authorized to collect and submit specimens for laboratory analysis, accredited veterinarians, private veterinarians, animal health technicians, herd owners, private laboratories, and research institutions.

Estimated Annual Number of Respondents: 1,773.

Estimated Annual Number of Responses per Respondent: 15.