

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

[Docket Number: USDA–2020–0002]

### Notice of Request for Public Comment on Updates to Technical Guidelines for Quantifying Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions and Carbon Sequestration at the Entity-Scale for Agriculture and Forestry

**AGENCY:** Office of the Chief Economist, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**ACTION:** Request for public comment.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with Section 2709 of the 2008 Farm Bill, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed technical guidelines and science-based methods to quantify greenhouse gas sources and sinks from the agriculture and forest sectors at the entity-scale. In the report, *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory*, USDA stated it intends to periodically update the technical guidelines based on newly available data and methodologies, and an update is planned for completion within the next 3 years. As we prepare the updated report, USDA is seeking input from the public to ensure that relevant information and data are considered, improve the rigor of the guidelines, and enhance the usability of the methods in the updated technical guidelines. USDA is interested in your comments in response to the numbered topics, categories, and questions shown in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time by April 20, 2020. Comments received after the posted deadline may not be considered, regardless of postmark.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments submitted in response to this notice may be submitted online Via the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to [http://](http://www.regulations.gov)

[www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and search for the Docket number USDA–2020–0002.

Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

All comments received will be posted without change and publicly available on [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** William Hohenstein, Director, USDA Office of Energy and Environmental Policy, telephone: 202–720–6698 Email: [William.hohenstein@usda.gov](mailto:William.hohenstein@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The report *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory* was developed in response to the 2008 Farm Bill, Section 2709, which states that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) shall prepare technical guidelines that outline science-based methods to measure the carbon benefits from conservation and land management activities. The guidelines were intended for use with landowners, nongovernmental organizations, and other groups assessing increases and decreases in greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration associated with changes in land management.

Notice of the project was announced in the **Federal Register** in February 2011 (76 FR 9534, February 18, 2011). The resulting report was published in 2014 as *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory*, Technical Bulletin Number 1939, Office of the Chief Economist, USDA, Washington, DC. The report and associated materials, including an erratum published in 2019, are available at: [https://www.usda.gov/oce/climate\\_change/estimation.htm](https://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/estimation.htm). The methods have also been implemented in the online tool COMET-Farm (<http://cometfarm.nrel.colostate.edu/>), a joint project of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Colorado State University.

As outlined in the report, USDA intends to periodically update the technical guidelines based on newly available data and methodologies. An update of *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Agriculture and Forestry: Methods for Entity-Scale Inventory* is planned for completion within the next 3 years. The updated report is expected to undergo both expert review and public comment.

Updates to the technical guidelines will be focused on croplands, grazing

lands, and animal production systems. Comments on managed wetland systems, forest systems, and land use change are also welcome. In addition to these sectors, USDA is considering adding a section on specialty crop systems.

USDA is currently seeking input from the public to ensure that relevant information and data are considered, improve the rigor of the guidelines, and enhance the usability of the methods in the updated technical guidelines. USDA is interested in your comments in response to the following:

1. Information on methods, practices, and technologies for quantification of greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration at the entity-scale for agriculture.

1a. Information on methods, practices, and technologies currently included in the report, including new information on emission factors and default values. Please indicate the relevant chapter and page number(s) of the technical guidelines.

1b. Information on practices and technologies currently not included in the report. Are there additional practices and technologies for which the science and data are clear, and which should be addressed in the technical guidelines? Are estimation methods available for these technologies and practices? Please provide details.

1c. Information on promising technologies and practices for greenhouse gas mitigation and/or quantification which may become viable in the future.

2. Information to improve the rigor of the guidelines.

2a. Are there datasets that could be used to test and validate current and future methods?

2b. Are there findings that could reduce the uncertainty of current and future methods?

3. Information to improve the usability of the methods.

3a. How can USDA improve the usability of the technical guidelines for its customers?

3b. What specific changes or improvements could be made to the COMET-Farm online tool to improve the implementation of the USDA technical guidelines?

Please provide information including citations and/or contact details for the

correspondent to the address listed above.

**Robert Johansson,**  
Chief Economist.

[FR Doc. 2020-04385 Filed 3-3-20; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-GL-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement

#### Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

**AGENCY:** Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**ACTION:** Announcement of public meeting of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers (ACBFR).

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and rules and regulations of the USDA, the Office of Partnership and Public Engagement (OPPE) announces a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers (ACBFR). The purpose of the ACBFR meeting is to deliberate upon matters concerning beginning farmers and ranchers that provide advice and recommendations through OPPE for the Secretary.

During this public meeting, the ACBFR will deliberate upon matters focused on, including but not limited to, the following: (A) The development of the program of coordinated assistance to qualified beginning farmers and ranchers under section 309(i) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act; (B) methods of maximizing the number of new farming and ranching opportunities created through the program; (C) methods of encouraging States to participate in the program; (D) the administration of the program; and (E) other methods of creating new farming or ranching opportunities.

The most up-to-date agenda details and documents will be made available to the public before and after the meeting at: <https://www.outreach.usda.gov/committees/ACBFR.htm>.

**DATES:** The ACBFR meeting will be held on Monday, March 16, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time Zone).

**ADDRESSES:**

(a) *Attendance in-person:* Omni Louisville Hotel, Olmstead Ballroom 4, 400 S 2nd Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202

(b) *Public Call Information—Listen Only:* Dial: 866-816-7252 Conference ID: 6188761

(c) *Comments may be sent to:*  
[ACBeginningFarmersandRanchers@usda.gov](mailto:ACBeginningFarmersandRanchers@usda.gov)

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Maria Goldberg, OPPE, 202-720-6350, or email: [maria.goldberg@usda.gov](mailto:maria.goldberg@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Members of the public are entitled to make comments during the public comment session. Commenters will be allowed a maximum of three minutes and will be scheduled on a first-come basis. If the number of persons requesting to speak is greater than what can be reasonably accommodated during the scheduled open public meeting timeframe; written comments may be submitted.

Written comments for the Committee's consideration may be submitted to Ms. Maria Goldberg, Designated Federal Officer, USDA OPPE, 1400 Independence Avenue, Room 533-A, Washington, DC 20250-0170; Fax (202) 720-7136; or email: [ACBeginningFarmersandRanchers@usda.gov](mailto:ACBeginningFarmersandRanchers@usda.gov). Written comments must be received by OPPE within 30 days after the scheduled meeting.

*Meeting Accommodations:* USDA is committed to ensuring that all persons are included in our programs and events. If you are a person with a disability and require reasonable accommodations to participate in this meeting, please contact Maria Goldberg, 202-720-6350 or email: [maria.goldberg@usda.gov](mailto:maria.goldberg@usda.gov).

Dated: February 27, 2020.

**Cikena V. Reid,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

[FR Doc. 2020-04383 Filed 3-3-20; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

#### Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) for Fiscal Year 2020

**AGENCY:** Rural Housing Service.

**ACTION:** Notice of solicitation of applications.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Housing Service (Agency), an Agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), announces the acceptance of applications under the Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) program. Applicants must provide matching funds in an amount at least equal to the Federal grant. These

grants will be made to qualified intermediary organizations that will provide financial and technical assistance to recipients to develop their capacity and ability to undertake projects related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development that will support the community.

This Notice announces that the Agency is accepting fiscal year (FY) 2020 applications for the RCDI program. Successful applications will be selected by the Agency for funding and subsequently awarded from funds appropriated for the RCDI program. The Agency will publish the amount of funding on its website at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/notices-solicitation-applications-nosas>.

**DATES:** Completed applications must be submitted on paper or electronically according to the following deadlines:

The Agency must receive a paper application by 4 p.m. local time, May 18, 2020. Electronic applications must be submitted via [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) by Midnight Eastern time on May 13, 2020. The application dates and times are firm. The Agency will not consider any application received after the deadline. Applicants intending to mail applications must provide sufficient time to permit delivery on or before the closing deadline date and time. Acceptance by the United States Postal Service or private mailer does not constitute delivery. Facsimile (FAX), electronic mail, and postage due applications will not be accepted.

**ADDRESSES:** Entities wishing to apply for assistance may download the application documents and requirements delineated in this Notice from the RCDI website: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>.

Application information for electronic submissions may be found at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Applicants may also request paper application packages from the Rural Development office in their state. A list of Rural Development State offices contacts can be found via [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Rural Development office for the state in which the applicant is located. A list of Rural Development State Office contacts is provided at the following link: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF\\_State\\_Office\\_Contacts.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/files/CF_State_Office_Contacts.pdf).