

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

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 96-068-1]

International Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-Setting Activities

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and solicitation of comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with legislation implementing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade, we are informing the public of international standard-setting activities of the Office International des Epizooties and the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention, and we are soliciting public comment on the standards to be considered.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 96-068-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state in your letter that your comments refer to Docket No. 96-068-1, and state the name of the committee or working group to which your comments are addressed. Comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Douglas Barnett, Assistant Director, International Activities, International Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 67, Riverdale, MD 20737-1233, (301)

734-8892; or e-mail Dbarnett@aphis.usda.gov. The public may also contact Mr. John Greifer, Trade Support Team, International Services, APHIS, room 1128, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250, (202) 720-7677; or e-mail jgreifer@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Legislation implementing the Uruguay Round of the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (the Uruguay Round Agreements Act) was signed into law (Pub. L. 103-465) by the President on December 8, 1994. The Uruguay Round Agreements Act amended title IV of the Trade Agreements Act of 1979 (19 U.S.C. 2531 *et seq.*) by adding a new subtitle F, "International Standard-Setting Activities." Subtitle F requires the President to designate an agency to be responsible for informing the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting activities of each international standard-setting organization. The designated agency must inform the public by publishing a notice in the Federal Register, which provides the following information: (1) The sanitary or phytosanitary standards under consideration or planned for consideration by the international standard-setting organization; and (2) for each sanitary or phytosanitary standard specified, a description of the consideration or planned consideration of the standard; whether the United States is participating or plans to participate in the consideration of the standard; the agenda for United States participation, if any; and the agency responsible for representing the United States with respect to the standard.

Subtitle F defines "international standard" as a standard, guideline, or recommendation: (1) Adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission regarding food safety; (2) developed under the auspices of the International Office of Epizootics regarding animal health and zoonoses; (3) developed under the auspices of the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention in cooperation with the North American Plant Protection Organization regarding plant health; or (4) established by or developed under any other international organization agreed to by the member countries of the North American Free Trade Agreement or by member countries of the World Trade Organization.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) was created in 1962 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization. It is the major international organization for encouraging international trade in food and protecting the health and economic interests of consumers.

The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) was created in Paris, France, in 1924, with the signing of an international agreement by 28 countries. Today, 143 countries are members. The OIE facilitates intergovernmental cooperation to prevent the spread of contagious diseases in animals, assists in the development of animal production through improved health information, and shares scientific progress among its members. The OIE provides the major international forum for discussion and agreement on recommendations and proposals on topics such as disease control, technical cooperation, trade standards, and the exchange of research and disease information.

The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) was established within the FAO in 1952 in response to demands from members for development of global standards for plant quarantine. The IPPC works with plant protection organizations at national and regional levels, including the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), to harmonize plant quarantine activities worldwide, facilitate the dissemination of phytosanitary information, strengthen international cooperation, and support technical assistance to developing countries.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) was established on January 1, 1995, as the common international institution for the conduct of trade relations among the members in matters related to the Uruguay Round Agreements. The WTO is the successor organization for the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade. U.S. membership in the WTO was approved by Congress when it enacted the Uruguay Round Agreements Act.

The President, pursuant to Proclamation No. 6780 of March 23, 1995 (60 FR 15845), designated the Secretary of Agriculture as the official responsible for informing the public of the sanitary and phytosanitary standard-

setting activities of each international standard-setting organization. This responsibility has been delegated to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for Codex activities, and to the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for OIE and IPPC activities. FSIS published a notice in the Federal Register on June 4, 1996 (61 FR 28132), informing the public of sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting activities for Codex.

Accordingly, in this notice, APHIS announces the following OIE and IPPC (including NAPPO) activities related to international standards. The United States is a participant in each of the following activities and APHIS is the agency responsible for representing the United States with respect to these standards. In some cases, working groups and committees have not yet set meeting dates and places or determined specific standards to be discussed. Also, because working groups and the issues they address are not static, this list may not present a complete picture of the OIE and IPPC sanitary and phytosanitary standard-setting activities during the coming year.

1. Committee/Working Group: Standards Commission of the OIE.

Agency Participant: Dr. James Pearson.

General Purpose: Establish standards for methods of diagnosing animal disease and testing biologics used for control programs.

Dates of Meetings: September 10–11, 1996.

Location of Meetings: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Review of OIE reference laboratories; diagnostic test standardization; OIE reference sera; laboratory quality assurance; review of new edition of OIE *Manual of Standards of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines*; and provide advice to OIE Animal Health Code Commission.

2. Committee/Working Group: OIE General Session.

Agency Participant(s): Dr. Joan Arnoldi (delegate); Dr. Alex Thiermann (alternate delegate and coordinator).

General Purpose: Establish and adopt international standards dealing with animal health.

Date of Meeting: May 1997.

Location of Meeting: Paris, France.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Animal health standards as they relate to trade; including risk assessment standards (including criteria for evaluating veterinary infrastructure) and regionalization.

3. Committee/Working Group: IPPC/ Foreign Agricultural Organization Working Group on Pest Risk Analysis.
Agency Participant: Mr. Richard Orr.
General Purpose: Development of international standards for pest risk analysis.

Date of Meeting: To be announced.

Location of Meeting: To be announced.

Major Discussion/Agenda: To be announced.

4. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Biological Control Committee.

Agency Participant: Dr. Dale Meyerdirk.

General Purpose: Facilitate cooperation among NAPPO member countries regarding biological control issues, through information exchange, coordination, and harmonization of recommendations, regulations, and guidelines.

Date of Meeting: February 1997.

Location of Meeting: Mexico City, Mexico.

Major Discussion/Agenda: To develop standard guidelines for the release of exotic biological control agents for the control of weed pests.

5. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Fruit Tree and Grapevine Nursery Stock Certification Standards Panel.

Agency Participant: Dr. Joseph Foster.

General Purpose: Set minimum standards for pathogen testing and propagation of fruit trees and grapevines so certified nursery stock can be shipped safely throughout North America.

Date of Meeting: To be announced.

Location of Meeting: Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Pathogen lists for each crop; and certification schemes for each crop.

6. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Working Group.

Agency Participant: Mr. Marshall Kirby.

General Purpose: Provide general leadership, direction, and support to NAPPO activities.

Dates of Meetings: October 1996; January and April 1997.

Locations of Meetings: To be announced.

Major Discussion/Agenda: All new and ongoing NAPPO business, including standards.

7. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Ad Hoc Irradiation Panel.

Agency Participant: Mr. Robert Griffin.

General Purpose: Develop NAPPO standards for the application of irradiation to phytosanitary problems.

Date of Meeting: October 1996.

Location of Meeting: Veracruz, Mexico.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Continuing development of trilateral policy.

8. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Pest Risk Analysis Panel.

Agency Participant: Dr. Matthew Royer.

General Purpose: To implement NAPPO pest risk analysis standard.

Date of Meeting: October 1996.

Location of Meeting: Veracruz, Mexico.

Major Discussion/Agenda: To be announced.

9. Committee/Working Group: NAPPO Executive Committee.

Agency Participant: Mr. Alfred Elder.

General Purpose: To harmonize plant quarantine regulations and import requirements among Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

Dates of Meetings: October 1996 and April 1997.

Locations of Meetings: To be announced.

Major Discussion/Agenda: Standards development process; area freedom standard; pest surveillance/monitoring standard; and pest risk analysis standard.

Comments on standards being considered or to be considered by any of the committees or working groups listed above may be sent to us as directed under the heading **ADDRESSES**.

Done in Washington, DC, this 16th day of September 1996.

Terry L. Medley,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 96–24211 Filed 9–19–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

Forest Service

Paradise Project, Boise National Forest, Idaho

AGENCY: Forest Services, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare Environmental Impact Statement.

SUMMARY: The Mountain Home Ranger District of the Boise National Forest will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for an integrated resource management project in the Paradise project area, located immediately west of the South Fork Boise River and approximately 2 miles south of Featherville, Idaho. Access is via Forest Development Road (FDR) 183. The project area encompasses approximately 2,800 acres of National Forest System land and is located 60 road miles northeast of Mountain Home and about 100 road miles east of Boise, Idaho.

The agency invites written comments and suggestions on the scope of the