

# 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. 94-116-6]

#### Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection and Request for Approval of a New Information Collection

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request an extension of a currently approved information collection and the approval of a new information collection in support of a final rule that allows fresh Hass avocado fruit from Michoacan, Mexico, to be imported into certain areas of the United States under certain conditions.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by June 2, 1997 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments regarding the accuracy of burden estimate, ways to minimize the burden (such as the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology), or any other aspect of this collection of information to: Docket No. 94-116-6, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please send an original and three copies, and state that your comments refer to Docket 94-116-6. 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:** For information regarding the final rule for Hass avocados from Michoacan, Mexico, contact Mr. Ronald Campbell, Staff Officer, Port Operations, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 139, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236, (301) 734-6799. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Cathy McDuffie, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 734-5190.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Importation of Fresh Hass Avocado Fruit Grown in Michoacan, Mexico.

*OMB Number:* 0579-0049.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* April 30, 1997.

*Type of Request:* Extension of a currently approved information collection; approval of a new information collection.

*Abstract:* On February 5, 1997, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published a final rule in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 5293-5315, Docket No. 94-116-5) amending 7 CFR 319.56 to allow fresh Hass avocado fruit from Michoacan, Mexico, to be imported into certain areas of the United States under certain conditions. Avocados destined for the United States must be grown only in approved orchards in approved municipalities in Michoacan, Mexico. The conditions to which the importation of fresh Hass avocado fruit will be subject (including pest surveys and pest risk-reducing cultural practices, packinghouse procedures, inspection and shipping procedures, and restrictions on the time of year shipments may enter the United States) will reduce, to an insignificant level, the risk that certain exotic plant pests from Mexico will be introduced into the United States.

The implementation of this rule will require us to engage in certain information collection activities. We are seeking Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to employ these information collection activities in connection with this program.

Nine of the 10 information collections described below are currently in use in other program areas and have received OMB approval for use in those programs. The remaining collection, i.e.,

a sticker identification system to be used in connection with Mexican avocado imports, is a new information collection requirement.

*Application for Permit:* A U.S. importer who wishes to import fresh Hass avocado fruit to the United States must first apply for a permit from APHIS. The permit specifies a set of conditions under which the fruit can be brought into the United States.

*Trust Fund Agreement:* Avocados can only be imported into the United States after the Mexican Avocado Industry Association (which represents the Mexican avocado growers, packers, and exporters) completes a trust fund agreement with APHIS for that shipping season. In this document, the Mexican Avocado Industry Association agrees to pay, in advance, for all estimated costs that we expect to incur via our participation in this program.

*Phytosanitary Certificate:* Avocados from Michoacan, Mexico, will require a phytosanitary inspection certificate completed by Mexican plant health officials. This document certifies that the avocados originated from an area free of certain agricultural pests.

*Sticker With Registration Numbers:* Packinghouse personnel in Mexico must label each avocado with a sticker that bears the registration number of the packinghouse. This identification system will facilitate any traceback investigations we may need to conduct.

*Marking Requirements:* Avocados destined for the United States must be packed in boxes and clearly marked by packinghouse personnel with the identity of the grower, packinghouse, and exporter, and a statement that the avocados may be distributed only in specific States within the United States. This identification system will facilitate any traceback investigations we may need to conduct and will also ensure that the avocados are distributed only in those approved States listed in the regulations.

*Annual Work Plan:* The Mexican Ministry of Agriculture must provide an annual work plan to us that details the activities and actions that will be implemented in order to meet our requirements concerning the exportation of fresh Hass avocado fruit to the United States.

*Pest Survey:* Municipalities and orchards participating in this program must be surveyed via visual inspection

and trapping for avocado pests and fruit flies by Mexican plant health officials.

**Registration:** Growers and packinghouse operators participating in this program must register with the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture's avocado export program. Registration ensures that participating orchards and packinghouses are adhering to a specific set of APHIS requirements.

**Infestation Information:** If certain plant pests are detected in a participating orchard, packinghouse, or municipality, the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture must supply us with information concerning the circumstances of the infestation and the pest risk mitigation measures that are being implemented.

**Seals:** Boxes of avocados must be placed in a refrigerated truck or refrigerated container and remain there while in transit through Mexico to the port of first arrival in the United States. Before leaving the packinghouse, a representative from the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture must secure the truck or container with a seal that must remain unbroken until arriving in the United States.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning these information collection activities. We need this outside input to help us:

(1) Evaluate whether the information collection is necessary for the proper performance of our agency's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the information collection, 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 information collection on those who are to respond, through the use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other collection technologies, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

**Estimate of burden:** Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.0002 hours per response.

**Respondents:** U.S. importers, growers and packinghouse operators in Mexico, Mexican plant protection authorities.

**Estimated number of respondents:** 157.

**Estimated number of responses per respondent:** 51,130.

**Estimated total annual burden on respondents:** 3,098.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 27th day of March 1997.

**Donald W. Luchsinger,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-8174 Filed 3-31-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

## **Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration**

### **Opportunity for Designation in the Minot (ND), Southern Illinois (IL), and Tri-State (OH) Areas**

**AGENCY:** Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The United States Grain Standards Act, as amended (Act), provides that official agency designations will end not later than triennially and may be renewed. The designations of Minot Grain Inspection, Inc. (Minot), Southern Illinois Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (Southern Illinois), and Tri-State Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (Tri-State), will end September 30, 1997, according to the Act. GIPSA is asking persons interested in providing official services in the Minot, Southern Illinois, and Tri-State areas to submit an application for designation.

**DATES:** Applications must be postmarked or sent by telecopier (FAX) on or before April 30, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications must be submitted to USDA, GIPSA, Janet M. Hart, Chief, Review Branch, Compliance Division, STOP 3604, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-3604.

Applications may be submitted by FAX on 202-690-2755. If an application is submitted by FAX, GIPSA reserves the right to request an original application. All applications will be made available for public inspection at this address located at 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., during regular business hours.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Janet M. Hart, telephone 202-720-8525.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866 and Departmental Regulation 1512-1; therefore, the Executive Order and Departmental Regulation do not apply to this action.

Section 7(f)(1) of the Act authorizes GIPSA's Administrator to designate a

qualified applicant to provide official services in a specified area after determining that the applicant is better able than any other applicant to provide such official services. GIPSA designated Minot, main office located in Minot, North Dakota; Southern Illinois, main office located in O'Fallon, Illinois; and Tri-State, main office located in Cincinnati, Ohio, to provide official inspection services under the Act on October 1, 1994.

Section 7(g)(1) of the Act provides that designations of official agencies shall end not later than triennially and may be renewed according to the criteria and procedures prescribed in Section 7(f) of the Act. The designations of Minot, Southern Illinois, and Tri-State end on September 30, 1997, according to the Act.

Pursuant to Section 7(f)(2) of the Act, the following geographic area, in the State of North Dakota, is assigned to Minot.

Bounded on the North by the North Dakota State line east to State Route 14;

Bounded on the East by State Route 14 south to State Route 5; State Route 5 east to State Route 60; State Route 60 southeast to State Route 3; State Route 3 south to State Route 200;

Bounded on the South by State Route 200 west to State Route 41; State Route 41 south to U.S. Route 83; U.S. Route 83 northwest to State Route 200; State Route 200 west to U.S. Route 85; U.S. Route 85 south to Interstate 94; Interstate 94 west to the North Dakota State line; and

Bounded on the West by the North Dakota State line.

The following grain elevators, located outside of the above contiguous geographic area, are part of this geographic area assignment: Harvey Farmers Elevator, Harvey, Wells County (located inside Grand Forks Grain Inspection Department, Inc.'s, area); and Benson Quinn Company, Underwood, and Missouri Valley Grain Company, Washburn, all in McLean County (located inside Grain Inspection, Inc.'s, area).

Pursuant to Section 7(f)(2) of the Act, the following geographic area, in the State of Illinois, is assigned to Southern Illinois.

Bounded on the East by the eastern Cumberland County line; the eastern Jasper County line south to State Route 33; State Route 33 east-southeast to the Indiana-Illinois State line; the Indiana-Illinois State line south to the southern Gallatin County line;

Bounded on the South by the southern Gallatin, Saline, and Williamson County lines; the southern Jackson County line west to U.S. Route