

Faust; Agricultural Research Service; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Room 338, Building 005, BARC-West; Beltsville, MD 20705; Telephone: (301) 504-6918; e-mail: rmf@ars.usda.gov.

C. Additional Information

The Biotechnology Risk Assessment Research Grants Program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.219. For reasons set forth in the final rule-related Notice to 7 CFR Part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29115, June 24, 1983), this Program is excluded from the scope of Executive Order No. 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials.

Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0022.

Done at Washington, D.C., on this 4th day of January, 2001.

Colien Hefferan,

Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

Edward B. Knipling,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Research Service.

[FR Doc. 01-1018 Filed 1-12-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Interim National Drought Council

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Interim National Drought Council meeting.

SUMMARY: The Interim National Drought Council (Interim Council) was established through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Its purpose is to coordinate activities between and among Federal Agencies, States, local governments, tribes and others. The first meeting of the Interim Council was held November 9, 2000. All meetings are open to the public; however, seating is limited and available on a first-come basis.

DATES: The Interim Council will meet on January 25, 2001, in Room 233 of the Hall of the States building located at 444 North Capitol Street, NW, in Washington, DC from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and then from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.. All times noted are Eastern Standard Time. This meeting will be devoted to revising the work plan and other Interim Council business.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Leona Dittus, Executive Director, Interim National Drought Council, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 6701-S, STOP 0501, Washington, D.C., 20250-0501 or telephone (202) 720-3168; FAX (202) 720-9688; internet leona.dittus@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the MOU is to establish a more comprehensive, integrated, coordinated approach toward reducing the impacts of drought through better preparedness, monitoring and prediction, risk management, and response to drought emergencies in the United States. The Interim Council will encourage cooperation and coordination between and among Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and others, relative to preparation for and response to serious drought emergencies. Activities of the Interim Council include providing coordination to: (a) Resolve drought related issues, (b) exchange information about lessons learned, and (c) improve public awareness of the need for drought planning and mitigation measures. The Interim Council is co-chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture or his designee, and a non-federal co-chair, selected from among the members who are not Federal officers or employees. Ms. Ane D. Deister, Executive Assistant to the General Manager, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, representing urban water interests, was selected as the non-federal co-chair at the Interim Council's organizational meeting. Administrative staff support essential to the execution of the Interim Council's responsibilities shall be provided by USDA. The Interim Council will continue in effect for 5 years or until Congress establishes a permanent National Drought Council.

If special accommodations are required, please contact Leona Dittus, at the address specified above, by COB January 22, 2001.

Signed at Washington, D.C., on January 10, 2001.

George Arredondo,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 01-1226 Filed 1-12-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Meeting on the Implementation of the United States Warehouse Act

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, Agriculture.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: To solicit comments and options for consideration in implementing the United States Warehouse Act of 2000 that was enacted on November 9, 2000 (USWA 2000), the Department of Agriculture (USDA) will conduct a public meeting.

The meeting is open to the public with attendance limited to space that will be available on a first come basis. All attendees are asked to be prepared to share information concerning their current and future e-commerce activities. Individuals who plan to attend and need special assistance, such as sign language interpretation or other reasonable accommodations should notify the contact person listed below in advance of the meeting. No registration is required and there is no fee to attend the public meeting.

DATES: The public meeting to present implementation options and to solicit oral comments will be held on January 23, 2001, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. E.S.T., in the Jefferson Auditorium of the U.S. Department of Agriculture South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, near the Smithsonian Metro Station.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Roger Hinkle, Chief, Licensing Authority Branch, Warehouse and Inventory Division, Farm Service Agency, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., STOP 0553, Washington DC 20250, telephone (202) 720-7433; e-mail: Roger_Hinkle@wdc.fsa.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The USWA 2000 was enacted on November 9, 2000, to replace the original United States Warehouse Act (USWA) that was enacted in 1916. USWA 2000 can be found online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/daco/uswamain/public-law-106-472.pdf. This statute was enacted to make Federal warehouse licensing and operations more relevant to today's agricultural marketing and financial systems. USWA 2000 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to promulgate regulations governing (1) The issuance and transfer of electronic warehouse receipts across State and international boundaries; (2) the manner in which electronic documents relating to the shipment, payment, and financing of the sale of agricultural products may be

issued or transferred, including transfers across State and international boundaries; and (3) the standardization of such electronic documents. This new paperless flow of agricultural commodities from the farm to the end-user will provide significant savings and efficiencies for producers, bankers, warehouse operators, and other affected parties across the nation and throughout the world, and will make U.S. agricultural more competitive in world markets.

Included in USWA 2000 were statutory deadlines for the issuance of proposed and final regulations, and the new statute provides that the current USWA that was enacted in 1916 expires no later than August 1, 2001.

Items that will be discussed in the subject meeting include, but are not limited to the following:

(1) What documents and transactions should USDA make available for e-commerce?

(2) Should USDA standardize criteria and formats for e-commerce concerning commodity warehousing? Financial and business records? Electronic data interchanges? Recordkeeping? Commodity merchandising?

(3) The regulations at 7 CFR 735.100 through 735.105 currently provide specifically for cotton Electronic Warehouse Receipts (EWR) and EWR provider requirements and standards. Should similar regulations and processes be adopted or expanded when including additional commodities? If not, what criteria and requirements should USDA establish for electronic warehouse commerce providers?

(4) What industry and business-based processes should USWA offer?

The agenda includes: (1) Presentation on options currently under consideration for implementing USWA 2000; (2) discussions on the implementation of electronic commerce authorized under USWA 2000, with opportunity for comment; and (3) discussions on warehouse issues, with opportunity for comment.

From 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., the discussion will concentrate on electronic commerce initiatives that are authorized by USWA 2000, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. the discussion will concentrate on the statutory changes that will affect warehousing issues. Each session will (1) outline options that are under consideration for implementing USWA 2000, and (2) provide attendees with an opportunity to present oral comments and submit written and oral questions. An official transcript will be prepared and will be available online at www.fsa.usda.gov/daco/uswamain/uswa2000-transcript.pdf. This official

transcript will also be available for public inspection in Room 5968, South Agriculture Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of regulatory information (braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

Comments: Written comments can be submitted in hard copy by mail to Roger Hinkle at the address shown above, or by fax at (202) 690-3123, or by e-mail to Roger_Hinkle@wdc.fsa.usda.gov. In order to ensure comments will be received before the meeting, submit written comments no later than January 15, 2001.

Signed at Washington, DC on January 8, 2001.

Carolyn B. Cooksie,

Acting Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 01-1020 Filed 1-12-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 00-053N]

Codex Alimentarius Commission: Meeting of the Codex Committees on Fats and Oils and Methods of Analysis and Sampling

AGENCY: Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of the Under Secretary for Food Safety, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) are sponsoring a public meeting on Wednesday, January 17, 2001. The objective of the public meeting is to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items and draft United States' positions that will be discussed at two upcoming Codex Committee meetings. The Under Secretary for Food Safety and FDA recognize the importance of providing interested parties the opportunity to obtain background information on the Sessions of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) and the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) and to address items on the agenda.

DATES: The public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17, 2001, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held in Room 1813, Federal Office Building 8, Food and Drug Administration, 200 C Street, SW., Washington, DC 20204. To receive copies of the documents referenced in this notice, contact the FSIS Docket Room, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102 Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20250-3700. The documents will also be accessible via the world wide web at the following address: <http://www.fao.org/waicent/faoinfo/economic/esn/codex>.

Submit one original and two copies of written comments to the FSIS Docket Room at the address above and reference docket number 00-053N. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection in the FSIS Docket Room between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patrick J. Clerkin, Assistant U.S. Manager for Codex, U.S. Codex Office, FSIS, Room 4861, South Agriculture Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250. Telephone (202) 205-7760; Fax (202) 720-3157. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Mr. Clerkin at the above number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) was established in 1962 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Codex is the major international organization for encouraging fair international trade in food and protecting the health and economic interests of consumers. Through adoption of food standards, codes of practice, and other guidelines developed by its committees, and by promoting their adoption and implementation by governments, Codex seeks to ensure that the world's food supply is sound, wholesome, free from adulteration, and correctly labeled.

The public meeting announced in this notice will provide information and an opportunity for public comment on two upcoming Codex Committee meetings:

- Seventeenth Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO) that will be held in London, United Kingdom, February 19-23, 2001.