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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

7 CFR Part 301

[Docket No. 02–096–4]

Oriental Fruit Fly; Removal of Quarantined Area

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are amending the Oriental fruit fly regulations by removing a portion of Orange County, CA, from the list of quarantined areas and by removing restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. This action is necessary to relieve restrictions that are no longer needed to prevent the spread of the Oriental fruit fly into noninfested areas of the United States. We have determined that the Oriental fruit fly has been eradicated from this portion of Orange County, CA, and that the quarantine and restrictions are no longer necessary. This portion of Orange County, CA, was the last remaining area in California quarantined for the Oriental fruit fly. Therefore, as a result of this action, there are no longer any areas in the continental United States quarantined for the Oriental fruit fly.

DATES: This interim rule was effective March 2, 2005. We will consider all comments that we receive on or before May 9, 2005.

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

- **EDOCKET:** Go to <http://www.epa.gov/feddoCKET> to submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the official public docket, and to access those documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once you have

entered EDOCKET, click on the “View Open APHIS Dockets” link to locate this document.

- **Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:** Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to Docket No. 02–096–4, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 02–096–4.

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for locating this docket and submitting comments.

Reading Room: You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room 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) 690–2817 before coming.

Other Information: You may view APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register** and related information on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Wayne Burnett, National Fruit Fly Program Manager, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 134, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–4387.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Oriental fruit fly, *Bactrocera dorsalis* (Hendel), is a destructive pest of citrus and other types of fruits, nuts, and vegetables. The short life cycle of the Oriental fruit fly allows rapid development of serious outbreaks that can cause severe economic losses. Heavy infestations can cause complete loss of crops.

The Oriental fruit fly regulations, contained in 7 CFR 301.93 through 301.93–10 (referred to below as the regulations), restrict the interstate movement of regulated articles from quarantined areas to prevent the spread of the Oriental fruit fly to noninfested areas of the United States. The regulations also designate soil and a large number of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and berries as regulated articles.

In an interim rule effective on September 14, 2004, and published in the **Federal Register** on September 20, 2004 (69 FR 56157–56159, Docket No. 02–096–3), we quarantined a portion of Orange County, CA, and restricted the interstate movement of regulated articles from the quarantined area.

Based on trapping surveys conducted by inspectors of California State and county agencies and by inspectors of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, we have determined that the Oriental fruit fly has been eradicated from the quarantined portion of this county. The last finding of Oriental fruit fly in the Orange County quarantined area was September 29, 2004.

Since then, no evidence of Oriental fruit fly infestation has been found in this area. Based on our experience, we have determined that sufficient time has passed without finding additional flies or other evidence of infestation to conclude that the Oriental fruit fly no longer exists in Orange County, CA. Therefore, we are removing the county from the list of quarantined areas in § 301.93–3(c). With the removal of Orange County, CA, from that list, there are no longer any areas in the continental United States quarantined for the Oriental fruit fly.

Immediate Action

Immediate action is warranted to relieve restrictions that are no longer necessary. A portion of Orange County, CA, was quarantined due to the possibility that the Oriental fruit fly could be spread from that area to noninfested areas of the United States. Since we have concluded that the Oriental fruit fly no longer exists in that area, immediate action is warranted to remove the quarantine on Orange County, CA, and to relieve the restrictions on the interstate movement of regulated articles from that area. Under these circumstances, the Administrator has determined that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are contrary to the public interest and that there is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553 for making this action effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

We will consider comments we receive during the comment period for this interim rule (see **DATES** above). After the comment period closes, we will publish another document in the **Federal Register**. The document will

include a discussion of any comments we receive and any amendments we are making to the rule.

Executive Order 12866 and Regulatory Flexibility Act

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12866. For this action, the Office of Management and Budget has waived its review under Executive Order 12866.

This action amends the Oriental fruit fly regulations by removing a portion of Orange County, CA, from the list of quarantined areas.

County records indicated there are 9 growers, 4 nurseries, 24 mobile vendors, 3 farmers markets, 8 fruit sellers, 1 distributor, 2 haulers, 2 processors, 1 swap meet, and 34 yard and tree maintenance firms within the quarantined portion of Orange County that could be affected by the lifting of the quarantine in this interim rule.

We expect that the effect of this interim rule on the small entities referred to above will be minimal. Small entities located within the quarantined area that sell regulated articles do so primarily for local intrastate, not interstate, movement, so the effect, if any, of this rule on these entities appears likely to be minimal. In addition, the effect on any small entities that may move regulated articles interstate has been minimized during the quarantine period by the availability of various treatments that allow these small entities, in most cases, to move regulated articles interstate with very little additional cost. Thus, just as the previous interim rule establishing the quarantined area in Orange County, CA, had little effect on the small entities in the area, the lifting of the quarantine in the current interim rule will also have little effect.

Under these circumstances, the Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that this action will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Executive Order 12372

This program/activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.025 and is subject to Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. (See 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V.)

Executive Order 12988

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule: (1) Preempts all State and local laws and regulations that are inconsistent with this rule; (2) has no

retroactive effect; and (3) does not require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit in court challenging this rule.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This interim rule contains no information collection or recordkeeping requirements under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 301

Agricultural commodities, Plant diseases and pests, Quarantine, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation.

■ Accordingly, we are amending 7 CFR part 301 as follows:

PART 301—DOMESTIC QUARANTINE NOTICES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 301 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Section 301.75–15 also issued under sec. 204, title II, Pub. L. 106–113, 113 Stat. 1501A–293; sections 301.75–15 and 301.75–16 also issued under sec. 203, title II, Pub. L. 106–224, 114 Stat. 400 (7 U.S.C. 1421 note).

■ 2. In § 301.93–3, paragraph (c) is revised to read as follows:

§ 301.93–3 Quarantined areas.

* * * * *

(c) The areas described below are designated as quarantined areas: There are no areas in the continental United States quarantined for the Oriental fruit fly.

Done in Washington, DC, this 2nd day of March 2005.

Elizabeth E. Gaston,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 05–4350 Filed 3–7–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 925

[Docket No. FV05–925–1 FR]

Grapes Grown in a Designated Area of Southeastern California; Increased Assessment Rate

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This rule increases the assessment rate established for the

California Desert Grape Administrative Committee (committee) for the 2005 and subsequent fiscal periods from \$0.015 to \$0.0175 per 18-pound lug of grapes handled. The committee locally administers the marketing order which regulates the handling of grapes grown in a designated area of southeastern California. Authorization to assess grape handlers enables the committee to incur expenses that are reasonable and necessary to administer the program. The fiscal period began January 1 and ends December 31. The assessment rate will remain in effect indefinitely unless modified, suspended, or terminated.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 9, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Toni Sasselli, Program Analyst or Terry Vawter, Marketing Specialist, Marketing Field Office, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 2202 Monterey Street, Suite 102B, Fresno, California 93721; Telephone: (559) 487–5901; Fax: (559) 487–5906; or George Kelhart, Technical Advisor, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; Telephone: (202) 720–2491; Fax: (202) 720–8938.

Small businesses may request information on complying with this regulation by contacting Jay Guerber, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; Telephone: (202) 720–2491; Fax: (202) 720–8938; or e-mail: Jay.Guerber@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rule is issued under Marketing Agreement and Order No. 925, both as amended (7 CFR part 925), regulating the handling of grapes grown in a designated area of southeastern California, hereinafter referred to as the “order.” The order is effective under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601–674), hereinafter referred to as the “Act.”

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing this rule in conformance with Executive Order 12866.

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. Under the marketing order now in effect, California grape handlers are subject to assessments. Funds to administer the order are derived from such assessments. It is intended that the assessment rate as issued herein will be applicable to all assessable grapes beginning on January 1, 2005, and continue until amended, suspended, or