

• The Agency's public health mandate requires that it address foodborne illness hazards within each segment of the food production chain and implement or encourage preventive strategies that improve the whole system.

As part of this farm-to-table strategy, FSIS is interested in supporting a series of pilot demonstration projects which may assist food animal producers, markets, the slaughter and processing industry, and the Agency in meeting food safety challenges in a preventive HACCP framework. These projects are intended to develop and foster voluntary food safety measures that can reasonably be taken on the farm, through marketing channels, and during preslaughter preparation to decrease public health hazards in animals presented for slaughter.

Therefore, the Agency has announced in the Commerce Business Daily a series of solicitations for bid on proposals to gain information concerning animal production practices as they pertain to food safety. Briefly, these solicitations are as follows:

#### **Proposals 1-4—Pathogen Reduction in Four Species**

FSIS is interested in funding pilot projects that use risk assessment strategies to demonstrate the application, feasibility, and effectiveness of current technologies for controlling contaminants and that emphasize pre-slaughter pathogen reduction. Multi-disciplinary teams in multiple geographical locations are required. Projects must demonstrate multi-geographical and multi-seasonal applicability.

There are four project/species areas of interest: pork, poultry, non-fed beef, and sheep. For poultry, there is information available on intervention methods used to reduce pathogens in/on poultry during production and transportation to slaughter. A possible approach would be to demonstrate whether or not multi-faceted (two or more) risk reduction practices carried out pre-slaughter could reliably reduce carcass contamination. With regard to pork, non-fed beef, and sheep, the Agency is interested in learning the relationship of current production practices to the incidence of pathogens in slaughter facilities. Using animal identification techniques to improve information-sharing between production and slaughter/processing entities is required for non-fed beef and encouraged for pork and sheep.

#### **Proposal 5—Training for Food Animal Producers**

FSIS is also interested in learning which training methodologies will work best to maximize the effectiveness of future food safety initiatives directed at food animal producers, particularly small producers. The purpose of these programs is to improve the ability of food animal producers to maintain sustainable operations as they address requirements of slaughter establishments implementing preventive HACCP systems and other food safety responsibilities.

#### **Proposal 6—Survey of Small Producer HACCP Needs**

FSIS is interested in supporting a survey of small producers and small and very small slaughter establishments. The purpose of the survey is to determine the needs of producers who supply slaughter establishments as these establishments consider developing pathogen reduction and HACCP systems. Proposals should address multiple geographic locations with a focus on disadvantaged areas and various slaughter classes. The evaluation must include access to and use of veterinary services, knowledge and implementation of commodity food safety/quality assurance programs, and recordkeeping practices for animal drug use.

Done at Washington, DC, on March 24, 1997.

**Thomas J. Billy,**  
*Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 97-7996 Filed 3-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-DR-P

#### **Natural Resources Conservation Service**

##### **Changes in the State Technical Guides in Oregon**

**AGENCY:** Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service), USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of change.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 343 of Subtitle E of the Federal Agricultural Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (FAIRA) that requires the Secretary of Agriculture to provide public notice and comment under Section 553 of Title, United States Code, with regard to any future technical guides that are used to carry out Subtitles A, B, and C of Title XII of the Food Security Action of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 *et seq.*), the Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture, gives notice of revisions to all conservation

practices in Section IV of the State technical guides in Oregon. The distribution of these revisions and an updated index of conservation practices standards and specifications will be via Oregon Bulletin OR 450-7-2 dated March 14, 1997.

These revisions to conservation practices in Section IV of State technical guides are subject to these provisions since one or more used or could be used as part of a conservation management system to comply with the Highly Erodible Land Conservation or Wetland Conservation requirements.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Roy M. Carlson, Jr., Leader—Technology Development, USDA-NRCS, 101 SW Main, Suite 1300, Portland, OR 97204-3221. FAX (503) 414-3277 or Internet: rcarlson@or.nrcs.usda.gov.

A copy of the new index and any of the revised items can be obtained from Roy Carlson. These items will also be available at each of the NRCS field offices in Oregon beginning March 31, 1997. Comments can be sent to Roy Carlson at the NRCS state office in Portland, Oregon.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In Oregon, "technical guides" refers to the Field Office Technical Guide maintained at each NRCS field Office in Oregon. The previous revisions to conservation practices in technical guides in Oregon were issued in June 1994. The former Oregon "Index of Conservation Practice Standards and Specifications" was dated June 1994. The revised conservation practices and revised index will be dated March 1997 and include all of the conservation practices and standards and conservation practice specifications. Revisions include word changes, reformatting sections of practice standards to be consistent with new national guidelines, name changes, renumbering, additions, deletions and redating.

Dated: March 25, 1997.

**Leonard Jordan,**

*Asst. State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-8023 Filed 3-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-16-M

#### **Rural Business-Cooperative Service**

##### **Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection**

**AGENCY:** Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; Comments requested.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Rural Business-Cooperative Service's (RBS) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection or recordkeeping requirements contained in the Federal-State Research on Cooperatives Program, as found in 7 CFR Part 4285.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received on or before May 30, 1997.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas Stafford, Director, Cooperative Marketing Division, Cooperative Services, RBS, USDA, Stop 3252, Room 4204, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20080-3252, telephone (202) 690-0368. (This is not a toll free number.) E-mail:

tstaff@rurdev.usda.gov. The Federal Information Relay service on 1-800-877-8339 may be used by TDD users.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Federal-State Research on Cooperatives Program.

*OMB Number:* 0570-0005.

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

*Type of Request:* Intent to extend the currently approved information collection and record keeping requirements.

*Abstract:* The Federal-State Research on Cooperatives (FSROC) Program, is authorized under Section 204(b) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621 *et seq.*). The FSROC Program is a matching fund program designed to assist State Department of Agriculture and State Agricultural Experiment Stations in conducting research related to cooperatives. The program is not currently funded, but existing agreements are in place and future funding is anticipated.

The FSROC Program is conducted using cooperative agreements which include a need for reporting information on the project proposals. In addition, the accepted proposals are required to keep financial records of the project funds and to make program and financial progress reports on a quarterly basis.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting for this collection information is estimated to average 3.48 hours per response with a variation of from 10 minutes to 36 hours.

*Respondents:* State departments of Agriculture, State Agricultural Experiment Stations, and other related State agencies.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 20.

*Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent:* 14.25.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 1712 Hours.

Copies of this information collection and record keeping can be obtained from Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Division, at (202) 720-9588.

**Comments**

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Division, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0743, Washington, DC 20250-0743. 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.

Dated: March 21, 1997.

**Dayton J. Watkins,**

*Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.*

[FR Doc. 97-7997 Filed 3-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-U

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**Minority Business Development Agency**

**Business Development Center Applications: Chicago I and Chicago II**

**AGENCY:** Minority Business Development Agency, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Cancellation.

**SUMMARY:** The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is cancelling the announcement to solicit competitive applications under its Minority Business Development Center (MBDC) Program to operate the Chicago I and Chicago II MBDCs. This solicitation was originally published in

the **Federal Register**, Tuesday, June 18, 1996, Vol. 61, No. 118, page 30856.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, 11.800 Minority Business Development Center)

Dated: March 25, 1997.

**Frances B. Douglas,**

*Alternate Federal Register Liaison Officer, Minority Business Development Agency.*

[FR Doc. 97-8022 Filed 3-28-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-21-M

**National Institute of Standards and Technology**

**Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program Evaluation Survey**

**ACTION:** Proposed collection; comment request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before May 30, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20230. Phone number: (202) 482-3272.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to: Elizabeth Bury, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Building 301, Room C-100, National Institute of Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899; phone: (301) 975-3944, and fax: (301) 926-3787.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**

**I. Abstract**

This submission under the Paperwork Reduction Act represents a request for extension of a currently approved collection by the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology. The information collection activity referenced is being conducted in partnership with the Department's Bureau of the Census.

The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is a nationwide