

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

December 19, 1997.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding: (a) Whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways 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 other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Washington, DC 20503 and to Department Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-6746.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it

displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Risk Management Agency

Title: Dairy Options Pilot Program.

OMB Control Number: 0563-New.

Summary of Collection: Information collection for the Dairy Options Pilot Program will take place through the use of two forms, one on-going process of electronic data transmission, and voluntary surveys.

Need and Use of The Information:

The information is to be used by RMA in verifying compliance of participating producers and brokers, and evaluating the effectiveness of options as a risk management tool for dairy farmers.

Description of Respondents: Farms; Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; Federal Government.

Number of Respondents: 35,329.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Semi-annually.

Total Burden Hours: 16,951.

Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services

Title: Adapting the Food Guide Pyramid for Young Children.

OMB Control Number: 0584-New.

Summary of Collection: Information will be collected through focus groups and prototype testing sessions concerning nutrition education.

Need and Use of the Information:

Information will help USDA develop food guidance materials for parents of young children.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 180.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: One-time.

Total Burden Hours: 360.

Office of Civil Rights

Title: Program Discrimination Complaints.

OMB Control Number: 0508-New.

Summary of Collection: Information is collected from respondents who wish to file discrimination complaints.

Need and Use of The Information:

The information will be used by the staff of the USDA Office of Civil Rights to investigate, attempt resolution and settle the case.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit institutions; Farms; State, Local, or Tribal government.

Number of Respondents: 600.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 600.

Emergency Processing of This Submission Has Been Requested by January 15, 1998.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Assignments of Payments and Joint Payment Authorizations.

OMB Control Number: 0560-New.

Summary of Collection: Information is collected from respondents who want to assign agricultural payments to a third party.

Need and Use of The Information:

The information allows USDA to pay the proper party when payments become due.

Description of Respondents: Farms.

Number of Respondents: 70,900.

Frequency of Respondent's:

Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 11,778.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Tobacco Marketing Quota Referenda—7 CFR 717.

OMB Control Number: 0560-New.

Summary of Collection: A referendum is conducted of eligible farmers to determine whether they favor or oppose marketing quotas for the next three years.

Need and Use of The Information:

The referendum is necessary to determine whether the producers do or do not favor national marketing quotas for tobacco.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households; Farms.

Number of Respondents: 155,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Every 3 years.

Total Burden Hours: 4,300.

Farm Service Agency

Title: Assignments of Payments and Joint Payment Authorizations.

OMB Control Number: 0560-New.

Summary of Collection: Information is collected from respondents who want to assign agricultural payments to a third party.

Need and Use of The Information:

The information allows USDA to pay the proper party when payments become due.

Description of Respondents: Farms.

Number of Respondents: 70,900.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 11,778.

Agricultural Marketing Service

Title: The National Organic Program.

OMB Control Number: 0581-New.

Summary of Collection: Information is required to accredit agents who will serve as inspectors of organically produced agricultural products and will document adherence to the established standards.

Need and Use of The Information: Information will be used by the Agricultural Marketing Service to certify inspection agents on an annual basis.

Description of Respondents: Farms; Individuals or households; Business or other for-profit; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 187,651.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 377,171.

Donald Hulcher,

Departmental Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 97-33589 Filed 12-23-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[FV-96-327]

United States Standards for Grades of Canned Apples

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is soliciting comments on its proposal to change the United States Standard for Grades of Canned Apples. Specifically, AMS is proposing to lower the recommended drained weight for canned apples packed in No. 10 cans. This change would allow more equitable utilization of processed apples across domestic growing regions and will help the apple industry to meet its market needs.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before February 23, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments may be submitted to Randle A. Macon, Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 0709, South Building; STOP 0247, P.O. Box 96456; Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; faxed to (202) 690-1087; or e-mailed to Randle_A_Macon@usda.gov.

Comments should reference the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**. All comments

received will be made available for public inspection at the address listed above during regular business hours.

The current United States Standards for Grades of Canned Apples, along with the proposed changes, are available either through the afore-mentioned address or by accessing AMS's Home Page on the Internet at the following address: www.ams.usda.gov/standards/frutcan.htm.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Contact Randle A. Macon at (202) 720-4693.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 1622 (c)) directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture "To develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade, and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices * * *". AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and make copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Canned Apples no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations but are maintained by the Department of Agriculture (USDA).

AMS is proposing to change the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Apples using the procedures it published in the August 13, 1997, **Federal Register** and that appear in Part 36 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR Part 36).

AMS received petitions from Independent Food Processors Company of Sunnyside, Washington; and Snokist Growers of Yakima, Washington, requesting the revision of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Apples. The two petitioners represent a significant part of the Pacific Northwest apple industry. The Pacific Northwest apple industry provides almost half of the apples produced domestically.¹

The petitions request that the recommend drained weight of 96 ounces for apples packed in No. 10 size cans, in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Apples, is difficult to obtain and puts Pacific Northwest processors at an economic disadvantage in bidding for government and non-government contracts. The reasons given for this disparity are that the varietal types of apples and the growing conditions in the Northwest region are different from other apple producing regions around

the country. The petitioners state that to meet the standard when packing certain varieties of apples, the cans are over-filled.

This condition may cause damage to the sliced apples which may cause the slices to be graded as less than "Grade A." To meet USDA requirements for drained weight, some processors may be required to put more product into the can, causing economic hardship, damage to the product, and sometimes loss of the integrity of the can seal. If the seal's integrity is lost during processing, the product's wholesomeness is jeopardized.

The remedies recommended by the petitioners, though similar in purpose, are different. Snokist Growers of Yakima, Washington, recommends a reduction in the recommended drained weight for apples packed in No. 10 size cans, from 96 ounces to 92 ounces. Independent Food Processors Company of Sunnyside, Washington, recommends the elimination of the recommended drained weight for apples packed in No. 10 size cans, from the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Apples. If that is not possible the petitioner recommends the incorporation of a "fill weight program" in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Apples to ensure that the "recommended fill of container" requirement is met with a reduction in the recommended drained weight for apples packed in No. 10 size cans, from 96 ounces to 85 ounces.

USDA has reviewed the petitions and data submitted, and has gathered additional information from relevant government agencies and industry sources including growers, processors, and buyers. Based on this information, USDA has found that there may be a disparity between the drained weights for canned apples from Pacific Northwest processors and those from other sections of the country. Though a variation in drained weights may exist, our review has shown that the difference is not great enough to warrant the changes to the Standards recommended by Independent Food Processors Company of Sunnyside, Washington.

Based on these findings, the USDA has agreed with the recommendation from Snokist Growers of Yakima, Washington, and is proposing to lower the recommended drained weight for apples packed No. 10 size cans, from 96 ounces to 92 ounces in the U.S. Standards for Grades of Canned Apples. This change would allow a more equitable marketing environment for the domestic canned apple industry.

¹ Source—USDA, NASS, ASB.