

Telephone Interviewing (CATI) techniques, which are more efficient and less time consuming than traditional written interview techniques. Responses are voluntary and confidential. Survey data will be used for statistical purposes and reported only in aggregate or statistical form.

Information to be obtained from property managers includes: rental property characteristics, general conditions within the properties, neighborhood quality, access to amenities and local services, property managers' experiences with USDA's Rural Development staff, demographic, employment, and income information on tenants, and tenant satisfaction. No existing data sources, including USDA administrative data, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Property Owners and Managers Survey, or the Bureau of the Census' American Housing Survey, provide the level of detail necessary to adequately explore these issues for USDA's Rural Rental Housing Program. These data and the research they will support are vital to the Department's ability to assess the impact of its rural housing programs on rural residents and their communities.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this data collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per completed interview, including time for listening to instructions, gathering data needed, and responding to questionnaire items.

*Respondents:* Property managers who currently oversee multifamily rental housing funded under USDA's Rural Rental Housing Section 515 Program.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 1,000

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 250 hours

Information concerning the data collection can be obtained from Leslie Whitener, Food Assistance, Poverty and Well-Being Branch, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room S2079, 1800 M. St., NW, Washington, DC. 20036-5831, 202-694-5444.

#### Comments

Comments are invited on (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper 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, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the

burden on those who are to respond, such as through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques. Comments may be sent to Leslie Whitener, Food Assistance, Poverty and Well-Being Branch, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room S2079, 1800 M. St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036-5831. 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.

Signed at Washington, D.C.

**Betsey Kuhn,**

*Director, Food and Rural Economics Division.*

[FR Doc. 98-3870 Filed 2-13-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-18-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Housing Service

### Rural Business-Cooperative Service

### Rural Utilities Service

### Farm Service Agency

### Notice of Request for Information Collection

**AGENCIES:** The Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Utilities Service, and Farm Service Agency, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Rural Utilities Service's (RUS) intention to request an extension for a currently approved information collection in support of the programs for 7 CFR Part 1780, Water and Waste Loans; 7 CFR Part 1823 Subpart N, Loans to Indian Tribes and Tribal Corporations; 7 CFR Part 1942 Subpart A, Community Facilities Loans; 7 CFR Part 1948 Subpart C, Intermediary Relending Program; and 7 CFR Part 1980 Subpart E, Business and Industry Loan Programs.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by April 20, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** H. Richard Kelly, Loan Specialist, Operations Branch, Water Programs Division, Rural Utilities Service, USDA, STOP 1570, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-1570, telephone: (202) 720-9589.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Form RD 1910-11, "Applicant Certification, Federal Collection Policies for Consumer or Commercial Debts"

*OMB Number:* 0575-0127

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

*Type of Request:* Reinstate information collection

*Abstract:* The water and waste loans, community facilities loans, tribe and tribal corporation loans, intermediary relending program loans, and business and industry direct loans are authorized by various sections of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, (7 U.S.C. 1921 *et seq.*), as amended. The water and waste program provides loan funds for water and waste projects serving rural communities. Community facilities loans assist rural communities to develop facilities that are essential for their communities. Loans to Indian tribes or tribal corporations are offered for the acquisition of land within tribal reservations and Alaskan communities. The intermediary relending program provides loans to intermediary organizations to establish revolving loan funds that assist with rural economic and community development. The direct business and industry direct loan program provides funds to rural businesses that cannot get adequate financing from other sources.

OMB Circular A-129, "Policies for Federal Credit Programs and Non-Tax Receivables" requires that an agency will inform its loan applicants of the Federal government's debt collection policies and procedures prior to extending credit. The Circular states that further information on the implementation of credit management and debt collection can be found in the Treasury Financial Manual. A supplement to the Treasury Financial Manual requires that the Agency will ask the applicant to sign a debt collection certification statement to certify knowledge of the Government's policies. This certification statement details the consequences of delinquency on Federal loans.

The Agencies will use Form RD 1910-11 to meet the requirements of OMB Circular A-129 and the supplement to the Treasury Financial Manual for the identified programs. This form will uniformly advise applicants of the debt collection methods that will be used in recovering delinquent or defaulted loans.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .167 hours per response.

*Respondents:* Business or other for profit organizations, not-for-profit

institutions, public organizations and local or tribal governments.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 135,000

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* \$22,545

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services 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 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, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (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. Comments may be sent to Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, Support Services Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0743, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, 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: January 28, 1998.

**Wally Beyer,**

*Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.*

Dated: January 30, 1998.

**Dayton J. Watkins,**

*Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.*

Dated: February 3, 1998.

**Jan E. Shadburn,**

*Administrator, Rural Housing Service.*

Dated: February 6, 1998.

**Keith Kelly,**

*Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

[FR Doc. 98-3872 Filed 2-13-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-U

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Foreign Agricultural Service

RIN 0551-AA26

### Announcement of the Foreign Market Development Cooperator Program for FY 1999

**AGENCY:** Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the availability of funds for the Fiscal Year 1999 Foreign Market Development Cooperator (Cooperator) Program.

**DATES:** All applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Savings Time, April 20, 1998.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-1042, (202) 720-4327.

### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### Introduction

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) announces that applications are being accepted for participation in the Fiscal Year 1999 Cooperator program. The program is intended to create, expand and maintain foreign markets for United States agricultural commodities and products. FAS administers the Cooperator program and provides cost share assistance to eligible trade organizations to implement approved market development activities. Financial assistance under this program will be made available on a competitive basis and applications will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria contained herein.

#### Background

Under the Cooperator program, FAS enters into Market Development Project Agreements with nonprofit U.S. trade organizations. FAS enters into these agreements with those nonprofit U.S. trade organizations that have the broadest possible producer representation of the commodity being promoted and gives priority to those organizations that are nationwide in membership and scope. Program participants may not, during the term of their agreement with FAS, make export sales of the agricultural commodity being promoted or charge fees for facilitating an export sale if promotional activities designed to result in that specific sale are supported by Cooperator program funds.

Market Development Project Agreements involve the promotion of

agricultural commodities on a generic basis and, therefore, do not involve activities targeted directly toward individual consumers. Approved activities contribute to the maintenance or growth of demand for the agricultural commodities and generally address long-term foreign import constraints by focusing on matters such as:

- Reducing infra-structural or historical market impediments;
- Improving processing capabilities;
- Modifying codes and standards; and
- Identifying new markets or new applications or uses for the agricultural commodity or product in the foreign market.

#### Authority

The Cooperator program is authorized by Title VII of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978, 7 U.S.C. 5721, *et seq.* Program regulations appear at 7 CFR part 1550.

#### Application Process

The FAS administers various agricultural export assistance programs, including the Cooperator program, the Market Access Program (MAP), Cochran Fellowships, the Emerging Markets Program, Section 108, and several Export Credit Guarantee programs. Until now, organizations interested in receiving assistance under any of these FAS-administered programs were asked to submit their requests at varying times throughout the year. In an effort to facilitate the strategic planning process of Cooperator program applicant organizations, as well as that of the Federal government, FAS has unified and simplified the application process for its agricultural export assistance programs.

Beginning with this announcement, organizations which are interested in applying for Cooperator program funds will have the opportunity to incorporate multiple requests for assistance into a single Unified Export Strategy (UES) proposal. The suggested UES format permits the submission of a consolidated and strategically coordinated proposal including not only Cooperator program applications, but also requests for assistance under virtually all other FAS marketing programs, financial assistance programs, and market access programs. The suggested UES framework encourages applicants to examine the constraints or barriers to trade they face, identify activities which would help overcome such impediments, consider the entire pool of complementary marketing tools and program resources, and establish realistic export goals.