

Proposed Rules

Federal Register

Vol. 64, No. 8

Wednesday, January 13, 1999

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

7 CFR Parts 300 and 319

[Docket No. 97-110-4]

RIN 0579-AA92

Importation of Grapefruit, Lemons, and Oranges From Argentina

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed rule; notice of additional public hearing.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that we have scheduled a public hearing in Orlando, FL, for our proposed rule regarding the importation of grapefruit, lemons, and oranges from Argentina. This hearing will be held in addition to a previously scheduled hearing in Thousand Oaks, CA. The purpose of these hearings is to provide interested persons an opportunity for the oral presentation of data, views, and arguments regarding the proposed rule.

DATES: Consideration will be given only to comments on Docket No. 97-110-1 that are received on or before February 11, 1999. We will also consider comments made at public hearings that will be held in Orlando, FL, on February 5, 1999, and in Thousand Oaks, CA, on February 8, 1999. The hearings in both locations will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 97-110-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238. Please state that your comments refer to Docket No. 97-110-1. Comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to

inspect comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

The February 5, 1999, public hearing will be held at the Radisson Barcelo Hotel, 8444 International Drive, Orlando, FL. The February 8, 1999, public hearing will be held at Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, Fred Kavli Theatre, 2100 East Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Thousand Oaks, CA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Ron Campbell, Import Specialist, Phytosanitary Issues Management Team, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 140, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-6799; e-mail:

Ronald.C.Campbell@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On August 12, 1998, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published a proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 43117-43125, Docket No. 97-110-1) to amend the citrus fruit regulations by recognizing a citrus-growing area within Argentina as being free from citrus canker. In that document, we also proposed to amend the fruits and vegetables regulations to allow the importation of grapefruit, lemons, and oranges from the citrus canker-free area of Argentina under conditions designed to prevent the introduction into the United States of two other diseases of citrus, sweet orange scab and citrus black spot, and other plant pests. These proposed changes would allow grapefruit, lemons, and oranges to be imported into the United States from Argentina subject to certain conditions.

On October 16, 1998, we published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 55559, Docket No. 97-110-2) a notice advising the public that we were extending the comment period for the proposed rule by 120 days and that we had scheduled a public hearing to give interested persons the opportunity for the oral presentation of data, views, and arguments regarding the proposed rule. In our October 16, 1998, notice, we announced that the public hearing would be held on December 17, 1998, in Thousand Oaks, CA. On December 4, 1998, we published in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 67011, Docket No. 97-110-3) a notice advising the public that we had changed the date and location

of the public hearing in Thousand Oaks, CA. As indicated in the December 4, 1998, notice, that hearing is now scheduled for February 8, 1999, and will be held at the Fred Kavli Theatre in the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza, Thousand Oaks, CA.

In response to requests that we provide Florida citrus growers and other interested persons an opportunity for the oral presentation of data, views, and arguments regarding the proposed rule, we have scheduled an additional public hearing to be held in Orlando, FL, on February 5, 1999.

The purpose of the hearings is to give interested persons the opportunity for the oral presentation of data, views, and arguments. Questions about the content of the proposed rule may be part of the commenters' oral presentations. However, neither the presiding officer nor any other representative of APHIS will respond to the comments at the hearings, except to clarify or explain provisions of the proposed rule.

A representative of APHIS will preside at each public hearing. Any interested person may appear and be heard in person, by attorney, or by other representative. Written statements may be submitted and will be made part of the hearing record. Persons who wish to speak at a public hearing will be asked to provide their name and organization. We ask that anyone who reads a statement or submits a written statement provide two copies to the presiding officer at the hearing.

Each public hearing will begin at 9 a.m. and is scheduled to end at 5 p.m., local time. However, either hearing may be terminated at any time after it begins if all persons desiring to speak have been heard. If the number of speakers at a hearing warrants it, the presiding officer may limit the time for presentations so that everyone wishing to speak has the opportunity.

Done in Washington, DC, this 7th day of January 1999.

Craig A. Reed,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 99-759 Filed 1-12-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P