

OMB Control Number: 0535-0234.

Summary of Collection: The Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey (FRIS) has provided detailed data on water management practices and water uses in American agriculture for the past two decades. The 2003 FRIS will gather data describing the irrigation activities of U.S. farm operations. Some of these activities are of national concern, such as the use of chemigation, fertigation and water-conserving practices of irrigators. The FRIS is an integral part of the 2002 Census of Agriculture and is conducted under the authority of the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Pub. L. 105-113).

Need and Use of the Information: NASS will collect information from the FRIS on acres irrigated by land use category, acres and yields of irrigated and non-irrigated crops, quantity of water applied and method of application to selected crops, acres irrigated and quantity of water used by sources, acres irrigated by type of water distribution systems, and number of irrigation wells and pumps. The primary purpose of FRIS is to provide detailed data relating to on-farm irrigation activities for use in preparing a wide variety of water-related local programs, economic models, legislative initiatives, market analyses, and feasibility studies. The absence of FRIS would certainly affect irrigation policy decision.

Description of Respondents: Farms.
Number of Respondents: 25,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Other (one-time).

Total Burden Hours: 15,250.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-23528 Filed 9-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

Information Collection; Guaranteed Farm Loan Programs

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is seeking comments from all interested individuals and entities on the extension and revision of currently approved information used in support of the guaranteed Farm Loan Programs (FLP). The collection of information is intended to reduce paperwork burden

on program participants and agency employees, make assistance available to more farmers, reduce the costs of the program, and enhance the fiscal integrity of the program.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before November 17, 2003 to be assured consideration.

ADDRESSES: Comments concerning this notice should be addressed to Tracy L. Jones, Senior Loan Officer, USDA Farm Service Agency, Loan Making Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Stop 0522, Washington, DC 20250-0522, and to: the Desk Office for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

Comments may be submitted by email to: tracy_jones@wdc.usda.gov. Copies of the information collection may be obtained by contacting Tracy Jones.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Tracy Jones, Loan Making Division, (202) 720-3889.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 7 CFR 762—Guaranteed Farm Loans.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0155.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 2004.

Type of Request: Extension and Revision to a Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: The information collected under OMB Control Number 0560-0155 is needed to effectively administer the FSA guaranteed farm loan programs. The information is collected by the FSA loan official in consultation with participating commercial lenders. The basic objective of the guaranteed loan program is to provide credit to applicants who are unable to obtain credit from lending institutions without a guarantee. The reporting requirements imposed on the public by the regulations at 7 CFR part 762 are necessary to administer the guaranteed loan program in accordance with statutory requirements of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act and are consistent with commonly performed lending practices. Collection of information after loans are made is necessary to protect the Government's financial interest.

Estimate of Respondent Burden: Public reporting burden for the collection of information in this regulation is estimated to average 0.7535 hours per response. Respondents: Commercial Banks, Farm Credit System, farmers and ranchers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 5,500 lenders, 9,000 loan applicants.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 49.90 per lender, 2.14 per loan applicant.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 221,360.

Comment is invited on: (a) Whether collection of information is necessary for the above stated purposes and the proper performance of FSA, 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 being 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.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the Office of Management and Budget Approval.

Signed in Washington, DC on September 9, 2003.

James R. Little,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 03-23529 Filed 9-15-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Notice of Proposed Changes in the National Handbook of Conservation Practices

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intention of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to issue a series of new or revised conservation practice standards in its National Handbook of Conservation Practices. These standards include: Brush Management, Forage Harvest Management, Irrigation System—Sprinkler, Irrigation Water Conveyance—Ditch and Canal Lining—Flexible Membrane, Stream Crossing, Structure for Water Control, and Well Decommissioning. These standards are used to convey national guidance in developing Field Office Technical Guide Standards used in the States and

the Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas. NRCS State Conservationists and Directors for the Pacific Basin and Caribbean Areas who choose to adopt these practices for use within their States/areas will incorporate them into Section IV of their Field Office Technical Guides. These practices may be used in resource management systems that treat highly erodible land, or on land determined to be wetland.

EFFECTIVE DATES: Comments will be received for a 30-day period, starting on the date of this publication. This series of new or revised conservation practice standards will be adopted after the close of the 30-day period.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Single copies of these standards are available from NRCS—CED in Washington, DC. Submit individual inquiries and return any comments in writing to William Hughey, National Agricultural Engineer, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Post Office Box 2890, Room 6139—S, Washington, DC 20013—2890. The telephone number is (202) 720—5023. The standards are also available, and can be downloaded from the Internet at: http://www.ftw.nrcs.usda.gov/practice_std.html.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 343 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 requires NRCS to make available, for public review and comment, proposed revisions to conservation practice standards used to carry out the highly erodible land and wetland provisions of the law. For the next 30 days, NRCS will receive comments on the proposed changes. Following that period, a determination will be made by NRCS regarding disposition of those comments, and a final determination of change will be made.

Signed in Washington, DC, on September 4, 2003.

Bruce I. Knight,

Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

[FR Doc. 03—23576 Filed 9—15—03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410—16—P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Bureau of the Census

[Docket Number 030527134—3220—02]

Data Sharing Activity

AGENCY: Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of determination.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of the Census (Census Bureau) conducts the Survey of Industrial Research and Development (R&D). The National Science Foundation (NSF) provides the funding for this data collection. The Census Bureau will provide data collected from the 1997 and 1999 R&D surveys to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) for statistical purposes exclusively. In accordance with the requirement of section 524(d) of the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA), we provided the opportunity for public comment on this data-sharing action (see the June 3, 2003, edition of the **Federal Register** (68 FR 33094)).

Through the use of these shared data, the BEA will augment its existing R&D-related data, identify data quality issues arising from reporting differences in the BEA and Census Bureau surveys, and improve its survey sample frames. The NSF will be provided non-confidential aggregate data (public use) and reports that have cleared Census Bureau disclosure review. Disclosure review is a process conducted to verify that the data to be released do not reveal any confidential information.

DATES: The Census Bureau will make the data collected from the 1997 and 1999 Survey of Industrial Research and Development available to BEA on September 16, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information on this program should be directed to Kimberly Moore, Assistant Division Chief for Special Studies and M3 Programs, Manufacturing and Construction Division, U.S. Census Bureau, 4700 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233—6900, by phone on (301) 763—7643 or by fax (301) 457—4583.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

CIPSEA (Pub. L. 107—347, Subtitle V) allows the Census Bureau and the BEA to share certain business data for statistical purposes exclusively. Section 524(d) of the Act required a **Federal Register** notice announcing the intent to share data (allowing 60 days for public comment).

On June 3, 2003 (68 FR 33094), the Census Bureau published in the **Federal Register** a notice of this proposed data-sharing activity and request for comment on the subject. The Census Bureau did not receive any public comments.

Shared Data

The Census Bureau will provide the BEA with data collected from the 1997 and 1999 R&D surveys. The BEA also will share data from its 1997 Foreign Direct Investment in the United States and 1999 U.S. Direct Investment Abroad surveys with the Census Bureau. The BEA issued a separate notice addressing this issue.

The BEA will use these data for statistical purposes exclusively. Through record linkage, the BEA will augment its existing R&D-related data, identify data quality issues arising from reporting differences in the BEA and Census Bureau surveys, and improve its survey sample frames.

Statistical Purposes for the Shared Data

The data collected from the R&D survey estimate the expenditures of research and development performed by United States-based industrial firms. The survey is conducted annually; however, the data to be shared are from the 1997 and 1999 surveys only. Statistics from the annual surveys are published in the NSF's annual publication series "Research and Development in Industry." Data collected by this survey include company characteristics and R&D spending information. Characteristics data include net sales, total employment, and employment of scientists and engineers. R&D spending data include the following: total spending; federally funded (total and by agency) spending for basic and applied R&D, for basic research by field, and for applied R&D by product group and energy and pollution abatement activities; R&D spending by state; and R&D financed by domestic firms but performed abroad. All data are collected under sections 131, 182, 224, and 225 of Title 13, United States Code (U.S.C.).

Data Access and Confidentiality

Title 13, U.S.C., protects the confidentiality of these data. These data may be seen only by persons sworn to uphold the confidentiality of the information. Access to the shared data will be restricted to specifically authorized personnel and will be provided for statistical purposes only. All BEA employees with access to these data will attain Census Bureau Special Sworn Status—meaning that they, under penalty of law, must uphold the data's confidentiality. Selected NSF employees will provide the BEA with expertise on the aspects of R&D performance in the United States and by U.S. companies abroad; these NSF consultants assisting with the work at the BEA also will