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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

7 CFR Part 301

[Docket No. 04–118–1]

Karnal Bunt; Regulated Areas

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim rule and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are amending the Karnal bunt regulations to make changes to the list of areas or fields regulated because of Karnal bunt, a fungal disease of wheat. We are adding certain areas in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Riverside County, CA, to the list of regulated areas either because they were found during surveys to contain a bunted wheat kernel, or because they are within the 3-mile-wide buffer zone around fields or areas affected with Karnal bunt. We are also removing certain areas or fields in Maricopa and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Imperial County, CA, from the list of regulated areas based on our determination that those fields or areas meet our criteria for release from regulation. These actions are necessary to prevent the spread of Karnal bunt to noninfected areas of the United States and to relieve restrictions on certain areas that are no longer necessary.

DATES: This interim rule is effective March 28, 2005. We will consider all comments that we receive on or before May 27, 2005.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- **EDOCKET:** Go to <http://www.epa.gov/feddoCKET> to submit or view public comments, access the index listing of the contents of the official public docket, and to access those

documents in the public docket that are available electronically. Once you have entered EDOCKET, click on the “View Open APHIS Dockets” link to locate this document.

- **Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:** Please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to Docket No. 04–118–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 04–118–1.

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the instructions for locating this docket and submitting comments.

Reading Room: You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690–2817 before coming.

Other Information: You may view APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register** and related information on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Vedpal Malik, Agriculturalist, Invasive Species and Pest Management, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 134, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–6774.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Karnal bunt is a fungal disease of wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), durum wheat (*Triticum durum*), and triticale (*Triticum aestivum* X *Secale cereale*), a hybrid of wheat and rye. Karnal bunt is caused by the smut fungus *Tilletia indica* (Mitra) Mundkur and is spread primarily through the movement of infected seed. Some countries in the international wheat market regulate Karnal bunt as a fungal disease requiring quarantine; therefore, without measures taken by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), United States Department of Agriculture, to prevent its spread, the presence of Karnal bunt in the United

States could have significant consequences with regard to the export of wheat to international markets.

Upon detection of Karnal bunt in Arizona in March of 1996, Federal quarantine and emergency actions were imposed to prevent the interstate spread of the disease to other wheat producing areas in the United States. The quarantine continues in effect, although it has since been modified, both in terms of its physical boundaries and in terms of its restrictions on the production and movement of regulated articles from regulated areas. The regulations regarding Karnal bunt are set forth in 7 CFR 301.89–1 through 301.89–16 (referred to below as the regulations).

The regulations in § 301.89–3(e) provide that we will classify a field or area as a regulated area when it is:

- A field planted with seed from a lot found to contain a bunted wheat kernel;
- A distinct definable area that contains at least one field that was found during survey to contain a bunted wheat kernel. The distinct definable area may include an area where Karnal bunt is not known to exist but where intensive surveys are required because of the areas's proximity to a field found during survey to contain a bunted kernel; or

- A distinct definable area that contains at least one field that has been determined to be associated with grain at a handling facility containing a bunted kernel of a host crop. The distinct definable area may include an area where Karnal bunt is not known to exist but where intensive surveys are required because of the area's proximity to the field associated with the bunted kernel at the handling facility.

The boundaries of distinct definable areas are determined using the criteria in paragraphs (b) through (d) of § 301.89–3, which provide for the regulation of less than an entire State, the inclusion of noninfected acreage in a regulated area, and the temporary designation of nonregulated areas as regulated areas. Paragraph (c) of § 301.89–3 states that the Administrator may include noninfected acreage within a regulated area due to its proximity to an infestation or inseparability from the infected locality for regulatory purposes, as determined by:

- Projections of the spread of Karnal bunt along the periphery of the infestation;

- The availability of natural habitats and host materials within the noninfected acreage that are suitable for establishment and survival of Karnal bunt; and

- The necessity of including noninfected acreage within the regulated area in order to establish readily identifiable boundaries.

When we include noninfected acreage in a regulated area for one or more of the reasons previously listed, the noninfected acreage, along with the rest of the acreage in the regulated area, is intensively surveyed. Negative results from surveys of the noninfected acreage provide assurance that all infected acreage is within the regulated area. In effect, the noninfected acreage serves as a buffer zone between fields or areas affected with Karnal bunt and areas outside of the regulated area.

Under the regulations in § 301.89–3(f), a field known to have been infected with Karnal bunt, as well as any non-infected acreage surrounding the field, will be released from regulation if:

- The field is no longer being used for crop production; or
- Each year for a period of 5 consecutive years, the field is subjected to any one of the following management practices (the practice used may vary from year to year): (1) Planted with a cultivated non-host crop, (2) tilled once annually, or (3) planted with a host crop that tests negative, through the absence of bunted kernels, for Karnal bunt.

The regulations in § 301.89–3(g) describe the boundaries of the regulated areas in Arizona, California, and Texas. In this interim rule, we are amending § 301.89–3(g) by removing certain areas or fields in Maricopa and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Imperial County, CA, from the list of regulated areas, based on our determination that these fields or areas are eligible for release from regulation under the criteria in § 301.89–3(f). This action relieves restrictions on fields within those areas that are no longer warranted.

We are also adding certain areas in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Riverside County, CA, to the list of regulated areas either because the fields within those areas were found during detection and delineating surveys to contain a bunted wheat kernel, or because the fields within those areas fall within the 3-mile-wide buffer zone around fields affected with Karnal bunt. This action is necessary in order to help prevent the spread of Karnal bunt into noninfected areas of the United States.

Arizona

The list of regulated areas in Arizona includes individual fields and other

distinct, definable areas in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties. In this interim rule, we are removing 1,912 acres (77 fields) in Pinal County and 11,520 acres (63 fields) in Maricopa County from the list of regulated areas. We are taking this action based upon our determination that the fields or areas have met one or more of the criteria in § 301.89–3(f) of the regulations.

We are also adding new regulated areas in LaPaz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties, AZ, due to the detection of bunted wheat kernels there or the application of the 3-mile-wide buffer zone around fields affected with Karnal bunt. These additional areas in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties involve approximately 278,453 acres (6,343 fields).

California

The list of regulated areas in California includes areas in Imperial and Riverside Counties. In this interim rule, we are removing 3,241 acres (85 fields) in eastern Riverside County, and 4,470 acres (95 fields) in Imperial County. We are taking this action based upon our determination that the fields or areas have met one or more of the criteria in § 301.89–3(f). With this action, there are no longer any regulated areas in Imperial County.

We are also adding new regulated areas in Riverside County, CA, due to the detection of bunted wheat kernels there or the application of the 3-mile-wide buffer zone around fields affected with Karnal bunt. These additional regulated areas in Riverside County involve approximately 10,262 acres (186 fields).

Immediate Action

Immediate action is necessary to help prevent Karnal bunt from spreading to noninfected areas of the United States. This rule will also relieve restrictions on certain fields or areas that are no longer warranted. Under these circumstances, the Administrator has determined that prior notice and opportunity for public comment are contrary to the public interest and that there is good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553 for making this action effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

We will consider comments we receive during the comment period for this interim rule (see **DATES** above). After the comment period closes, we will publish another document in the **Federal Register**. The document will include a discussion of any comments we receive and any amendments we are making to the rule.

Executive Order 12866 and Regulatory Flexibility Act

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12866. For this action, the Office of Management and Budget has waived its review under Executive Order 12866.

We are removing certain fields in Arizona and California from the list of regulated areas. The areas to be deregulated are located in Maricopa and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Imperial and Riverside Counties, CA. These fields are being deregulated based on our determination that they have met the criteria in § 301.89–3(f) for being released from regulation.

Additionally, we are adding certain fields in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Riverside County, CA, to the list of regulated areas. These areas are being added because they were found during surveys to contain a bunted wheat kernel, or because they are within the 3-mile-wide buffer zone around fields or areas affected with Karnal bunt.

Deregulating certain areas in Arizona and California will benefit producers in these areas who wish to produce host crops in the future. Deregulation will allow producers to move wheat grain and seed with no restrictions. Prior to this rule, any wheat, durum wheat, or triticale grown in those fields could be moved into or through a non-regulated area without restriction only if it first tested negative for bunted kernels. In addition, any wheat, durum wheat, or triticale grown in those fields could not be used as seed within or outside a regulated area unless it was tested and found free of bunted kernels and spores. Thus, deregulation allows for freer movement of grain and seed in those areas that are affected by this aspect of the interim rule.

The impact of this rule on individual producers is not likely to be significant. The elimination of restrictions will increase marketing opportunities for producers, with impacts on prices those producers may set for their wheat, durum wheat, or triticale. Producers whose fields are deregulated may enjoy increased market opportunities for any wheat, durum wheat, or triticale they grow in the future (e.g. the availability of export markets). They may also receive a higher commodity price for their wheat, durum wheat, or triticale, although any price changes would most likely be small. This is due in part to the perceived notion that wheat produced in a regulated area is of lower quality. Deregulation may remove this stigma.

Despite the increased ability to move grain and seed, as well as a potential

increase in the price received for wheat, the benefits to individual producers are not likely to be significant. There are several reasons for this. First, grain in regulated areas is tested for Karnal bunt at no charge to the producer. Thus, removing this testing requirement does not translate into a cost savings for producers, but merely eliminates an inconvenience. Second, little to no wheat seed will be grown in the affected areas of Maricopa and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Imperial and Riverside Counties, CA. In 2003, seed demand accounted for approximately 5.2 percent of total domestic wheat production. Given such a small percentage and the small size of the area in question relative to other wheat producing regions, it is not expected that this region will grow a significant amount of wheat for seed. Thus, the benefits associated with removing restrictions on the movement of seed are expected to be minimal in this area. Finally, as mentioned previously, the areas affected by the rule are very small players in the overall wheat market. In 2003, Maricopa and Pinal Counties accounted for only 0.07 and 0.14 percent of total U.S. wheat production, respectively, while Imperial and Riverside Counties accounted for 0.22 percent and 0.05 percent, respectively, of total production. Therefore, deregulation of these areas would not influence the price of wheat to a significant degree if at all.

Regulation of certain areas in La Paz, Maricopa, and Pinal Counties, AZ, and Riverside County, CA, is also unlikely to have a profound effect on individual producers. In this case, producers will still be allowed to transport and market their grain in non-regulated areas if it tests negative for bunted kernels. As stated above, this cost is borne by the government and not by individual producers, so producers are only affected by the inconvenience of testing. Further, little or no wheat seed is expected to be produced in these areas, so the restrictions on seed movement should be negligible. Finally, although producers may see a more limited market for their product and face lower prices, the influence of this wheat producing area is small. In 2003, the counties mentioned above together accounted for only 0.3 percent of total U.S. wheat production. Thus, any price changes would be very small.

The Regulatory Flexibility Act requires that agencies consider the economic impact of rule changes on small businesses, organizations, and governmental jurisdictions. Those most likely affected by this interim rule are producers whose fields have been added to the list of regulated areas.

Additionally, those farmers whose fields have been removed from the list of regulated areas and plan to grow wheat in the future will also be affected. The number of producers likely to be affected by this interim rule is not expected to be large. Also, it is not expected that the interim rule will have a significant impact on the affected producers. The reasons for this are presented in the preceding paragraphs.

Producers affected by the interim rule are likely to be small in size based on the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) standards for wheat farmers, with supporting data from the 2002 Census of Agriculture (2002 Census), which is the most recent census available. The SBA classifies wheat producers with total annual sales of not more than \$750,000 as small entities. According to 2002 Census data, there were a total of 7,294 farms in Arizona in 2002. Of this number, 91 percent had annual sales in 2002 of less than \$500,000, which is well below the SBA's small entity threshold of \$750,000 for wheat farms. The percentage of farms with annual sales of less than \$500,000 in California out of a total of 79,631 farms was 90 percent. Therefore, these findings, in conjunction with those above, demonstrate that although most of the entities impacted by the rule are expected to be small, the impact on those entities is not expected to be significant.

Under these circumstances, the Administrator of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that this action will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

Executive Order 12372

This program/activity is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.025 and is subject to Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. (See 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V.)

Executive Order 12988

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule: (1) Preempts all State and local laws and regulations that are inconsistent with this rule; (2) has no retroactive effect; and (3) does not require administrative proceedings before parties may file suit in court challenging this rule.

Paperwork Reduction Act

This interim rule contains no information collection or recordkeeping requirements under the Paperwork

Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 301

Agricultural commodities, Plant diseases and pests, Quarantine, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Transportation.

■ Accordingly, we are amending 7 CFR part 301 as follows:

PART 301—DOMESTIC QUARANTINE NOTICES

■ 1. The authority citation for part 301 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Section 301.75–15 also issued under Sec. 204, Title II, Pub. L. 106–113, 113 Stat. 1501A–293; sections 301.75–15 and 301.75–16 also issued under Sec. 203, Title II, Pub. L. 106–224, 114 Stat. 400 (7 U.S.C. 1421 note).

■ 2. In § 301.89–3, paragraph (g) is amended as follows:

■ a. Under the heading “Arizona,” by revising the entry for La Paz County to read as set forth below.

■ b. Under the heading “Arizona,” in the entry for Maricopa County, by revising paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) to read as set forth below.

■ c. Under the heading “Arizona,” by revising the entry for Pinal County to read as set forth below.

■ d. Under the heading “California,” by removing the entry for Imperial County and revising the entry for Riverside County to read as set forth below.

§ 301.89–3 Regulated areas.

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(g) * * *

ARIZONA

La Paz County. Beginning at the northeast corner of sec. 19, T. 8 N., R. 20 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 31, T. 7 N., R. 20 W.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 2, T. 6 N., R. 21 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 2, T. 6 N., R. 21 W.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 2, T. 6 N., R. 21 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 15, T. 6 N., R. 21 W., then west to the southwest corner of sec. 13, T. 6 N., R. 22 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 24, T. 7 N., R. 22 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 24, T. 7 N., R. 22 W.; then north to the point of intersection with the Colorado River; then northeast along the Colorado River to its intersection with the northern boundary of sec. 16, T. 8 N., R. 21 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 14, T. 8 N., R. 21 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 14, T. 8 N., R. 21 W.; then east to the point of beginning.

Maricopa County. (1) Beginning at the southeast corner of sec. 20, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 24, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 24, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then west

to the southwest corner of sec. 14, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 14, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 9, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 9, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 5, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 5, T. 1 S., R. 1 E.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 6, T. 1 S., R. 1 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 7, T. 1 S., R. 1 W.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 14, T. 1 S., R. 2 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 14, T. 1 S., R. 2 W.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 20, T. 1 S., R. 2 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 20, T. 1 S., R. 2 W.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 29, T. 1 S., R. 3 W.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 29, T. 1 S., R. 3 W.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 26, T. 1 S., R. 5 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 14, T. 1 N., R. 5 W.; then east to the southwest corner of sec. 7, T. 1 N., R. 2 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 7, T. 1 N., R. 2 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 7, T. 1 N., R. 2 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 5, T. 1 N., R. 2 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 5, T. 1 N., R. 2 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 28, T. 2 N., R. 2 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 28, T. 2 N., R. 2 W.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 3, T. 3 N., R. 2 W.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 1, T. 3 N., R. 1 W.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 19, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 20, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then south to the northeast corner of sec. 29, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 27, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 27, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 35, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 35, T. 3 N., R. 1 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 1, T. 2 N., R. 1 E.; then south to the northeast corner of sec. 1, T. 1 N., R. 1 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 4, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 15, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 15, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 27, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 27, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then south to the southwest corner of sec. 34, T. 1 N., R. 2 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 16, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 16, T. 1 S., R. 2 E.; then south to the point of beginning.

(2) Beginning at the intersection of the Maricopa/Pinal County line and the southeast corner of sec. 36, T. 2 S., R. 7 E.; then west along the Maricopa/Pinal County line to the southwest corner of sec. 31, T. 2 S., R. 5 E.; then north to the southeast corner of sec. 25, T. 2 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 25, T. 2 S., R. 4 E.; then north to the southwest corner of sec. 13, T. 2 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 15, T. 2 S., R. 4 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 3, T. 2 S., R. 4 E., then east to the southwest corner of sec.

35, T. 1 S., R. 4 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 35, T. 1 S., R. 4 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 33, T. 1 S., R. 5 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 22, T. 1 S., R. 5 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 19, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 8, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then east to the southwest corner of sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 2, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 2, T. 1 S., R. 6 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 7, T. 1 S., R. 7 E.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 5, T. 2 S., R. 7 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 3, T. 2 S., R. 7 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 35, T. 1 S., R. 7 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 36, T. 1 S., R. 7 E. and the Maricopa/Pinal County line; then south along the Maricopa/Pinal County line to the point of beginning.

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(4) Beginning at the southeast corner of sec. 36, T. 2 N., R. 5 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 31, T. 2 N., R. 5 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 7, T. 2 N., R. 5 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 12, T. 2 N., R. 5 E.; then south to the point of beginning.

Pinal County: (1) Beginning at the intersection of the Maricopa/Pinal County line and the northwest corner of sec. 31, T. 1 S., R. 8 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 32, T. 1 S., R. 8 E.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 4, T. 2 S., R. 8 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 4, T. 2 S., R. 8 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 27, T. 2 S., R. 8 E.; then west to the southeast corner of sec. 28, T. 2 S., R. 8 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 4, T. 3 S., R. 8 E.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 8, T. 3 S., R. 8 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 8, T. 3 S., R. 8 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 12, T. 3 S., R. 7 E.; then north to the southeast corner of sec. 2, T. 3 S., R. 7 E.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 9, T. 3 S., R. 6 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 4, T. 4 S., R. 6 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 5, T. 4 S., R. 6 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 5, T. 4 S., R. 6 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 34, T. 3 S., R. 5 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 10, T. 3 S., R. 5 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 6, T. 3 S., R. 5 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 6, T. 3 S., R. 5 E. and the intersection of the Maricopa/Pinal County line; then east along the Maricopa/Pinal County line to the southeast corner of sec. 36, T. 2 S., R. 7 E.; then north along the Maricopa/Pinal County line to the point of beginning.

(2) Beginning at the southeast corner of sec. 5, T. 6 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 1, T. 6 S., R. 3 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 14, T. 6 S., R. 3 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 14, T. 6 S., R. 3 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 22, T. 6 S., R. 3 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 19,

T. 6 S., R. 3 E.; then north to the southeast corner of sec. 13, T. 6 S., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 13, T. 6 S., R. 2 E.; then north to the southwest corner of sec. 25, T. 5 S., R. 2 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 26, T. 5 S., R. 2 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 35, T. 4 S., R. 2 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 35, T. 4 S., R. 2 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 25, T. 4 S., R. 2 E.; then east to the southwest corner of sec. 20, T. 4 S., R. 3 E.; then north to the northwest corner of sec. 20, T. 4 S., R. 3 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 24, T. 4 S., R. 3 E.; then south to the northeast corner of sec. 25, T. 4 S., R. 3 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 28, T. 4 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 34, T. 4 S., R. 4 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 35, T. 4 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the northwest corner of sec. 1, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then east to the northeast corner of sec. 1, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 1, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 12, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 24, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the southwest corner of sec. 24, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the northeast corner of sec. 35, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the northwest corner of sec. 35, T. 5 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the southeast corner of sec. 49, T. 6 S., R. 4 E.; then west to the northeast corner of sec. 5, T. 6 S., R. 4 E.; then south to the point of beginning.

(3) The following individual fields in Pinal County are regulated areas: 309021804, 309042601, 309050104, 309050109, 309050122, 309050209.

CALIFORNIA

Riverside County. That portion of Riverside County known as the Palo Verde Valley (in part) bounded by a line drawn as follows: Beginning at the intersection of Neighbours Boulevard and West Hobson Way; then east on West Hobson Way to Arrowhead Boulevard; then north on Arrowhead Boulevard to West 11th Avenue; then east on West 11th Avenue to Defrain Boulevard; then north on Defrain Boulevard to 10th Avenue; then east on 10th Avenue to the southern boundary line of secs. 23 and 24, T. 6 S., R. 23 E.; then east along that boundary line to the California/Arizona State line; then south along the State line to the southern boundary line of secs. 25, 26, and 27, T. 8 S., R. 22 E.; then west along that boundary line to 36th Avenue; then west on 36th Avenue to Stephenson Boulevard; then north on Stephenson Boulevard to 34th Avenue; then west on 34th Avenue to Keim Boulevard; then north along an imaginary line to the intersection of 28th Avenue and Keim Boulevard; then north on Keim Boulevard to its northernmost point; then from that point northeast along an imaginary line to the intersection of Stephenson Boulevard and West 14th Avenue; then east along West 14th Avenue to Neighbours Boulevard; then north on Neighbours Boulevard to the point of beginning.

* * * * *

Done in Washington, DC, this 22nd day of March 2005.

Elizabeth E. Gaston,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 05-6029 Filed 3-25-05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 985

[Docket No. FV04-985-2 IFR-A2]

Marketing Order Regulating the Handling of Spearmint Oil Produced in the Far West; Revision of the Salable Quantity and Allotment Percentage for Class 3 (Native) Spearmint Oil for the 2004-2005 Marketing Year

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim final rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: This rule further amends prior interim final rules that increased the quantity of Class 3 (Native) spearmint oil produced in the Far West that handlers may purchase from, or handle for, producers during the 2004-2005 marketing year. This rule increases the Native spearmint oil salable quantity by an additional 85,936 pounds from 1,267,562 pounds to 1,353,498 pounds, and the allotment percentage by an additional 4 percent from 59 percent to 63 percent. The Spearmint Oil Administrative Committee (Committee), the agency responsible for local administration of the marketing order for spearmint oil produced in the Far West, unanimously recommended this rule to avoid extreme fluctuations in supplies and prices and to help maintain stability in the Far West spearmint oil market.

DATES: Effective June 1, 2004, through May 31, 2005; comments received by April 25, 2005, will be considered prior to issuance of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this rule. Comments must be sent to the Docket Clerk, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; Fax: (202) 720-8938; E-mail: moab.docketclerk@usda.gov; or Internet: <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments should reference the docket number and the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public

inspection in the Office of the Docket Clerk during regular business hours, or can be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Susan M. Hiller, Northwest Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1220 SW Third Avenue, Suite 385, Portland, Oregon 97204; Telephone: (503) 326-2724, Fax: (503) 326-7440; or George Kelhart, Technical Advisor, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; Telephone: (202) 720-2491, Fax: (202) 720-8938.

Small businesses may request information on complying with this regulation by contacting Jay Guerber, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; Telephone: (202) 720-2491, Fax: (202) 720-8938, or E-mail: Jay.Guerber@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rule is issued under Marketing Order No. 985, as amended (7 CFR part 985), regulating the handling of spearmint oil produced in the Far West (Washington, Idaho, Oregon, and designated parts of Nevada and Utah), hereinafter referred to as the "order." The order is effective under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), hereinafter referred to as the "Act."

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing this rule in conformance with Executive Order 12866.

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This rule is not intended to have retroactive effect. This rule will not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies, unless they present an irreconcilable conflict with this rule.

The Act provides that administrative proceedings must be exhausted before parties may file suit in court. Under section 608c(15)(A) of the Act, any handler subject to an order may file with USDA a petition stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order is not in accordance with law and request a modification of the order or to be exempted therefrom. A handler is afforded the opportunity for a hearing on the petition. After the hearing USDA would rule on the petition. The Act provides that the district court of the

United States in any district in which the handler is an inhabitant, or has his or her principal place of business, has jurisdiction to review USDA's ruling on the petition, provided an action is filed not later than 20 days after the date of the entry of the ruling.

The initial salable quantity and allotment percentages for Scotch and Native spearmint oils for the 2004-2005 marketing year were recommended by the Committee at its October 8, 2003, meeting. The Committee recommended salable quantities of 766,880 pounds and 773,474 pounds, and allotment percentages of 40 percent and 36 percent, respectively, for Scotch and Native spearmint oils. A proposed rule was published in the **Federal Register** on January 23, 2004 (69 FR 3272). Comments on the proposed rule were solicited from interested persons until February 23, 2004. No comments were received. Subsequently, a final rule establishing the salable quantities and allotment percentages for Scotch and Native spearmint oils for the 2004-2005 marketing year was published in the **Federal Register** on March 22, 2004 (69 FR 13213).

Pursuant to authority contained in §§ 985.50, 985.51, and 985.52 of the order, the Committee has made unanimous Committee recommendations to increase the quantity of Native spearmint oil that handlers may purchase from, or handle for, producers during the 2004-2005 marketing year, which ends on May 31, 2005. An interim final rule was published in the **Federal Register** on October 21, 2004 (69 FR 61755), which increased the salable quantity from 773,474 pounds to 1,095,689 pounds, and the allotment percentage from 36 percent to 51 percent. Comments on the interim final rule were solicited from interested persons until December 20, 2004. No comments were received. In addition, an amended interim final rule was published in the **Federal Register** on February 23, 2005 (70 FR 8712), which further increased the salable quantity by 171,873 pounds to 1,267,562 pounds, and the allotment percentage by 8 percent to 59 percent. Comments on the amended interim final rule are being solicited from interested persons through April 25, 2005.

This rule further amends the interim final rule published on February 23, 2005, and is based on a unanimous Committee recommendation made at a meeting on February 23, 2005, to increase the salable quantity an additional 85,936 pounds from 1,267,562 pounds to 1,353,498 pounds, and the allotment percentage an