

This change represents a small increase in costs for producers and handlers of Vintage Ripes™, primarily from costs associated with developing and maintaining the IP program. However, this rule will make additional volumes of Vintage Ripes™ available for shipment. This should result in increased sales of Vintage Ripes™. Consequently, the benefits of this action are expected to more than offset the associated costs.

One alternative to this action that was considered was to not provide an exemption from shape requirements for Vintage Ripes™. However, providing the exemption will increase the volume of Vintage Ripes™ that will meet the order requirements, and will help increase shipments and availability of these tomatoes for consumers. Further, the same exemption had been provided previously for a similar tomato. Therefore, this alternative was rejected.

This rule will not impose any additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements beyond the IP program on either small or large tomato handlers. As with all Federal marketing order programs, reports and forms are periodically reviewed to reduce information requirements and duplication by industry and public sector agencies.

AMS is committed to complying with the E-Government Act, to promote the use of the Internet and other information technologies to provide increased opportunities for citizen access to Government information and services, and for other purposes.

In addition, USDA has not identified any relevant Federal rules that duplicate, overlap or conflict with this rule.

Further, the Committee's meeting was widely publicized throughout the Florida tomato industry and all interested persons were invited to attend the meeting and participate in Committee deliberations. Like all Committee meetings, the September 4, 2008, meeting was a public meeting and all entities, both large and small, were able to express their views on this issue.

Finally, interested persons are invited to submit comments on this interim final rule, including the regulatory and informational impacts of this action on small businesses.

A small business guide on complying with fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop marketing agreements and orders may be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateN&page=MarketingOrdersSmallBusinessGuide>. Any questions about the compliance guide should be

sent to Jay Guerber at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

This rule invites comments on a partial exemption to the minimum grade requirements prescribed under the order. A 60-day comment period is provided to allow interested persons to respond to this rule. All written comments timely received will be considered before a final determination is made on this matter.

After consideration of all relevant material presented, including the Committee's recommendation, and other information, it is found that this interim final rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553, it is also found and determined upon good cause that it is impracticable, unnecessary, and contrary to the public interest to give preliminary notice prior to putting this rule into effect and that good cause exists for not postponing the effective date of this rule until 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register** because: (1) The shipment of Florida Vintage Ripes™ begins in November, 2008; (2) this rule relaxes requirements prescribed in the order; (3) the Committee unanimously recommended this change at a public meeting and interested parties had an opportunity to provide input; and (4) this rule provides a 60-day comment period and any comments received will be considered prior to finalization of this rule.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 966

Marketing agreements, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Tomatoes.

■ For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 966 is amended as follows:

PART 966—TOMATOES GROWN IN FLORIDA

■ 1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 966 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

■ 2. In § 966.323, paragraph (d)(5) all references to “UglyRipe™” are revised to read “UglyRipe™ and Vintage Ripes™”.

Dated: December 10, 2008.

James E. Link,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. E8–29658 Filed 12–15–08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 1280

[Docket No. LS–08–0041]

Lamb Promotion and Research Program: Procedures To Request Conduct of a Referendum

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule amends the regulations issued under the Lamb Promotion, Research, and Information Order (Order) pursuant to administrative changes to Web addresses and office locations within the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

DATES: *Effective Date:* December 17, 2008.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Payne, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch, on (202) 720–1115, fax (202) 720–1125, or by e-mail at Kenneth.Payne@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996 (Act) (7 U.S.C. 7411–7425) authorizes USDA to establish generic programs of promotion, research, and information for agricultural commodities designed to strengthen an industry's position in the marketplace and to maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for agricultural commodities. Pursuant to the Act, a proposed Order on the Lamb Checkoff Program was published in the **Federal Register** on September 21, 2001 (66 FR 48764). The final Order was published in the **Federal Register** on April 11, 2002 (67 FR 17848). Collection of assessments began on July 1, 2002.

This program is funded primarily by those persons engaged in the production and feeding of lambs in the amount of one-half cent (\$.005) per pound when live lambs are sold. For purposes of this program, the term “lamb” as defined in the Order means, “any ovine animal of any age, including ewes and rams.”

First handlers, which means the packer or other person who buys or takes possession of lambs from a producer or feeder for slaughter, including custom slaughter, are assessed an additional \$.30 cents per head purchased for slaughter or slaughtered by such first handler pursuant to a custom slaughter arrangement. Each

person who processes or causes to be processed lamb or lamb products of that person's own production and markets the processed products is assessed one-half cent (\$.005) per pound on the live weight at the time of slaughter and is required to pay an additional assessment of \$.30 per head. Assessment rates may be adjusted in accordance with applicable provisions of the Act and the Order. The Order also requires persons to collect and remit assessments to the American Lamb Board (Board). Each producer, feeder, or seedstock producer is obligated to pay that portion of the assessment that is equivalent to that producer's, feeder's, or seedstock producer's proportionate share and shall transfer the assessment to the subsequent purchaser. Additionally, a person who is a market agency (*i.e.*, commission merchant, auction market, or broker in the business of receiving such lamb or lamb products for sale on commission for or on behalf of a producer, feeder, or seedstock producer) is required to collect an assessment and transfer the collected assessment on to the subsequent purchaser(s). Such persons will not be subject to the assessment and are not eligible to participate in a referendum. Any person who processes or causes to be processed lamb or lamb products of that person's own production and markets the processed products will be required to pay an additional assessment and remit the total assessment to the Board. Each first handler who buys or takes possession of lambs from a producer or feeder for slaughter is required to pay an additional assessment and remit the total assessment to the Board.

The Act requires that a referendum to ascertain approval of an Order must be conducted no later than 3 years after assessments first begin. Assessments began on July 1, 2002. A referendum of lamb producers, feeders, seedstock producers, and first handlers of lamb and lamb products was conducted from January 31, 2005, through February 28, 2005. A majority of the participants, who represented a majority of the volume of lambs, voted in favor of the continuation of the Order. The Act also requires a subsequent referendum on the Order be conducted no later than 7 years after assessments first begin. Thus, USDA is required to conduct a nationwide referendum among persons subject to the assessment by July 1, 2009. The Order will continue if a majority of those persons voting, who also represent a majority of the volume of lambs, voted in favor of continuing the program. If the continuation of the

Order is not approved by eligible persons voting in the referendum, USDA will begin the process of terminating the program.

This final rule amends Web site addresses cited in sections 1280.626 and 1280.631 that are currently outdated. This final rule also amends the physical address cited in section 1280.626, as it is also outdated. This rule is implemented in preparation for the 2009 referendum.

This rule relates to internal agency management. Therefore, this rule is exempt from the provisions of Executive Orders 12866 and 12988, and for this same reason the notice of proposed rulemaking and opportunity for comment are also not required, and this rule may be effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**. In addition, under 5 U.S.C. 804, this rule is not subject to congressional review under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104–121). Finally, this rule is not a rule as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601–612) (RFA). Therefore, this rule is exempt from the requirements of RFA.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 1280

Administrative practice and procedure, Advertising, Agricultural research, Marketing agreements, Lamb and lamb products, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

■ For the reasons set forth in the preamble, Title 7, part 1280 is amended as follows:

PART 1280—LAMB PROMOTION, RESEARCH, AND INFORMATION

■ 1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 1280 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7411–7425 and 7 U.S.C. 7401.

Subpart E—Procedures To Request a Referendum

■ 2. In § 1280.626, paragraph (b) the Web site <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/rp-lamb.htm> is removed and a new Web site www.ams.usda.gov/lsmarketingprograms is added in its place.

■ 3. In § 1280.631, paragraph (a) is revised to read as follows:

§ 1280.631 Results of the referendum.

(a) The Administrator, FSA, shall submit to the Administrator, AMS, the reports from all State FSA offices. The Administrator, AMS, shall tabulate the results of the ballots. USDA will issue an official press release announcing the

results of referendum and publish the same results in the **Federal Register**. In addition, USDA will post the official results at the following Web site: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/LSMarketingPrograms> or such other Web site as announced by the Administrator of AMS. Subsequently, State reports and related papers shall be available for public inspection upon request during normal business hours in the Marketing Programs Branch; Livestock and Seed Program, AMS, USDA, Room 2628–S; STOP 0251; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC.

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Dated: December 10, 2008.

James E. Link,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Administration

[Docket No.: 080213181–8811–01]

RIN 0610–AA64

13 CFR Parts 301, 302, 303, 305, 307, 308, 310, 314 and 315

Revisions to the EDA Regulations

AGENCY: Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce

ACTION: Extension of public comment period on interim final rule.

SUMMARY: On October 22, 2008, the Economic Development Administration (“EDA”) published an interim final rule in the **Federal Register**. This document extends the deadline for submitting public comments on the interim final rule from December 22, 2008 until January 22, 2009. The extension of the public comment period is necessary to provide additional time for the submission of public comments and to allow for EDA’s additional consideration of matters pertaining to the effective implementation of the interim final rule.

DATES: The deadline for submitting public comments on the interim final rule is extended from 5 p.m. (EST) on December 22, 2008 until 5 p.m. (EST) on January 22, 2009.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Office of Chief Counsel, ATTN: Hina Shaikh, Economic Development Administration, Department of Commerce, Room 7005, 1401