

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Research Service

Notice of Intent To Seek Reinstatement of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 3) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320, this notice announces the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) intent to seek reinstatement of the ARS Animal Health National Program Assessment Survey, which seeks input on the impact of the Animal Health National Research Program through the completion of an electronic evaluation form. This voluntary information collection will give the beneficiaries of ARS research the opportunity to provide input on the impact of the research conducted by ARS in the last national program cycle. This input will be used for planning the research agenda for the next 5-year program cycle.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by December 31, 2012 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments concerning this notice to Dr. Cyril G. Gay, National Program Leader, Agricultural Research Service, National Program Staff, Animal Production and Protection, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, GWCC, Building 4, Beltsville, Maryland 20705-5148. Comments may be sent by phone to (301) 504-4786 or fax to (301) 504-4873. Submit electronic comments to Cyril.Gay@ars.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Cyril G. Gay at (301) 504-4786.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: ARS Animal Health National Program Assessment Evaluation Form.

OMB Number: 0518-0042.

Expiration Date: February 28, 2013.

Type of Request: Approval to seek reinstatement of the ARS Animal Health National Program Assessment Survey, which seeks input from the beneficiaries of research conducted by ARS for program planning and ensures alignment of the Animal Health National Program with the needs of our customers, partners, and stakeholders.

Abstract: This voluntary electronic evaluation form will give the beneficiaries of ARS research the opportunity to provide input on the impact of the national program on animal agriculture. For the purpose of this National Program Assessment, impact is defined as research that has influenced or will significantly influence the animal sciences and animal health, has created or will create economic opportunities for producers and farmers, or has enabled or will enable action and regulatory agencies to formulate policies and regulations to support American agriculture. The report and evaluation form will be available on-line through a dedicated URL. The input provided through the completion of the evaluation form will be shared with customers, partners, and stakeholders through webinars, conference calls and/or meetings, which will be held during the input stage of the program planning cycle.

ARS National Program Assessments are conducted every 5 years, through the organization of webinars, conference calls and/or meetings. These input sessions allow ARS to periodically update the vision and rationale of each National Program and assess the relevancy, effectiveness, and responsiveness of ARS research. In addition, these input sessions facilitate the review and simultaneously provide an opportunity for customers, stakeholders, and partners to assess the progress made through the National Program and provide input for future modifications to the National Program or the National Program's research agenda.

In the case of the ARS Animal Health National Program, the beneficiaries of the research are numerous, including the majority of the livestock and poultry industries, trade associations, Federal and State government agencies, and research partners in universities and the private sector. The electronic evaluation

form will allow ARS to outreach to its many customers, partners, and stakeholders that are unable to attend the webinars, conference calls and/or meetings and also ensure an efficient means of obtaining the greatest amount of input on the impact and direction of the ARS Animal Health National Research Program.

Estimate of Burden: Completing the electronic evaluation form is estimated to average 15 minutes per response.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 400.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 100 hours.

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 the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and the assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the input provided by a wide array of customers, and; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technology. Comments should be sent to the address in the preamble. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Dated: October 22, 2012.

Caird E. Rexroad, Jr.,

Associate Administrator, ARS.

[FR Doc. 2012-26616 Filed 10-29-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-03-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Request for Extension and Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration's intention to request that the Office of Management and Budget approve a 3-year extension and revision of a currently approved information collection in support of the reporting and recordkeeping requirements for the Swine Contract Library program.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 31, 2012.

ADDRESSES: We invite you to submit comments on this notice. You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Internet:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Mail, hand deliver, or courier* to Dexter Thomas, GIPSA, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 2530-S, Washington, DC 20250-3604.
- *Fax* to (202) 690-2173.

Instructions: All comments should refer to the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**. The information collection package, public comments, and other documents relating to this action will be available for public inspection in the above office during regular business hours. Please call GIPSA's Management and Budget Services at (202) 720-7486 to arrange a viewing of these documents.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Catherine M. Grasso, Program Analyst, Policy and Litigation Division at (202) 720-7363 or catherine.m.grasso@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) is responsible for maintaining the Swine Contract Library, which is authorized by the Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR) Act of 1999, and requires that certain packers submit hog procurement contracts and delivery estimates to GIPSA. The Swine Contract Library was reauthorized by Congress on October 5, 2006 through 2010. On September 28, 2010, the Mandatory Price Reporting Act of 2010 reauthorized LMR for an additional 5 years.

Title: Swine Contract Library.

OMB Number: 0580-0021.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 2013.

Type of Request: Extension and revision of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The information collection and recordkeeping requirements for the

Swine Contract Library are essential to maintaining the mandatory library of swine marketing contracts and reporting the number of swine contracted for delivery. There are currently 30 packers that are required to file contracts and report certain information on deliveries for a total of 43 plants that they either operate or at which they have swine slaughtered. We expect the overall number of plants and packers to remain relatively constant, but the specific packers required to report will vary with consolidation and construction in the industry.

Packers are required to report information for individual plants even in instances when a given packer owned or used more than one plant. The information collection burden estimate provided below is based on time and cost requirements at the plant level. Consequently, packers that report for more than one plant would bear a cost that would be a multiple of the per-plant estimates.

We understand from discussions with packers complying with current reporting requirements that reporting packers have adapted pre-existing data and information systems to provide the required information.

There are two types of information collections required for the Swine Contract Library.

The first information collection requirement consists of submitting example contracts. Initially, a packer submits example contracts currently in effect or available for each swine processing plant that is subject to the regulations. Subsequently, a packer submits example contracts for any offered, new, or amended contracts that vary from previously submitted contracts in regard to the base price determination, the application of a ledger or accrual account, carcass merit premium and discount schedules (including the determination of the lean percent or other merits of the carcass that is used to determine the amount of the premiums and discounts and how those premiums and discounts are applied), or the use and amount of noncarcass merit premiums or discounts. The initial submission of example contracts requires more time than subsequent filings of new contracts or changes, as packers initially need to review all their contracts to identify the unique types that need to be represented by an example submitted to GIPSA.

Thereafter, subsequent filings require a minimal amount of effort on the part of packers, as only example contracts that represent a new or different type need to be filed with GIPSA. P&SP-342 must accompany each contract

submission to identify the contract, the plan for which the contract is valid, and the contact person.

The required submission of contracts includes both written and verbal contracts. Packers have added documentation of verbal contracts to their existing recordkeeping systems in order to comply with this requirement. The optional form that is available, but not required, for reporting verbal contracts is used by 10 packers; 2 packers that rely heavily on verbal contracts use this optional form exclusively to document their verbal contracts. Of 1,022 contracts files on file, the optional verbal contract sheet was used to document 245 verbal contracts.

The second information collection requirement is a monthly filing of summary information on form P&SP 341, Monthly Report: Estimates of Swine To Be Delivered Under Contract. The form for the monthly filing is simple and brief. For new packers required to start reporting, this data should be available in the packers' existing record system. Electronic submission is encouraged and we provide the necessary information on procedures to submit data to GIPSA electronically. In 2011, 50 percent of monthly reports were submitted through the Web site, with the remaining 50 percent submitted by facsimile or mail.

The estimates of time requirements used for the burden estimates below were developed in consultation with GIPSA personnel knowledgeable of the industry's recordkeeping practices. The estimates also reflect our experience in assembling large amount of data during the course of numerous investigations involving use of data collected from the industry. Estimates of time requirements and hourly wage costs for developing electronic recordkeeping and reporting systems are based on our experience in developing similar systems in consultation with our automated information systems staff.

(1) Contract Submission Cover Sheet (Form P&SP-342)

Estimate of Burden: Reporting burden for submission of contracts is estimated to include 4 hours per plant for an initial review of all contracts to categorize them into types and identify unique examples, plus an additional 0.25 hours per unique contract identified during the initial review to submit an example of that contract. After the initial filing, the reporting burden is estimated to include 0.25 hours per plant to submit an example of each new or amended contract.

Respondents: Packers required to report information for the Swine Contract Library.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 30 packers (total of 43 plants).

Estimated Number of Responses per Plant: Number of responses per plant varies. Some plants would have no contracts, while other could have up to 80 contracts. We receive an average of six example contracts per plant per year for offered contracts and for amended existing or available contracts.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: Initial filing: 5.5 total hours for the initial filing of examples of existing contracts by all plants newly subject to the regulations combined. Based on changes in the industry, we anticipate one new plant to become subject to the regulations each year. Calculated as follows: 4 hours per plant for initial review \times 1 new plant = 4 hours for initial review; 0.25 hours per contract \times 6 example contracts per plant \times 1 new plant = 1.5 hours; 4 hours + 1.5 hours = 5.5 total hours.

Thereafter, 64.5 total hours annually for all subsequent filing of examples for offered contracts and for amended existing or available contracts by all plants combined, based on an average of 6 offered or amended existing or available contracts annually. Calculated as follows: 0.25 hours per contract \times 6 example contracts per plant \times 43 plants = 64.5 hours.

Total Cost: Initial filing \$138 for all plants combined. Calculated as follows: 5.5 hours \times \$25 per hour = \$138.

Thereafter, \$1,613 annually for all plants combined for submission of subsequent filings. Calculated as follows: 64.5 hours \times \$25 per hour = \$1,613.

(2) Monthly Report: Estimate of Swine To Be Delivered Under Contract (Form P&SP-341)

Estimate of Burden: The reporting burden for compiling data, completing and submitting the form is estimated to average 2 hours per manually prepared and submitted (by mail or facsimile) report and 1 hour per electronically prepared and submitted report. There would be an estimated additional one-time set up burden of 1 hour at a cost of \$60 per plant for a packer that chose to create a spreadsheet or database for recordkeeping and preparation of monthly estimates. There would be an estimated additional 2 hour burden at a cost of \$60 per hour or \$120 per plant for a packer to develop procedures to extract and format the required information and to develop an interface between the packer's electronic recordkeeping system and GIPSA's

system. The hourly rate for the development of electronic tools is assumed to be high due to the need to use personnel with specialized computer skills.

Respondents: Packers required to report information for the Swine Contract Library.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 30 packers (total of 43 plants).

Estimated Number of Responses per Plant: 12 (1 per month for 12 months).

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1,032 hours for all plants combined provided all plants used manual compiling, preparation, and submission. Calculated as follows: 2 hours per response \times 43 plants \times 12 responses per plant = 1,032.

516 hours for all plants combined provided all plants use electronic compiling, preparation, and submission. Calculated as follows: 1 hour per response \times 43 plants \times 12 responses per plant = 516 hours.

Total Cost: \$25,800 annually for all plants combined provided all use manual submission. Calculated as follows: 1,032 \times \$25 per hour = \$25,800.

\$12,900 annually for all plants combined provided all were to completely utilize electronic preparation and submission. Calculated as follows: 516 hours \times \$25 per hour = \$12,900.

Additional \$180 one-time set-up cost provided all plants newly subject to the Regulations were to completely utilize electronic systems for preparation and submission.

Calculated as follows: 1 hour build spreadsheet/database + 2 hours develop electronic interface = 3 hours. 3 hours total development \times \$60 per hour \times 1 new plant = \$180.

The Paperwork Reduction Act also requires GIPSA to measure the recordkeeping burden. Under the Packers and Stockyards Act and its existing regulations, each packer is required to maintain and make available upon request any records necessary to verify information on all transactions between the packer and producers from whom the packer obtains swine for slaughter. Records that packers are required to maintain under existing regulations would meet the requirements for verifying the accuracy of information required to be reported for the Swine Contract Library. These records include original contracts, agreements, receipts, schedules, and other records associated with any transaction related to the purchase, pricing, and delivery of swine for slaughter under the terms of marketing contracts. Additional annual costs of maintaining records would be nominal

since packers are required to store and maintain such records as a matter of normal business practice and in conformity with existing regulations.

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)) and its implementing regulations (5 CFR 1320.8(d)(1)), we specifically request comment to:

(a) Evaluate 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) Evaluate 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) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) Minimize the burden on 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 responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for the Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3506 and 5 CFR 1320.8.

Larry Mitchell,

Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration.

[FR Doc. 2012-26723 Filed 10-29-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-EN-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Publication of Depreciation Rates

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS) administers rural utilities programs, including the Telecommunications Program. RUS announces the depreciation rates for telecommunications plant for the period ending December 31, 2011.

DATES: These rates are effective immediately and will remain in effect until rates are available for the period ending December 31, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jonathan P. Claffey, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, STOP