

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

October 23, 2013.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) Whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (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 should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), *OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV* or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8958.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to

the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Food and Nutrition Service

Title: Operating Guidelines, Forms and Waivers.

OMB Control Number: 0584-0083.

Summary of Collection: Under section 16 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (the Act), 7 U.S.C. 2025, the Secretary is authorized to pay each State agency an amount equal to 50 percent of all administrative costs involved in each State agency's operation of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Under corresponding SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 272.2(c), the State agency must submit to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) annually for approval a Budget Projection Statement (FNS-366A), which projects total costs for major areas of SNAP operations, and a Program Activity Statement (FNS-366B), which provides a summary of SNAP operations during the preceding fiscal year.

Need and Use of the Information: FNS will collect information to estimate funding needs and also provide data on the number of applications processed, number of fair hearings, and fraud control activity. FNS uses the data to estimate funding needs and to monitor State agency activity levels and performance. If the information were not collected it would disrupt budget planning and delay appropriation distributions and FNS would not be able to verify and ensure State compliance with statutory criteria.

Description of Respondents: State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 53.

Frequency of Responses:

Recordkeeping; Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 2,866.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013-25372 Filed 10-28-13; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-30-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

October 24, 2013.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for

review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) Whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (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 should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), *OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV* or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602.

Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8958.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Foreign Agricultural Service

Title: Certificate for Quota Eligibility (CQE).

OMB Control Number: 0551-0014.

Summary of Collection: 5(a)(i) of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States authorize the Secretary to establish a raw-cane sugar tariff-rate quota (TRQ). 5(b)(1) authorizes the U.S. Trade Representative to allocate the raw-cane sugar tariff-rate quota among supplying countries. Certificates of Quota Eligibility (CQE) are issued to the 40 countries that receive TRQ allocations to export sugar to the United States. The CQE is completed by the

certifying authority in the foreign country that certifies that the sugar being exported to the United States was produced in the foreign country that has the TRQ allocation. The Foreign Agriculture will collect information using form FAS-961.

Need and Use of the Information: FAS will collect the following information: (1) Country of origin or area of the eligible raw cane sugar; (2) quota period; (3) quantity of raw cane sugar to be exported; (4) details of the shipment (shipper, vessel, port of loading); and (5) additional details if available at the time of shipment (consignee, address of consignee, expected date of departure, expected date of arrival in the U.S., expected port of arrival). The information will help determine if the quantity to be imported is eligible to be entered under the TRQ.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 40.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 204.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2013-25548 Filed 10-28-13; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

[FNS-2013-0033]

Request for Information: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Enhancing Retail Food Store Eligibility; Extension of Comment Period

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; Extension of Comment Period.

SUMMARY: Sections 3(k), (p) and (r), Section 7, and Section 9 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (“the Act”), and Title 7 Parts 271, 274, and 278 of the Code of Federal Regulations (“the regulations”) provide factors for determining the eligibility of retail food stores to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (“SNAP”). This notice requests information from any and all interested parties on opportunities to enhance retailer definitions and requirements in a manner that improves access to healthy food choices for SNAP participants as well as program integrity, and ensures that only those

retailers that effectuate the purpose of SNAP are authorized to accept benefits. The Food and Nutrition Service (“FNS”) considers access to a variety of healthy foods at SNAP retailers to be fundamental to the effectiveness of this critical nutrition assistance program. FNS is requesting information to understand what policy changes and, as needed, statutory changes, should be considered for retailer authorizations. FNS will use this information in determining how to make positive progress in the available healthy choices for program participants at authorized SNAP retail stores. The comment period is being extended to provide additional time for interested parties to review this request for information.

DATES: The comment period for the notice that was published on August 20, 2013 (78 FR 51136) has been extended from October 21, 2013 to November 6, 2013. To be assured of consideration, comments must be postmarked on or before November 6, 2013.

ADDRESSES: Comments may be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically. Comments can also be mailed or delivered to: Shanta Swezy, Chief, Retailer Management and Issuance Branch, Retailer Policy and Management Division, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 426, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

All comments submitted in response to this notice will be included in the record and will be made available to the public at www.regulations.gov. Please be advised that the substance of the comments and the identity of the individuals or entities commenting will be subject to public disclosure.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Shanta Swezy, Chief, Retailer Management and Issuance Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, (703) 305-2238.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At the end of fiscal year (FY) 2012, over 246,000 retailers were authorized to redeem SNAP benefits. This is an increase of almost 100,000 authorized stores since 2005. According to the most recent data available (2012), 82 percent of all benefits redeemed were redeemed at supermarkets, large grocers and superstores. Approximately 18 percent of benefits were redeemed at smaller stores, including convenience stores, small grocers and farmers’ markets. Less than one percent were redeemed by authorized treatment programs, group homes, homeless meal providers,

communal dining facilities and shelters as provided for in statute. A 2009 FNS study on benefit use indicates that 96.3 percent of all SNAP beneficiaries shopped at supermarkets or superstores at least once each month.

According to Sections 3(k), (p) and (r), and Section 9 of the Act, and Title 7, Parts 271 and 278 of the regulations, to be eligible to participate in SNAP, stores must sell food for home preparation and consumption and meet one of the criteria below:

(A) Offer for sale, on a continuous basis (any given day of operation), at least three varieties of qualifying foods in each of the following four staple food groups, with perishable foods in at least two of the categories:

- Meat, poultry or fish
- Bread or cereal
- Vegetables or fruits
- Dairy products

or

(B) More than one-half (50 percent) of the total dollar amount of all things (food, nonfood, gas and services) sold in the store must be from the sale of eligible staple foods.

The last major changes to the store eligibility requirements took place in the early 1990’s as a result of congressional action. Today, a store that consistently stocks as few as 12 total food items from the required staple foods categories could technically be licensed to participate in SNAP. Store authorization data collected from retailers by USDA indicates that over 90,000 currently authorized SNAP retailers have substantial (over 50 percent) sales that stem from ineligible items.

In addition to providing minimal access to healthy food, retailers that do not provide sufficient healthful offerings often tend to be those stores that present the greatest integrity challenges for USDA. The sale or exchange of SNAP benefits for cash is referred to as “trafficking”, an illegal activity punishable by law. According to the latest FNS trafficking study covering the period 2009–2011, 99.5 percent of all trafficking stores involve retailers *other than* supermarkets, superstores and large grocers. Further, 84.5 percent of all benefit dollars trafficked involve retailers *other than* supermarkets, superstores and large grocers. The large number of smaller stores—roughly 222,000 authorized store locations nationwide—redeemed 15 percent of SNAP recipient’s benefits and present the greatest integrity challenge for FNS; the trafficking rate in these store types was 7.6 percent. The store violation rate was 12.45 percent. A 2006 report by the Government Accountability Office