

of the provisions of the Act was the authorization of the section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program (GRRHP), adding the program to the Housing Act of 1949. The purpose of the GRRHP is to increase the supply of affordable rural rental housing through the use of loan guarantees that encourage partnerships between the Rural Housing Service (RHS), private lenders and public agencies. RUS will approve qualified lenders to participate and monitor lender performance to ensure program requirements are met. RHS will collect information from lenders on the eligibility cost, benefits, feasibility, and financial performance of the proposed project.

Need and Use of the Information: RHS will collect information from lenders to manage, plan, evaluate, and account for Government resources and from time to time, propose demonstration programs that use loan guarantees or interest credit. The GRRHP regulation and handbook will provide lenders and agency staff with guidance on the origination, and servicing of GRRHP loans and the approval of qualified lenders. RHS will use the information to evaluate a lender's request and make determination that the interests of the government are protected. Failure to collect information could have an adverse impact on the agency ability to monitor lenders and assess program effectiveness and effectively guarantee loans.

Description of Respondents: Business or other for-profit; Not-for-profit Institutions.

Number of Respondents: 150.
Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Quarterly; Monthly; Annually.
Total Burden Hours: 2,059.

Rural Housing Service

Title: RD 1951–65, “Customer Initiated Payments”, RD 1951–66, “FedWire Worksheet”, and 3550–28, “Authorization Agreement for Preauthorization Payments”.

OMB Control Number: 0575–0184.

Summary of Collection: Rural Development (RD) uses electronic methods for receiving and processing loan payments and collections. These electronic collection methods are approved by Treasury and include Preauthorized Debits (PAD), Customer Initiated Payments (CIP), and FedWire. These electronic collection methods provide the borrower the ability to submit their loan payments the day prior to, or the day of their installment due date. To administer these electronic payment methods, RD will use approved agency forms for collecting

financial institution routing information. Form RD 3550–28, Authorization Agreement for Preauthorized Payments, is prepared by the borrower to authorized RD to electronically collect regular loan payments from a borrower's account at a financial institution (FI) as preauthorized debits. Form RD 1951–65, is prepared by the borrower to enroll in CIP. CIP is an electronic collection method that enables borrowers to input payment data to a contract bank via telephone (touch tone and voice) or computer terminal. Form RD 1951–66, FedWire Worksheet, is completed by the borrower to establish an electronic FedWire format with their FI.

Need and Use of the Information: RD will request that borrowers make payments electronically via PAD, CIP, or FedWire. The information is collected only once unless the FI routing information changes. If the information were not collected, RD would be unable to collect loan payments electronically.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-profit institutions; Business or other for-profit; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Number of Respondents: 8,260.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 4,242.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2017–0083]

General Conference Committee of the National Poultry Improvement Plan; Solicitation for Membership

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of solicitation for membership.

SUMMARY: We are giving notice that the Secretary of Agriculture is soliciting nominations for the election of a member at-large and regional members and their alternates for the General Conference Committee of the National Poultry Improvement Plan.

DATES: Consideration will be given to nominations received on or before May 1, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Completed nomination forms should be sent to the person listed

under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Denise L. Brinson, Senior Coordinator, National Poultry Improvement Plan, VS, APHIS, USDA, 1506 Klondike Road, Suite 101, Conyers, GA 30094; phone (770) 922–3496; fax (770)–922–3498; Denise.l.brinson@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The General Conference Committee (the Committee) of the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) is the Secretary's Advisory Committee on poultry health. The Committee serves as a forum for the study of problems relating to poultry health and, as necessary, makes specific recommendations to the Secretary concerning ways the U.S. Department of Agriculture may assist the industry in addressing these problems. The Committee assists the Department in planning, organizing, and conducting the Biennial Conference of the NPIP. The Committee recommends whether new proposals should be considered by the delegates to the Biennial Conference and serves as a direct liaison between the NPIP and the United States Animal Health Association.

The Committee consists of an elected member-at-large who is an NPIP participant and an elected member (and alternate) from each of the six U.S. regions represented on the Committee. Terms will expire for three current regional members of the Committee, as well as the member-at-large, in June 2018. We are soliciting nominations from interested organizations and individuals to replace the member-at-large and members from the North Atlantic (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont), East North Central (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin), and Western (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming) regions.

Member selection is determined by a majority vote of the NPIP delegates from the respective regions. The member-at-large will be elected by a majority vote of all official delegates. There must be at least two nominees for each position. Persons interested in serving on the Committee or nominating another individual to serve must complete Form AD–755, which is available on the internet at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-755> or may be obtained by contacting the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

To ensure the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership should include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent underrepresented groups (minorities, women, and persons with disabilities). At least one nominee from each of the three regions, as well as for the member-at-large, must be from an underrepresented group. The voting will be by secret ballot of official delegates, and the results will be recorded.

Done in Washington, DC, this 7th day of December 2017.

Kevin Shea,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2017-0093]

Notice of Request for Revision to and Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request a revision to and extension of approval of an information collection associated with the regulations for the commercial transportation of equines to slaughtering facilities.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before February 12, 2018.

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

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2017-0093>.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2017-0093, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=>

APHIS-2017-0093 or in our reading room, which 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 202-799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the regulations for the commercial transportation of equines for slaughter, contact Mr. Joseph Astling, Compliance & Outreach, Commercial Transport of Equines for Slaughter, Surveillance, Preparedness, and Response Services, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 46, Riverdale, MD 20737; (817) 247-3704. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Kimberly Hardy, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 851-2843.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter.

OMB Control Number: 0579-0332.

Type of Request: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: Sections 901-905 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 1901) authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to issue guidelines for regulating the commercial transportation of equines for slaughter by persons regularly engaged in that activity within the United States. Specifically, the Secretary is authorized to regulate the food, water, and rest provided to these equines while the equines are in transit and to review related issues appropriate to ensuring that these animals are treated humanely. Based on that authority, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) established regulations in 9 CFR part 88, "Commercial Transportation of Equines for Slaughter."

The regulations in part 88 provide minimum standards that cover, among other things, the food, water, and rest provided to such equines prior to transportation. The regulations also prohibit the commercial transportation for slaughter of equines considered to be unfit for travel, the use of electric prods on such animals in commercial transportation for slaughter, and the use of double-deck trailers for commercial transportation of equines for slaughter.

APHIS' regulations also require the application of backtags and the completion of owner/shipper

certificates of fitness to travel to a slaughter facility that include identification of the animals, details of the transportation, and signatures attesting to compliance with the provision of food, rest, and water, and to the animal's fitness to travel. In addition, any owner/shipper transporting equines to slaughtering facilities outside the United States must present the owner-shipper certificates to USDA representatives at the U.S. border.

Implementing these regulations entails the use of information collection activities, such as providing business information, completing owner/shipper certificates of fitness to travel to a slaughter facility, certificates of veterinary inspection, maintaining records of the owner/shipper certificate and continuation sheet, and applying backtags, as needed.

The information collection requirements above are currently approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for the commercial transportation of equines for slaughter under OMB control numbers 0579-0332 and 0579-0160. After OMB approves this combined information collection package (0579-0332), APHIS will retire OMB control number 0579-0160.

We are asking OMB to approve our use of these information collection activities, as described, for an additional 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. These comments will help us:

(1) Evaluate 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;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

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

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, and other collection technologies; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.465 hours per response.

Respondents: Owners and shippers of slaughter horses, owners or operators of slaughtering facilities, and drivers of the transport vehicles.