

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 Marketing Service

[Docket No. AMS-LPS-17-0046]

United States Standards for Grades of Pork Carcasses

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; reopening of comment period.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is reopening the comment period on the notice requesting comments on revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Pork Carcasses (pork standards) published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017. The comment period for this notice closed on December 22, 2017. The revisions are intended to modernize the standards and meet stakeholder demands by segregating the population of commodity pork products into uniform groups (of similar quality, value, etc.) that can facilitate the production and marketing of pork and deliver certain eating expectations for the consumer.

DATES: Comments on the notice published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017, must be received by March 19, 2018.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit comments electronically at <https://www.regulations.gov>. Written comments should be sent to: Pork Carcass Revisions, Standardization Branch, Quality Assessment Division; Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 3932-S, STOP 0258, Washington, DC 20250-0258. Comments may also be emailed to porkcarcassrevisions@ams.usda.gov. All comments should reference docket number AMS-LPS-17-0046, the date of submission, the page

numbers of this issue, and the October 23, 2017, issue of the *Federal Register*. All comments received will be posted without change, including any personal information provided, and they will be made available for public inspection at the above physical address during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bucky Gwartney, International Marketing Specialist, Standardization Branch, Quality Assessment Division, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 3932-S, STOP 0258, Washington, DC 20250-0258; phone (202) 720-1424; or via email at Bucky.Gwartney@ams.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A notice was published in the *Federal Register* (82 FR 48971) on October 23, 2017, requesting comments on revisions to the pork standards. The 60-day comment period provided in the notice closed on December 22, 2017. Trade organizations submitted comments requesting a 60-day extension to enable industry stakeholders more time to evaluate the proposed changes and to submit comments. Therefore, AMS is reopening the comment period for the notice until March 19, 2018. AMS is reopening the public comment period to ensure that interested persons have sufficient time to review and comment on the notice.

Dated: January 10, 2018.

Bruce Summers,

Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 2018-00627 Filed 1-16-18; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2017-0090]

Addition of the Philippines to the List of Regions Affected by Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that we are adding the Philippines to the list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service considers to be affected by highly

pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). This action follows our imposition of HPAI-related restrictions on avian commodities originating from or transiting the Philippines as a result of the confirmation of HPAI in the Philippines.

DATES: The Philippines was added to the list of regions under temporary restrictions on August 16, 2017. The Philippines is added to the list of regions considered to be affected by HPAI as of January 17, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Ingrid Kotowski, Regionalization Evaluation Services, National Import Export Services, VS, APHIS, 920 Main Campus Drive Suite 200, Raleigh, NC, 27606; (919) 855-7732; Ingrid.Kotowski@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals and animal products into the United States to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases, including Newcastle disease and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The regulations prohibit or restrict the importation of live poultry, poultry meat, and other poultry products from regions where these diseases are considered to exist.

Section 94.6 of part 94 of the regulations contains requirements governing the importation into the United States of carcasses, meat, parts or products of carcasses, and eggs (other than hatching eggs) of poultry, game birds, or other birds from regions of the world where HPAI exists or is reasonably believed to exist. HPAI is an extremely infectious and potentially fatal form of avian influenza in birds and poultry that, once established, can spread rapidly from flock to flock. A list of regions that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) considers affected with HPAI of any subtype is maintained on the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/ct-animal-disease-status>.

APHIS receives notice of HPAI outbreaks from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable. On August 11, 2017, the veterinary authorities of the Philippines reported to the OIE that