

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 84, No. 201

Thursday, October 17, 2019

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.

JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure

AGENCY: Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Bankruptcy Procedure, Judicial Conference of the United States.

ACTION: Notice of proposed amendments.

SUMMARY: The Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules have proposed amendments to the following rules and forms:

Interim Bankruptcy Rules: 1007(b), 1007(h), 1020, 2009, 2012(a), 2015, 3010(b), 3011, and 3016; and Bankruptcy Forms: 101, 201, 309E, 309E2, 309F, 309F2, 314, 315, and 425A.

DATES: All written comments and suggestions with respect to the proposed amendments may be submitted on or after the opening of the period for public comment on October 16, 2019, but no later than November 13, 2019.

ADDRESSES: The text of the proposed rules and the accompanying committee notes, along with the related forms, are posted on the Judiciary's website at: <http://www.uscourts.gov/rules-policies/proposed-amendments-published-public-comment>. Written comments must be submitted electronically, following the instructions provided on the website. All comments submitted will be posted on the website and available to the public.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rebecca A. Womeldorf, Secretary, Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Judicial Conference of the United States, Thurgood Marshall Federal Judiciary Building, One Columbus Circle NE, Suite 7-300, Washington, DC 20544, Telephone (202) 502-1820.

Dated: October 11, 2019.

Rebecca A. Womeldorf,
Secretary, Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure, Judicial Conference of the United States.

[FR Doc. 2019-22621 Filed 10-16-19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 2210-55-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-NOP-19-0090; NOP-19-04]

National Organic Program: Request for an Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) intention to request approval from the Office of Management and Budget, for an extension of the currently approved information collection National Organic Program (NOP) Reporting and Recordkeeping Requirements.

DATES: Comments received by December 16, 2019 will be considered.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this notice. Comments must be sent to Valerie Frances, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, National Organic Program, AMS/USDA, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 2642-S., Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250-0268 or by internet: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Written comments responding to this notice should be identified with the document number AMS-NOP-19-0090; NOP-19-04. It is USDA's intention to have all comments concerning this notice, including names and addresses when provided, regardless of submission procedure used, available for viewing on the [Regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (<http://www.regulations.gov>) internet site.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will also be available for viewing in person at USDA-AMS, National Organic Program, Room 2624-South Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1:00 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday

through Friday (except official Federal holidays). Persons wanting to visit the USDA South Building to view comments received in response to this notice are requested to make an appointment in advance by calling (202) 720-3252.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul I. Lewis, Ph.D., Director, Standards Division, National Organic Program, USDA-AMS, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 2642-So., Ag Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250, Telephone: (202) 720-3252, Fax: (202) 205-7808.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: National Organic Program.
OMB Number: 0581-0191.

Expiration Date of Approval: January 31, 2020.

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

Abstract: The Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA) as amended (7 U.S.C. 6501-6522) mandates that the Secretary develop the NOP to accredit eligible State program's governing State officials or private persons as certifying agents who would certify producers or handlers of agricultural products that have been produced using organic methods as provided for in OFPA. The USDA organic regulation (7 CFR part 205): (1) Established national standards governing the marketing of certain agricultural products as organically produced products; (2) assures consumers that organically produced products meet a consistent standard; and (3) facilitates interstate commerce in fresh and processed food that is organically produced.

Reporting and recordkeeping are essential to the integrity of the organic certification system. A paper trail is a critical element in carrying out the mandate of OFPA and NOP. Reporting and recordkeeping serve the AMS mission, program objectives, and management needs by providing information on the efficiency and effectiveness of the program. The information affects decisions because it is the basis for evaluating compliance with OFPA and NOP, for administering the program, for management decisions and planning, and for establishing the cost of the program. It supports administrative and regulatory actions in response to noncompliance with OFPA and NOP.

In general, the information collected is used by USDA, State program governing State officials, and certifying agents. It is created and submitted by State and foreign program officials, peer review auditors, accredited certifying agents, organic inspectors, certified organic producers and handlers, those seeking accreditation or certification, and parties interested in changing the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances at sections 205.600 through 205.607. Additionally, it causes most of these entities to have procedures and space for recordkeeping.

USDA. USDA is the accrediting authority. USDA accredits domestic and foreign certifying agents who certify domestic and foreign organic producers and handlers, using information from the agents documenting their business operations and program expertise. USDA also permits States to establish their own state organic programs after the programs are approved by the Secretary, using information from the States documenting their ability to operate such programs and showing that such programs meet the requirements of OFPA and NOP.

States. States may operate their own organic programs. State officials obtain the Secretary's approval of their programs by submitting information to USDA documenting their ability to operate such programs and showing that such programs meet the requirements of OFPA and NOP. The Secretary, or delegated representative, will review a State organic program not less than once during each 5-year period following the date of the initial program approval. To date, one State organic program is approved by USDA.

Certifying agents. Certifying agents are State, private, or foreign entities who are accredited by USDA to certify domestic and foreign producers and handlers as organic in accordance with OFPA and NOP. Each entity wanting to be an agent seeks accreditation from USDA, submitting information documenting its business operations and program expertise. Accredited certifying agents determine if a producer or handler meets organic requirements, using detailed information from the operation documenting its specific practices and on-site inspection reports from organic inspectors. As of August 7, 2019, there are 78 certifying agents accredited under NOP.

Administrative costs for reporting, disclosure of information, and recordkeeping vary among certifying agents. Factors affecting costs include the number and size of clients, the categories of certification provided, and the type of systems maintained.

When an entity applies for accreditation as a certifying agent, it must provide a copy of its procedures for complying with recordkeeping requirements (§ 205.504(b)(3)). Once accredited, agents must make their records available for inspection and copying by authorized representatives of the Secretary (§ 205.501(a)(9)). USDA charges certifying agents for the time required to do these document reviews. Audits require less time when the documents are well organized and centrally located.

Recordkeeping requirements for certifying agents are divided into three categories of records with varying retention periods: (1) Records created by certifying agents regarding applicants for certification and certified operations, maintain 10-years, consistent with OFPA's requirement for maintaining all records concerning activities of certifying agents; (2) records obtained from applicants for certification and certified operations, maintain 5-years, the same as OFPA's requirement for the retention of records by certified operations; and (3) records created or received by certifying agents regarding accreditation, maintain 5-years, consistent with OFPA's requirement for renewal of agent's accreditation (§ 205.510(b)).

Organic inspectors. Inspectors, on behalf of certifying agents, conduct on-site inspections of certified operations and operations applying for certification. They report the findings from their inspection to the certifying agent. Inspectors are the agents themselves, employees of the agents, or individual contractors. We estimate that about half are certifying agents or their employees and half are individual contractors. Individuals who apply for positions as inspectors submit to the agents information documenting their qualifications to conduct such inspections. According to International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA), there are at least 250 inspectors currently providing services.¹

Producers and handlers. Producers and handlers, domestic and foreign, apply to certifying agents for organic certification, submit detailed information documenting their specific practices, provide annual updates to continue their certification, and report changes in their practices. Producers include farmers, livestock and poultry producers, and wild crop harvesters. Handlers include those who transport or transform food and include millers, bulk distributors, food manufacturers, processors, or packers. Some handlers

are part of a retail operation that processes organic products in a location other than the premises of the retail outlet. Based upon AMS NOP's Organic Integrity Database (INTEGRITY) on August 7, 2019, there are approximately 42,309 certified operations globally.² Based on past growth of the industry, AMS estimates the addition of 2,496 new certified organic operations a year. In addition, AMS estimates that there are 4,866 producers exempt from certification, but who must still maintain records pursuant to section 205.101(c).

Administrative costs for reporting and recordkeeping vary among certified operators. Factors affecting costs include the type and size of operation, and the type of systems maintained.

AMS believes that operations using product labels containing the term "organic" handle an average of 20 labels annually. Based on INTEGRITY on August 7, 2019, there are over 18,584 certified organic handlers. For each certified handler, AMS estimates that the average annual burden to develop product labels with organic claims is two hour per product label times 20 product labels per handler. The annual burden will be lower for smaller operations and livestock feed handlers, and higher for large operations that produce a significant volume of organic processed product.

Interested parties. Any interested party may petition the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) for the purpose of having a substance evaluated for recommendation to the Secretary for inclusion on or deletion from the National List. Based on the number of petitions received in the past, AMS estimates 25 parties petitioning the NOSB to amend the National List in a given year. The annual burden for each interested party to prepare a complete petition is an average of 30 hours.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 4.99 hours per response.

Respondents: Producers, handlers, certifying agents, inspectors and State, Local or Tribal governments and interested parties.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 50,025.

Estimated Number of Responses: 1,138,229.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 22.75.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 5,667,494.

¹Not all inspectors are members of IOIA.

²Organic Integrity Database: <https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/>

Comments are invited on: (1) 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; (2) 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; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including 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 OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 6501–6522.

Dated: October 10, 2019.

Bruce Summers,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 2019–22564 Filed 10–16–19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

October 11, 2019.

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 are requested regarding: 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; the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and 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.

Comments regarding this information collection received by November 18, 2019 will be considered. Written comments should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs,

Office of Management and Budget (OMB), New Executive Office Building, 725–17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20502. Commenters are encouraged to submit their comments to OMB via email to: *OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV* or fax (202) 395–5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250–7602. 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.

Rural Housing Service

Title: 7 CFR 3570 Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program.

OMB Control Number: 0575–0198.

Summary of Collection: The Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) is a competitive grant program which the Rural Housing Service (RHS) administers. Section 306 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (CONACT), 7 U.S.C. 1926, was amended by Section 6006 of the Agriculture Act of 2014 (P.L. 113–79) to establish the Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training Grant. Section 6006 authorized grants be made to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations (including Indian Tribes) that will serve rural areas for the purpose of enabling the grantees to provide to associations technical assistance and training with respect to essential community facilities authorized under Section 306(a)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)). Grants can be made for 100 percent of the cost of assistance.

Need and Use of the Information: Eligible entities receive TAT grants to help small rural communities or areas identify and solve problems relating to essential community facilities. The grant recipients may provide technical assistance to public bodies and private nonprofit corporations. Applicants applying for TAT grants must submit an application, which includes an application form, narrative proposal, various other forms, certifications, and supplemental information. The Rural Development State Offices and the RHS National Office staff will use the

information collected to determine applicant eligibility, project feasibility, and the applicant's ability to meet the grant and regulatory requirements. Failure to collect proper information could result in improper determinations of eligibility or improper use of funds.

Description of Respondents: Not-for-Profit Institutions.

Number of Respondents: 51.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Annually.

Total Burden Hours: 1,397.

Title: 7CFR 1956–C, Debt

Settlement—Community and Business Programs.

OMB Control Number: 0575–0124.

Summary of Collection: The Community and Direct Business Programs loans and grants are authorized by the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. Rural Housing Service (RHS) is a credit agency for agricultural and rural development for the United States Department of Agriculture and offers supervised credit to develop, improve and operate family farms, modest housing, essential community facilities, and business and industry across rural America. 7 CFR 1956–C, Debt Settlement—Community and Business Programs provides policies and procedures as well as a mechanism for debt settlement in connection with Community Facilities loans and grants, direct Business and Industry loans, Indian Tribal Land Acquisition loans and Irrigation and Drainage. The debt settlement program provides the delinquent client with an equitable tool for the compromise, adjustment, cancellation, or charge-off of a debt owed to the Agency.

Need and Use of the Information: The field offices will collect information from applicants, borrowers, consultants, lenders, and attorneys to determine eligibility, financial capacity and derive an equitable resolution. This information collected is similar to that required by a commercial lender in similar circumstances. Failure to collect the information could result in improper servicing of these loans.

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

Number of Respondents: 116.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: 1,005.

Kimble Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2019–22694 Filed 10–16–19; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–XV–P