

Services, Regionalization Evaluation Services, 920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27606; phone: (301) 550-1671; email: [AskRegionalization@usda.gov](mailto:AskRegionalization@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 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. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) maintains a list of restricted regions it considers affected with HPAI of any subtype on the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-and-animal-product-import-information/animal-health-status-of-regions>.

APHIS receives notice of HPAI outbreaks from veterinary officials of the exporting country, from the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH),<sup>1</sup> or from other sources the Administrator determines to be reliable.

On November 28, 2022, the veterinary authorities of the Republic of Ecuador reported to the WOA the occurrence of HPAI in that country. On December 3, 2022, after confirming that HPAI occurred in commercial birds and poultry, APHIS added the Republic of Ecuador to the list of regions where HPAI exists. On that same day, APHIS issued an import alert notifying stakeholders that APHIS imposed import restrictions on poultry, commercial birds, ratites, avian hatching eggs, unprocessed avian products and byproducts, and certain fresh poultry commodities from the Republic of Ecuador to mitigate risk of

HPAI introduction into the United States.

On December 2, 2022, the veterinary authorities of the Republic of Peru reported to the WOA the occurrence of HPAI in that country. On December 12, 2022, after confirming that the HPAI occurred in commercial birds or poultry, APHIS added the Republic of Peru to the list of regions where HPAI exists. On that same day, APHIS issued an import alert notifying stakeholders that APHIS imposed import restrictions on poultry, commercial birds, ratites, avian hatching eggs, unprocessed avian products and byproducts, and certain fresh poultry commodities from the Republic of Peru to mitigate risk of HPAI introduction into the United States.

With the publication of this notice, we are informing the public that we added: The Republic of Ecuador to the list of regions APHIS considers affected with HPAI of any subtype, effective December 3, 2022; and the Republic of Peru to the list of regions APHIS considers affected with HPAI of any subtype, effective December 12, 2022. This notice serves as an official record and public notification of these actions.

#### Congressional Review Act

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act (5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*), the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs designated this action as not a major rule, as defined by 5 U.S.C. 804(2).

*Authority:* 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701-7772, 7781-7786, and 8301-8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 15th day of August 2023.

**Michael Watson,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 2023-18073 Filed 8-22-23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-34-P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

##### Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2022-0038]

#### Notice of Availability of a Pest Risk Analysis for the Importation of Fresh Table Beet Root (*Beta vulgaris* L.) for Consumption From the United Kingdom Into the Continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** We are advising the public that we have prepared a pest risk analysis that evaluates the risks associated with importation of fresh table beet root (*Beta vulgaris* L.) for consumption from the United Kingdom into the continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Based on the analysis, we have determined that the application of one or more designated phytosanitary measures will be sufficient to mitigate the risks of introducing or disseminating plant pests or noxious weeds via the importation of fresh table beet root from the United Kingdom. We are making the pest risk analysis available to the public for review and comment.

**DATES:** We will consider all comments that we receive on or before October 23, 2023.

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

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Enter APHIS-2022-0038 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.

- *Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:* Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2022-0038, 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 [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) or in our reading room, which is located in room 1620 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:** Ms. Claudia Ferguson, Senior Regulatory Policy Specialist, Regulatory Coordination and Compliance, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road, Unit 133, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231; (301) 851-2352; [Claudia.Ferguson@usda.gov](mailto:Claudia.Ferguson@usda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Under the regulations in “Subpart L—Fruits and Vegetables” (7 CFR 319.56-1 through 319.56-12, referred to below as the regulations), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) prohibits or restricts the importation of fruits and vegetables into the United States from certain parts of the world to prevent plant pests from being introduced into or disseminated within the United States.

<sup>1</sup>The World Organization for Animal Health internationally follows a British English spelling of “organisation” in its name; also, it was formerly the Office International des Epizooties, or OIE, but on May 28, 2022, the Organization announced that the acronym was changed from OIE to WOA.

Section 319.56–4 contains a performance-based process for approving the importation of fruits and vegetables that, based on the findings of a pest risk analysis, can be safely imported subject to one or more of the five designated phytosanitary measures listed in paragraph (b) of that section.

APHIS received a request from the national plant protection organization (NPPO) of the United Kingdom to allow the importation of fresh table beet root (*Beta vulgaris* L.) for consumption from the United Kingdom into the continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. As part of our evaluation of the United Kingdom's request, we have prepared a pest risk assessment to identify the pests of quarantine significance that could follow the pathway of the importation of fresh table beet root for consumption into the United States and specified territories from the United Kingdom. Based on the pest risk assessment, a risk management document (RMD) was prepared to identify phytosanitary measures that could be applied to fresh table beet root to mitigate the pest risk.

Therefore, in accordance with § 319.56–4(c), we are announcing the availability of our pest risk assessment and RMD for public review and comment. Those documents, as well as a description of the economic considerations associated with the importation of fresh table beet root from the United Kingdom, may be viewed on the *Regulations.gov* website or in our reading room (see **ADDRESSES** above for a link to *Regulations.gov* and information on the location and hours of the reading room). You may request paper copies of the pest risk assessment and RMD by calling or writing to the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. Please refer to the subject of the analysis you wish to review when requesting copies.

After reviewing any comments we receive, we will announce our decision regarding the import status of fresh table beet root from the United Kingdom in a subsequent notice. If the overall conclusions of our analysis and the Administrator's determination of risk remain unchanged following our consideration of the comments, then we will authorize the importation of fresh table beet root (*Beta vulgaris* L.) for consumption from the United Kingdom into the continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands subject to the requirements specified in the RMD.

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701–7772, and 7781–7786; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 17th day of August 2023.

**Michael Watson,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 2023–18111 Filed 8–22–23; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–34–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Rural Utilities Service

[Docket No. RUS–23–ELECTRIC–0011]

#### **60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: RUS Specification for Quality Control and Inspection of Timber Products; OMB Control No.: 0572–0076**

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA.  
**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Utilities Service (RUS or Agency) announces its intention to request an extension of a currently approved information collection and invites comments on this information collection.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by October 23, 2023 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be submitted by the Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and, in the “Search Field” box, labeled “Search for dockets and documents on agency actions,” enter the following docket number: (RUS–23–ELECTRIC–0011). To submit or view public comments, click the “Search” button, select the “Documents” tab, then select the following document title: “RUS Specification for Quality Control and Inspection of Timber Products” from the “Search Results,” and select the “Comment” button. Before inputting your comments, you may also review the “Commenter’s Checklist” (optional). Insert your comments under the “Comment” title, click “Browse” to attach files (if available). Input your email address and select “Submit Comment.” Information on using *Regulations.gov*, including instructions for accessing documents, submitting comments, and viewing the docket after the close of the comment period, is available through the site’s “FAQ” link.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kimble Brown, Rural Development Innovation Center—Regulations Management Division, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4227, South Building, Washington, DC 20250–

1522. Telephone: (202) 720–6780. Email [kimble.brown@usda.gov](mailto:kimble.brown@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) regulation (5 CFR part 1320) implementing provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) requires that interested members of the public and affected agencies have an opportunity to comment on information collection and recordkeeping activities (see 5 CFR 1320.8(d)). This notice identifies the following information collection that RUS is submitting to OMB as an extension to an existing collection with Agency adjustment.

*Title:* RUS Specification for Quality Control and Inspection of Timber Products.

*OMB Control Number:* 0572–0076.

*Expiration Date of Approval:* February 29, 2024.

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

*Estimate of Burden:* This collection of information is estimated to average 1.01 hour per response.

*Respondents:* Not-for-profit institutions; Business or other for profit.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 25.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 800.

*Estimated Total Number of Responses:* 20,000.

*Estimated Annual Reporting Burden on Respondents:* 20,000 hours.

*Estimated Annual Recordkeeping Burden on Respondents:* 333.25 hours.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 20,333.25 hours.

*Abstract:* RUS Bulletin 1728H–702 and 7 CFR 1728.202 describe the responsibilities and procedures pertaining to the quality control by producers and pertaining to inspection of timber products produced in accordance with RUS specifications. To ensure the security of loan funds, adequate quality control of timber products is vital to loan security on electric power systems where hundreds of thousands of wood poles and cross-arms are used. Since RUS and its borrowers do not have the expertise or manpower to quickly determine imperfections in the wood products or their preservatives treatments, they must obtain service of an inspection agency to ensure that the specifications for wood poles and cross-arms are being met. Copies of test reports on various preservatives must accompany each load of poles treated at the same time in a pressure cylinder (charge) as required by 7 CFR 1728.202(i). RUS feels the importance of safety concerns are