

more information on the implementation of state labeling regulations for maple syrup.

**Question 4:** How will inspectors be trained and equipment calibrated, and what type of lighting will be used to grade the colors proposed in the revised standard?

**Response:** AMS will train staff to grade the product under the revised grade standards. AMS values and relies on trained, educated employees to accomplish its mission. Quality training and development programs are designed to provide the most effective training possible. AMS training may be provided through classroom training, computer/web based training, distance learning, on-the job training, or combination of methods. With regard to calibration of equipment, the equipment will be calibrated and cross checked as appropriate, with detailed instructions from manufacturers taken into account. Approved lighting sources are used to make critical color evaluations and comparisons. USDA lighting sources are designed to provide uniform color and spectral quality.

**Question 5:** Will this change result in more Canadian products on shelves and add financial benefits to the United States, or will it hurt jobs and sales?

**Response:** This revision is intended to improve marketing of maple syrup in the United States and internationally. According to the petitioner, each maple-producing state intends to revise its standards to reflect Federal grade standards. Overall, the revised grade standards should have a positive effect on the maple syrup industry.

**Question 6:** Will this change increase the amount of interstate maple syrup sales, and allow marketing of product from one region as if it were from another region?

**Response:** As stated previously, these revisions will improve the marketing of maple syrup in the United States and internationally, (see question 5). However, these standards do not excuse failure to comply with provisions of applicable Federal or state laws including provisions to prevent misbranding.

**Question 7:** Was there an economic study conducted that proves these changes are productive to U.S. consumers and producers?

**Response:** The revised grade standards are based on a petition from IMSI. IMSI represents maple industry stakeholders including maple producers, state governments and associations, vendors, maple equipment manufacturers, organizations, and others in Canada and the United States. The purpose of the standards is to foster

and assist in the development of new or expanded markets, and improve the marketing of maple syrup in the United States and internationally. As such, the revised grade standards should have a positive effect on the maple syrup industry.

**Question 8:** Will this revision hurt or help existing branding such as Vermont Fancy, and can Maine producers use their own branding?

**Response:** The U.S. Standards for Grades of Maple Sirup (Syrup) are voluntary grade standards. States do have the option to allow branding if they wish. The 2014 Vermont Maple Product Regulations allow for using current grade terminology such as "Vermont Fancy" until January 1, 2017. Refer to the "Maine Maple Regulations" for that state's maple branding requirements.

**Question 9:** U.S. maple production is too small to come up on the USDA radar.

**Response:** We disagree. An example of this is reflected in the 2013 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) report. The report states: Nationally, maple syrup production in 2013 totaled 3.25 million gallons, up 70 percent from 2012. In 2012, prevailing high temperatures limited sap flow. The number of taps is estimated at 10.6 million, 8 percent above the 2012 total of 9.77 million. Yield per tap is estimated to be 0.308 gallons, up 58 percent from the previous season's revised yield. All states showed an increase in production from the previous year.

**Question 10:** Will revised USDA color standards (maple sirup color grading kits) be available?

**Response:** The revised standards specify that "color may be determined by spectrophotometer, or any method that provides equivalent results." The current USDA Color Standards for Maple Sirup permanent kit will no longer meet the revised requirements for color. There are no plans to revise the USDA maple sirup grading kit. Other entities are free to develop grading kits in the marketplace.

**Question 11:** The upper brix limit for Grade A, now set at 68.9 percent, should be set at 70 percent brix because small producers do not have the precision equipment to grade to 68.9 percent brix.

**Response:** The upper limit in Grade A for brix of not more than 68.9 percent can be determined using the same instrumentation that is currently being used to verify the minimum brix requirement of 66.0 percent. In response to AMS' inquiry on how IMSI arrived at 68.9 percent brix as the upper limit for Grade A, the petitioner responded that

it was a consensus decision among maple syrup producers and packer stakeholders to require an upper limit, and that 68.9 percent brix is currently the upper limit for "Brix Maple Regulations in Vermont and New Hampshire." IMSI added that there is no advantage to going to a higher limit and noted that going higher would result in a product that is uncharacteristically thick, and would significantly increase production costs.

The official grade of a lot of maple syrup covered by these standards will be determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Products, Thereof, and Certain Other Processed Food Products (7 CFR 52.1 to 52.83).

Accordingly, no changes to the standards were made as a result of comments received. However, AMS has made changes to the description of the processing grade for clarity.

The revisions to this maple syrup grade standard in this notice provide a common language for trade and better reflect the current marketing of maple syrup. The changes are effective 30 days after the date of publication in the **Federal Register**.

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

**Dated:** January 23, 2015.

**Rex A. Barnes,**

*Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Farm Service Agency

#### Information Collection; Data on Nonresident Applicants

**AGENCY:** Farm Service Agency, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is requesting comments from all interested individuals and organizations on a new information collection that will be used to determine the applicant's citizenship.

**DATES:** We will consider comments that we receive by March 30, 2015.

**ADDRESSES:** We invite you to submit comments on this notice. In your comments, include date, volume, and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**. You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

• *Mail:* Jackie Pickens, USDA/FSA/FMD, STOP 0581, Patriot Plaza III, 355 E. Street SW., Washington, DC 20024.

You may also send comments to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. Copies of the information collection may be requested by contacting Jackie Pickens at the above address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jackie Pickens; (615) 277-2613.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* Data on Nonresident.

*OMB Number:* 0560-NEW.

*Type of Request:* New.

*Abstract:* FSA is using the FSA-500 Data on Nonresident Applicants, to verify each applicant's citizenship, if applications for payments are filed by or for applicants who reside outside the United States, its territories or possessions, even if the application is filed by an agent of the applicant whose address is in the United States. County office employees provide the FSA-500 to the nonresident applicants or agents to complete the form. The FSA-500 request the applicant's name, address, United States citizenship and signature of applicant or authorized agent. The completed returned form will be filed at the County office. The data collected on the FSA-500 will assist with ensuring foreign taxes are collected and reported to the IRS.

The formula used to calculate the total burden hour is estimated average time per responses hours times total annual responses.

*Estimate of Respondent Burden:* Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 0.0833 hours per response. The average travel time, which is included in the total burden, is estimated to be 1 hour per respondent.

*Respondents:* Individuals or households, businesses or other for profit farms.

*Estimated Annual Number of Respondents:* 55.

*Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:* 1.

*Estimated Total Annual Responses:* 55.

*Estimated Average Time per Response:* 1.0833.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 60.

We are requesting comments on all aspects of this information collection to help us to:

(1) Evaluate whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the FSA, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of the FSA's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

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

(4) 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.

All comments received in response to this notice, including names and addresses when provided, will be a matter of public record. Comments will be summarized and included in the submission for Office of Management and Budget approval.

Signed on January 23, 2015.

**Val Dolcini,**

*Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

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**BILLING CODE 3410-05-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Economic Development Administration

#### Announcement of Federal Interagency Competition, Fiscal Year 2015 Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership

**AGENCY:** Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**Authority:** The Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (PWEDA) (42 U.S.C. 3121 *et seq.*).

**SUMMARY:** This notice outlines a competition to designate up to 12 communities as manufacturing communities (Manufacturing Communities) through the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP), including proposal submission requirements and instructions, and eligibility and selection criteria that will be used to evaluate proposals. Manufacturing Communities will receive preference for a range of future Federal economic development funding and technical assistance offered by IMCP participating agencies. Some Manufacturing Communities, as discussed in the Supplementary Information section of this notice and subject to the availability of funds, may receive financial assistance awards from IMCP participating agencies to assist in cultivating an environment for

businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country.

**DATES:** The deadline for receipt of applications is April 1, 2015 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this notice.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications will be accepted in electronic form only. To begin the application process, applicants should use the following link: <http://www.eda.gov/challenges/imcp/applications/>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ryan Hedgepeth and/or Julie Wenah, U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW., Suite 78006, Washington, DC 20230 or via email at [IMCP@eda.gov](mailto:IMCP@eda.gov).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### I. Overview

The Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership (IMCP) is a government-wide initiative to help communities cultivate an environment for businesses to create well-paying manufacturing jobs in regions across the country and thereby accelerate the resurgence of manufacturing. The IMCP is designed to reward communities that demonstrate best practices in attracting and expanding manufacturing by bringing together key local stakeholders and using long-term planning that integrates targeted public and private investments across a community's industrial ecosystem to create broad-based prosperity. Research has shown that vibrant ecosystems may create a virtuous cycle of development for a key technology or supply chain through integrated investments and linkages among the following elements:

- Workforce and training;
- Supplier network;
- Research and innovation;
- Infrastructure/site development or redevelopment;
- Trade and international investment; and
- Operational improvement and capital access.

Interactions within and between these elements create "public goods," or assets upon which many firms can draw and that are fundamental in promoting an industry's development but are not adequately provided by the private sector. Thus, well-designed public investment is a key part of developing a self-sustaining ecosystem that attracts