

Dated: February 24, 2003.

Donna Reifschneider,

Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

7 CFR Part 868

RIN 0580-AA82

Fees for Rice Inspection Services

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) is proposing an approximate 4.1 percent increase in fees for all hourly rates and certain unit rates for inspection services performed under the Agricultural Marketing Act (AMA) of 1946 in the rice inspection program. These increases are needed to cover increased operational costs resulting from the January 2003 Federal pay increase.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before March 31, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this proposal. Written comments must be submitted to Tess Butler, GIPSA, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 1647, Washington, DC 20250-3604, or faxed to (202) 690-2755. Comments may also be sent by electronic mail or Internet to: comments.gipsa@usda.gov. All comments should make reference to the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be available for public inspection in the above office during regular business hours (7 CFR 1.27(b)).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Orr, Director, Field Management Division, at his E-mail address: David.M.Orr@usda.gov, or telephone him at (202) 720-0228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Order 12866, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, and the Paperwork Reduction Act

This proposed rule has been determined to be nonsignificant for the purpose of Executive Order 12866 and, therefore, has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

Also, pursuant to the requirements set forth in the Regulatory Flexibility Act,

Donna Reifschneider, Administrator, GIPSA, has determined that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*).

GIPSA regularly reviews its user-fee programs to determine if the fees are adequate and continues to seek cost-saving opportunities and implement appropriate changes to reduce costs. Such actions can provide alternatives to fee increases. Employee salaries and benefits are major program costs that account for approximately 84 percent of GIPSA's total operating budget. An anticipated January 2003 general and locality salary increase that averages 4.1 percent for all GIPSA employees will increase program costs in the rice inspection program.

The existing fee schedule for GIPSA's rice inspection program will not generate sufficient revenues to cover program costs while maintaining an adequate reserve balance. Fees for this program are in Tables 1 and 2 of 7 CFR 868.91. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2000, operating costs in the rice program were \$4,034,964 with revenue of \$4,837,116 that resulted in a positive margin of \$802,152 and a positive reserve of \$406,359. In FY 2001, operating costs in the rice program were \$3,842,326 with revenue of \$4,102,960 that resulted in a positive margin of \$260,634 and a positive reserve of \$611,654. Using the most recent data available, GIPSA's FY 2002 operating costs were \$3,382,574 with revenue of \$3,385,121 that resulted in a positive margin of \$2,547. The current positive reserve balance of \$311,596 is well below the desired 3-month reserve of approximately \$1 million.

GIPSA has reviewed the financial position of our rice inspection program based on the anticipated increased salary and benefit costs, along with the projected FY 2003 workload. Even though the financial status of the rice inspection program has improved, GIPSA has concluded that it cannot absorb the increased costs caused by the anticipated 4.1 percent salary increase with the small positive reserve balance. This fee increase will collect an estimated \$155,500 in additional revenues in the rice program based on the projected FY 2003 work volume of 3.4 million metric tons.

This fee increase applies primarily to GIPSA customers that produce, process, and market rice for the domestic and international markets. There are approximately 550 such customers located primarily in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Many of these

customers meet the criteria for small entities established by the Small Business Administration criteria for small businesses. Even though the fees are being increased, the proposed increase will not be excessive (4.1 percent) and should not significantly affect those entities. Those entities are under no obligation to use GIPSA's service and, therefore, any decision on their part to discontinue the use of service should not prevent them from marketing their products.

There will be no additional reporting or record keeping requirements imposed by this proposed action. In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 35), the information collection and record keeping requirements in Part 868 have been previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0580-0013. GIPSA has not identified any other Federal rules which may duplicate, overlap, or conflict with this proposed rule.

Executive Order 12988

This proposed rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. This proposed action is not intended to have a retroactive effect. This proposed action will not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies unless they present irreconcilable conflict with this rule. There are no administrative procedures that must be exhausted prior to any judicial challenge to the provisions of this proposed rule.

Proposed Action

The current rice fees were published in the **Federal Register** on April 4, 2001 (66 FR 17775), and became effective on May 4, 2001. Under the provisions of the AMA (7 U.S.C. 1621, *et seq.*), rice inspection services are provided upon request and GIPSA must collect a fee from the customer to cover the cost of providing such services. Section 203(h) of the AMA (7 U.S.C. 1622(h)) provides for the establishment and collection of fees that are reasonable and, as nearly as practicable, cover the costs of the services rendered. These fees cover the GIPSA administrative and supervisory costs for the performance of official services, including personnel compensation and benefits, travel, rent, communications, utilities, contractual services, supplies, and equipment.

The existing fee schedule for GIPSA's rice inspection program will not generate sufficient revenues to cover program costs while maintaining an adequate reserve balance. Fees for this program are in Tables 1 and 2 of 7 CFR 868.91. In FY 2000, operating costs in

the rice program were \$4,034,964 with revenue of \$4,837,116 that resulted in a positive margin of \$802,152 and a positive reserve of \$406,359. In FY 2001, operating costs in the rice program were \$3,842,326 with revenue of \$4,102,960 that resulted in a positive margin of \$260,634 and a positive reserve of \$611,654. Using the most recent data available, GIPSA's FY 2002 operating costs were \$3,382,574 with revenue of \$3,385,121 that resulted in a positive margin of \$2,547. The current positive reserve balance of \$311,596 is

well below the desired 3-month reserve of approximately \$1 million.

GIPSA has reviewed the financial position of its rice inspection program based on the anticipated salary and benefit costs, along with the projected FY 2003 workload. Even though the financial status of the rice inspection program has improved, GIPSA has concluded that with the small positive reserve balance it cannot absorb the increased costs caused by the 4.1 percent salary increase. This fee increase will collect an estimated \$155,500 in additional revenues in the

rice program based on the projected FY 2003 work volume of 3.4 million metric tons.

In 7 CFR 868.91, Table 1—Hourly Rates/Unit Rate Per CWT and Table 2—Unit Rates, currently the regular workday contract and noncontract fees are \$44.60 and \$54.30, respectively, while the nonregular workday contract and noncontract fees are \$61.80 and \$75.00, respectively. The unit rate per hundredweight for export port services is currently \$0.054 per hundredweight. The rice current unit rates are:

Service	Rough rice	Brown rice for processing	Milled rice
Inspection for quality (per lot, subplot, or sample inspection)	\$34.80	\$30.00	\$21.50
Factor analysis for any single factor (per factor):			
(a) Milling yield (per sample)	27.00	27.00	
(b) All other factors (per factor)	12.90	12.90	12.90
Total oil and free fatty acid		42.60	42.60
Interpretive line samples:			
(a) Milling degree (per set)			91.00
(b) Parboiled light (per sample)			22.60
Extra copies of certificates (per copy)	3.00	3.00	3.00

This proposed rule provides a 30-day period for interested persons to comment. This comment period is deemed appropriate because the anticipated Federal pay increase is scheduled to become effective on January 1, 2003, rice inspection volume and associated requests for official services for such rice inspection requests are projected to further decrease in the coming months due to seasonal and other adjustments. Accordingly, given the current level of the operating reserve, it would be necessary to implement any fee increase

that may result from this rulemaking as soon as possible.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 868

Administrative practice and procedure, Agricultural commodities.

For reasons set out in the preamble, 7 CFR Part 868 is amended as follows:

PART 868—GENERAL REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS FOR CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

1. The authority citation for part 868 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Secs. 202–208, 60 Stat. 1087 as amended (7 U.S.C. 1621, *et seq.*)

2. Section 868.91 is revised to read as follows:

§ 868.91 Fees for certain Federal rice inspection services.

The fees shown in Tables 1 and 2 apply to Federal rice inspection services.

TABLE 1.—HOURLY RATES/UNIT RATE PER CWT
[Fees for Federal Rice Inspection Services]

Service ¹	Regular workday (Monday–Saturday)	Nonregular workday (Sunday–Holiday)
Contract (per hour per Service representative)	\$46.40	\$64.40
Noncontract (per hour per Service representative)	56.60	78.00
Export Port Services (per hundredweight) ²056	.056

¹ Original and appeal inspection services include: Sampling, grading, weighing, and other services requested by the applicant when performed at the applicant's facility.

² Services performed at export port locations on lots at rest.

TABLE 2.—UNIT RATES

Service ^{1,3}	Rough rice	Brown rice for processing	Milled rice
Inspection for quality (per lot, subplot, or sample inspection)	\$35.50	\$30.50	\$22.00
Factor analysis for any single factor (per factor):			
(a) Milling yield (per sample)	27.50	27.50	
(b) All other factors (per factor)	13.20	13.20	13.20
Total oil and free fatty acid		43.00	43.00

TABLE 2.—UNIT RATES—Continued

Service ^{1,3}	Rough rice	Brown rice for processing	Milled rice
Interpretive line samples: ²			
(a) Milling degree (per set)	94.00
(b) Parboiled light (per sample)	23.00
Extra copies of certificates (per copy)	3.00	3.00	3.00

¹ Fees apply to determinations (original or appeals) for kind, class, grade, factor analysis, equal to type, milling yield, or any other quality designation as defined in the U.S. Standards for Rice or applicable instructions, whether performed singly or in combination at other than at the applicant's facility.

² Interpretive line samples may be purchased from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, GIPSA, FGIS, Technical Services Division, 10383 North Ambassador Drive, Kansas City, Missouri 64153-1394. Interpretive line samples also are available for examination at selected FGIS field offices. A list of field offices may be obtained from the Director, Field Management Division, USDA, GIPSA, FGIS, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 3630, Washington, DC 20250-3630. The interpretive line samples illustrate the lower limit for milling degrees only and the color limit for the factor "Parboiled Light" rice.

³ Fees for other services not referenced in Table 2 will be based on the noncontract hourly rate listed in § 868.90, Table 1.

Dated: February 24, 2003.

Donna Reifschneider,

Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

10 CFR Part 20

Rulemaking on Controlling the Disposition of Solid Materials: Scoping Process for Environmental Issues and Notice of Workshop

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Request for comments on scope of proposed rulemaking and notice of workshop.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is conducting an enhanced participatory rulemaking on alternatives for controlling the disposition of solid materials that originate in restricted or impacted areas of NRC-licensed facilities, and that have no, or very small amounts of, radioactivity resulting from licensed operations. The NRC is seeking stakeholder participation and involvement in identifying alternatives and their environmental impacts that should be considered as part of the rulemaking. Considerable information collection effort has been conducted in this area and the Commission is building on existing information to focus on potential solutions. To assist in this process, the NRC is holding a workshop to solicit new input with a focus on the feasibility of alternatives identified in this notice that would limit where solid material can go. The NRC has not made a decision on the scope or details of a regulation and is continuing

to develop a solid technical basis for the rulemaking.

DATES: Submit comments by June 30, 2003. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practicable to do so, but the Commission is able to assure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

In addition to providing opportunity for written (and electronic) comments, a workshop to solicit comments on alternatives, with a focus on the feasibility of alternatives identified in this notice that would limit where solid materials can go, will be held on May 21-22, 2003 from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. in the NRC Auditorium, 11545 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments to: Secretary, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555. Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff.

Deliver comments to 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. on Federal workdays.

You may also provide comments via the NRC's rulemaking Web site at <http://ruleforum.llnl.gov> (then select "Information/Comment Requests" from left-hand column). This site provides the capability to upload comments as files (any format), if your web browser supports that function. For information about the interactive rulemaking web page, contact Ms. Carol Gallagher, (301) 415-5905 (cag@nrc.gov).

Copies of any comments received may be examined at the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Cardile, telephone: (301) 415-6185; e-mail: fpc@nrc.gov, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, USNRC, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Specific comments on the public meeting process should be directed to Chip Cameron; e-mail fxc@nrc.gov, telephone: (301) 415-1642; Office of the

General Counsel, USNRC, Washington, DC 20555-0001. Specific comments on the environmental scoping process discussed in Section VI should be directed to Phyllis Sobel; e-mail pas@nrc.gov, telephone: (301) 415-6714; Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, USNRC, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

The NRC is conducting a rulemaking to evaluate alternatives for controlling the disposition of solid materials with no, or very small amounts of, radioactivity resulting from licensed operations. This **Federal Register** Notice (FRN) provides information on this effort as follows:

(1) *Sections II.1-II-7:* These sections provide background information about why we are conducting this effort and what are some alternatives for controlling the disposition of solid materials.

(2) *Sections III.1-III.2:* These sections discuss the considerable information collection efforts we have conducted to date in this area and what we have learned about the alternatives.

(3) *Sections IV and V:* These sections discuss our current effort to build on information previously collected in this area. The NRC has not made a decision on any alternatives for controlling the disposition of solid materials and invites stakeholders to present new information on alternatives. In particular, Section IV asks specific questions about the feasibility of alternatives that would limit where solid material can go, and Section V announces a workshop scheduled for May 21-22, 2003.

(4) *Section VI:* This section announces a re-opening of the scoping process and requests input on environmental impacts of alternatives.

To further assist stakeholders, the staff is also placing on its website an