

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

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 00-092-1]

User Fees; Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Services

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice pertains to user fees charged for agricultural quarantine and inspection services we provide in connection with commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States. The purpose of this notice is to remind the public of the user fees for fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2001).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information concerning program operations, contact Mr. Colonel Locklear, Senior Staff Officer, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 60, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 734-8372.

For information concerning rate development, contact Ms. Donna Ford, User Fees Section Head, FSSB, BASEU, MRP-BS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 54, Riverdale, MD 20737-1232; (301) 734-8351.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 7 CFR 354.3 (referred to below as the regulations) contain provisions for the collection of user fees for agricultural quarantine and inspection (AQI) services provided by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). These services include, among other things, inspecting commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial

aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States from points outside the United States. (The Customs territory of the United States is defined in the regulations as the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.)

These user fees are authorized by section 2509(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (21 U.S.C. 136a). This statute, known as the Farm Bill, was amended by section 504 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-127, 110 Stat. 888) on April 4, 1996.

On July 24, 1997, we published in the **Federal Register** (62 FR 39747-39755, Docket No. 96-038-3) a final rule that amended the regulations by adjusting our user fees for servicing commercial vessels, commercial trucks, commercial railroad cars, commercial aircraft, and international airline passengers arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States and by setting user fees for these services for fiscal years 1997 through 2002. Additionally, on November 16, 1999, we published in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 62089-62096, Docket No. 98-073-2) another final rule that amended the regulations by updating some of the user fees. When we established the user fees for fiscal years 1997 through 2002, we stated that, prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, we would publish a notice to remind the public of the user fees for that fiscal year. This document provides notice to the public of the user fees for fiscal year 2001.

We inspect commercial vessels of 100 net tons or more.¹ As specified in § 354.3(b)(1), our user fee for inspecting commercial vessels will be \$474.50 during fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2001).

We inspect commercial trucks² entering the Customs territory of the United States. Commercial trucks may pay the APHIS user fee each time they enter the Customs territory of the United

States from Mexico³ or purchase a prepaid APHIS permit for a calendar year. Since commercial trucks are also subject to Customs user fees, our regulations provide that commercial trucks must prepay the APHIS user fee if they are prepaying the Customs user fee. In that case, the required APHIS user fee is 20 times the user fee for each arrival and is valid for an unlimited number of entries during the calendar year (see § 354.3(c)(3)(i) of the regulations). The truck owner or operator, upon payment of the APHIS and the Customs user fees, receives a decal to place on the truck windshield. This is a joint decal, indicating that both the Customs and APHIS user fees for the truck have been paid for that calendar year. As specified in § 354.3(c)(1), our user fee for inspecting commercial trucks will be \$4.50 for individual arrivals and, as specified in § 354.3(c)(3)(i), \$90 for a calendar year 2001 decal.

We inspect commercial railroad cars⁴ entering the Customs territory of the United States. These user fees may be paid per inspection or prepaid. Prepaid user fees cover 1 calendar year's worth of AQI inspections. As specified in § 354.3(d)(1), the user fee for this service will be \$7.00 per loaded commercial railroad car for each arrival or, if user fees are prepaid, \$140 (20 times the individual arrival fee) for each loaded railcar during fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2001).

We also inspect international commercial aircraft⁵ arriving at ports in the Customs territory of the United States. As specified in § 354.3(e)(1), the user fee will be \$64.75 during fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2001).

We also inspect international airline passengers⁶ arriving at ports in the

³ Section 354.3(c)(2)(i) of the regulations states that commercial trucks entering the Customs territory of the United States from Canada are exempt from paying an APHIS user fee.

⁴ Those commercial railroad cars subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(d)(2).

⁵ Those commercial aircraft subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part 330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(e)(2).

⁶ Those international airline passengers subject to inspections are specified in 7 CFR, chapter III, part

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Customs territory of the United States. As specified in § 354.3(f)(1), the international airline passenger user fee will be \$3.00 during fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000, through September 30, 2001).

Done in Washington, DC, this 25th day of September 2000.

Craig A. Reed,

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 00-25021 Filed 9-28-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

[00-B]

Pilot Programs for Official Agencies

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: GIPSA is extending the current three pilot programs (timely service, open season, and barge) pending changes to the current statutory authority for such programs. These pilot programs were established in 1995 and 1998 to allow more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area. These programs are scheduled to end on September 30, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Neil E. Porter, telephone 202-720-8262.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Sections 7(f) and 7A of the United States Grain Standards Act (Act) (7 U.S.C. 79(f)) and (7 U.S.C. 79a) were amended by the United States Grain Standards Act Amendments of 1993 (Public Law 103-156) on November 24, 1993, to authorize GIPSA's Administrator to conduct pilot programs allowing more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area without undermining the declared policy of the Act. The purpose of the pilot programs is to evaluate the impact of allowing more than one official agency to provide official services within a single geographic area. These pilot programs are scheduled to end on September 30, 2000.

On September 27, 1995, GIPSA published a **Federal Register** Notice (60 FR 49828), announcing two new pilot programs (timely service and open season) to begin on November 1, 1995. The timely service pilot program allowed official agencies to provide official services to facilities outside their

assigned geographic area on a case-by-case basis when these services could not be provided in a timely manner by the official agency designated to serve the area. The open season pilot program allowed official agencies to offer their services to facilities outside their assigned geographic area where no official sample-lot or official weighing services had been provided in the previous 6 months. On October 3, 1996, GIPSA published a **Federal Register** Notice (61 FR 51674), which reduced the qualification period to 3 months.

On January 15, 1998, GIPSA published a **Federal Register** Notice (63 FR 2360), announcing a pilot program allowing barges on all rivers to be sampled by probe by any official agency. This barge pilot option was initiated on March 1, 1998.

On October 1, 1998, GIPSA published a **Federal Register** Notice (63 FR 52682) extending the three pilot programs to September 30, 2000.

The pilot programs are extended pending changes to the current statutory authority for the pilot programs. GIPSA will continue to monitor and evaluate the pilot programs. If, at any time, GIPSA determines that any pilot program is having a negative impact on the official system or is not working as intended, the program may be modified or discontinued.

Authority: Pub. L. 94-582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*).

Dated: September 22, 2000.

Neil E. Porter,

Director, Compliance Division.

[FR Doc. 00-24925 Filed 9-28-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-EN-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Utilities Service

Publication of Depreciation Rates

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) hereby announces the depreciation rates for telecommunications plant for the period ended December 31, 1999.

DATES: These rates are effective for the period beginning January 1, 1999 and ending December 31, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jonathan P. Claffey, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Telecommunications Program, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 4056, STOP 1590, Washington, DC 20250-1590. Telephone: (202) 720-9556.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 206(a)(3) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 requires RUS to annually determine and publish average depreciation rates used by its borrowers for the purposes of depreciating telecommunications plant. The following chart provides those rates, compiled by RUS for the reporting period ended December 31, 1999:

AVERAGE DEPRECIATION RATES OF RUS BORROWERS BY EQUIPMENT CATEGORY FOR PERIOD ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1999:

Telecommunications plant category	Depreciation rate (percent)
1. Land and Support Assets:	
a. Motor vehicles	15.00
b. Aircraft	10.00
c. Special purpose vehicles	12.00
d. Garage and other work equipment	10.00
e. Buildings	3.01
f. Furniture and office equipment	10.00
g. General purpose computers	18.57
2. Central Office Switching:	
a. Digital (a)	8.33
b. Analog & electro-mechanical	10.00
c. Operator systems	8.86
d. Radio systems	9.50
e. Circuit equipment (b) ...	10.00
3. Information Origination/Termination:	
a. Station apparatus	11.59
b. Customer premises equipment	10.00
c. Large private branch exchanges	12.50
d. Public telephone terminal equipment	11.10
e. Other terminal equipment	10.55
4. Cable and Wire Facilities:	
a. Aerial cable-Poles	6.67
a. Aerial cable-metal	6.00
b. Aerial cable-fiber	5.00
c. Underground cable-metal	4.81
d. Underground cable-fiber	4.82
e. Buried cable-metal	5.00
f. Buried cable-fiber	5.00
g. Conduit systems	3.02
h. Other	7.21

Christopher A. McLean,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

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330 or in 9 CFR, chapter I, subchapter D of the regulations. Exemptions to these user fees are specified in § 354.3(f)(2).