Notices

Federal Register
Vol. 67, No. 8
Friday, January 11, 2002

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. 01–071–1]

Notice of Request for Reinstatement of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Reinstatement of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request a reinstatement of an information collection in support of the State-Federal Brucellosis Eradication Program.

DATES: We invite you to comment on this docket. We will consider all comments we receive that are postmarked, delivered, or e-mailed by March 12, 2002.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by postal mail/commercial delivery or by e-mail. If you use postal mail/commercial delivery, please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 01–071–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD,APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 01–071–1. If you use e-mail, address your comment to *regulations@aphis.usda.gov*. Your comment must be contained in the body of your message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and ''Docket No.01–071–1'' on the subject line.

You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading room. The reading room is located in room 1141 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) 690–2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information regarding the State-FederalBrucellosis Eradication Program, contact Dr. Valerie Ragan, Senior Staff Veterinarian, National Animal Health Programs Staff, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 734–7708. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Mrs. Celeste Sickles, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 734–7477.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Brucellosis Eradication Program.

OMB Number: 0579–0047.

Type of Request: Reinstatement of an information collection.

Abstract: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is responsible for, among other things, administering regulations intended to prevent the spread of brucellosis and other animal diseases within the United States.

Brucellosis is a contagious disease that primarily affects cattle, bison, and swine. It causes the loss of young through spontaneous abortion or birth of weak offspring, reduced milk production, and infertility. The continued presence of brucellosis in a herd seriously threatens the health of other animals. Brucellosis has caused devastating losses to farmers in the UnitedStates over the last century.

The State-Federal Brucellosis Eradication Program, which is a national program, is working toward eliminating this serious disease of livestock. The program is conducted under the various States' authorities supplemented by Federal authorities regulating interstate movement of affected animals. Effective screening programs and extensive epidemiologic investigations are required to locate infection and to eradicate the disease.

Conducting effective brucellosis screening programs and epidemiologic investigations requires the use of many information collection activities, such as applications for tags or tattoos, epidemiology report forms, permits for movement of restricted animals, monthly reports of brucellosis eradication and program surveillance activities, reports of brucellosis reactors slaughtered, and permits for shipping exposed herds. The information obtained from these activities is used to continue the search for other infected herds, maintain identification of livestock, monitor deficiencies in identification of animals for movement, and monitor program deficiencies in suspicious and infected herds. These information collection activities are essential in determining the status of a brucellosis area and helping herd owners by speeding up the detection and elimination of serious disease conditions in their herds.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of these information collection activities for 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments form the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. These comments will help us:

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

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

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

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, and other collection technologies; e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.0076513 hours per response.

Respondents: Veterinarians, livestock inspectors, and herd owners.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 7,382.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 71.455703.

Estimated annual number of responses: 527,486.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 4,036 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the average reporting burden per response.)

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Done in Washington, DC, this 7th day of January 2002.

W. Ron DeHaven,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 02–742 Filed 1–10–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 01–024–2]

Availability of Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for Confined Field Test of Genetically Engineered Pink Bollworm

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that an environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact have been prepared relative to the issuance of a permit to allow the field testing of pink bollworm genetically engineered to express green fluorescence as a marker. The environmental assessment provides a basis for our conclusion that the confined field testing of the genetically engineered pink bollworm will not present a risk of introducing or disseminating a plant pest and will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Based on its finding of no significant impact, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has determined that an environmental impact statement need not be prepared for this field test.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2001.

ADDRESSES: You may read a copy of the environmental assessment and the finding of no significant impact and comments received on an earlier notice of the availability of the environment assessment at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure that someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690–2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at *http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Robert I. Rose, Biotechnology Assessments Section, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–8723. To obtain a copy of the environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact, contact Ms. Kay Peterson at (301) 734–4885; e-mail: *kay.peterson@aphis.usda.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 7 CFR part 340 (referred to as the regulations) regulate the introduction (importation, interstate movement, and release into the environment) of genetically engineered organisms and products that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests (regulated articles). A permit must be obtained or a notification acknowledged before a regulated article may be introduced into the United States. The regulations set forth the permit application requirements and the notification procedures for the importation, interstate movement, and release into the environment of a regulated article.

On January 29, 2001, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) received a permit application (APHIS No. 01–029–01r) from APHIS' Plant Protection Center in Phoenix, AZ, for a permit to field test the plant pest pink bollworm (PBW), *Pectinophora gossypiella* (Lepidoptera: Gelechiidae).

APHIS published a notice in the **Federal Register** on June 21, 2001 (66 FR 33226, Docket No. 01–024–1), announcing the availability for public comment of an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed confined field test of the genetically engineered PBW. Comments were to have been received by APHIS on or before July 23, 2001. APHIS received nine comments on the EA during the designated comment period. The comments were from universities, environmental and consumer groups, a university medical research center, a crop protection association, a cotton industry organization, and a cotton growers group. Four comments were in favor of the proposed field test, while three were opposed. (We counted as a single comment three separate comments critical of the proposed field test that were written by the same commenter and were identical in content.) The commenters favoring the field test stressed the thoroughness of the control and containment measures proposed, the negligible risks of the experiment because of the planned safeguards, the adequacy of the EA, and the need for gathering data on PBW control. The commenters who opposed the proposed field test expressed concern about the need for additional data on transgene stability, the need for an independent assessment of the permit application, the adequacy of the proposed containment procedures, potential human health risks, and alleged deficiencies in APHIS' compliance with the requirements of the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), including the need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a transgenic PBW sterile insect technique program. APHIS identified and addressed the majority of these issues in the EA prepared for the subject field trial, and we have provided a response to comments as an attachment to our finding of no significant impact (FONSI), which is available from the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.** With regard to the comment concerning the need for an EIS, APHIS is committed to considering the long-term issues associated with the release of certain transgenic arthropods through the NEPA EIS process.

The subject PBW has been genetically engineered to express an enhanced green fluorescent protein (EGFP) derived from a jellyfish, *Aequora victoria.* The PBW expresses EGFP fluoresces when viewed under an ultraviolet light source. A *piggyBac* transposable element derived from the plant pest cabbage looper (*Trichoplusia ni*) was used to transform the subject PBW, and expression of the EGFP is controlled through use of the *Drosophila melanogaster* hsp70 and *Bombyx mori* actin A3 promoters. The subject transgenic PBW is considered a regulated article under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because the recipient organism is a plant pest and because it contains gene sequences from a plant pest. The field test will be conducted under carefully controlled and confined conditions.

The transgenic PBW with EGFP as a marker has been developed for use in confined, on-site experimentation and field performance studies in the PBW sterile insect program, which is designed to depress PBW populations. The transgenic PBW will be reared in