

Handlers may also dispose of cull dates of their own production within their own livestock-feeding operation; otherwise, such cull dates must be shipped or delivered to the Committee for sale to non-human food product outlets. The Committee anticipates a reduction in surplus funds available to the Committee from the sale of cull dates. As a consequence, it decided to fund all of the Committee's expenses with assessment funds during 2002–03.

The budgeted administrative expenses for the 2002–03 year include \$123,450 for labor and office expenses. This compares to \$90,800 in budgeted expenses in 2000–01. In addition, \$150,000 has been budgeted for marketing and promotion under the marketing order for the 2002–03 crop year.

The Committee reviewed and unanimously recommended 2002–03 expenditures of \$273,450, which include marketing and promotion programs. Prior to arriving at this budget, the Committee considered alternative expenditure levels, including a proposal to not have a budget. The assessment rate of \$0.90 per hundredweight of assessable dates was then determined by applying the following formula where:

A = Administrative Reserve (\$39,450 of the anticipated \$50,000 Administrative Reserve)
 B = 2002–03 expected shipments (260,000 hundredweight in pounds)
 C = 2002–03 expenses (\$273,450);
 $(C - A) \div B = \$0.90$ per hundredweight.

Estimated shipments should provide \$234,000 in assessment income. Income derived from handler assessments and the administrative reserves would be adequate to cover budgeted expenses. Funds in the administrative reserve are expected to total about \$10,550 by September 30, 2003, and therefore would be less than the maximum permitted by the order (not to exceed 50 percent of the average of expenses incurred during the most recent five preceding crop years; § 987.72(c)).

A review of historical information and preliminary information pertaining to the upcoming crop year indicates that the grower price for the 2002–03 season could range between \$30 and \$75 per hundredweight of dates. Therefore, the estimated assessment revenue for the 2002–03 crop year as a percentage of total grower revenue could range between 1 and 3 percent.

This action increases the assessment obligation imposed on handlers under the Federal marketing order. While assessments impose some additional costs on handlers under the Federal

marketing order, the costs are minimal and uniform on all handlers. Some of the additional costs may be passed on to producers. However, these costs are offset by the benefits derived by the operation of the marketing order. In addition, the Committee's meeting was widely publicized throughout the California date industry, and all interested persons were invited to attend the meeting and participate in Committee deliberations on all issues. Like all Committee meetings, the April 8, 2002, meeting was a public meeting and all entities, both large and small, were able to express views on this issue.

This rule imposes no additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements on either small or large California date handlers. As with all Federal marketing order programs, reports and forms are periodically reviewed to reduce information requirements and duplication by industry and public sector agencies.

USDA has not identified any relevant Federal rules that duplicate, overlap, or conflict with this rule.

A proposed rule concerning this action was published in **Federal Register** on June 14, 2002 (67 FR 40876). Copies of the proposed rule were also mailed or sent via facsimile to date handlers. Finally, the proposal was made available through the Internet by the Office of the Federal Register and USDA. A 30-day comment period ending July 15, 2002, was provided for interested persons to respond to the proposal. No comments were received.

A small business guide on complying with fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop marketing agreements and orders may be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>. Any questions about the compliance guide should be sent to Jay Guerber at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

After consideration of all relevant material presented, including the information and recommendation submitted by the Committee and other available information, it is hereby found that this rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 987

Dates, Marketing agreements, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 987 is amended as follows:

PART 987—DOMESTIC DATES PRODUCED OR PACKED IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 987 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

2. Section 987.339 is revised to read as follows:

§ 987.339 Assessment rate.

On and after October 1, 2002, an assessment rate of \$0.90 per hundredweight is established for California dates.

Dated: August 8, 2002.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 02–20686 Filed 8–14–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–02–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 993

[Docket No. FV02–993–4 IFR]

Dried Prunes Produced in California; Decreased Assessment Rate

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Interim final rule with request for comments.

SUMMARY: This rule decreases the assessment rate established for the Prune Marketing Committee (Committee) under Marketing Order No. 993 for the 2002–03 and subsequent crop years from \$2.80 to \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes. The Committee locally administers the marketing order which regulates the handling of dried prunes grown in California. Authorization to assess dried prune handlers enables the Committee to incur expenses that are reasonable and necessary to administer the program. The crop year begins August 1 and ends July 31. The assessment rate will remain in effect indefinitely unless modified, suspended, or terminated.

DATES: August 16, 2002. Comments received by October 15, 2002, will be considered prior to issuance of a final rule.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this rule. Comments must be sent to the Docket Clerk, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237; Fax: (202)

720-8938; or e-mail:

moab.docketclerk@usda.gov. Comments should reference the docket number and the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be available for public inspection in the Office of the Docket Clerk during regular business hours, or can be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Toni Sasselli, Program Assistant, or Richard P. Van Diest, Marketing Specialist, California Marketing Field Office, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 2202 Monterey Street, suite 102B, Fresno, California 93721; telephone: (559) 487-5901; Fax (559) 487-5906; or George Kelhart, Technical Advisor, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; telephone: (202) 720-2491, Fax: (202) 720-8938.

Small businesses may request information on complying with this regulation by contacting Jay Guerber, Marketing Order Administration Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; telephone: (202) 720-2491, Fax: (202) 720-8938, or e-mail: Jay.Guerber@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This rule is issued under Marketing Agreement and Order No. 993, both as amended (7 CFR part 993), regulating the handling of dried prunes grown in California, hereinafter referred to as the "order." The marketing agreement and order are effective under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), hereinafter referred to as the "Act."

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is issuing this rule in conformance with Executive Order 12866.

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform. Under the marketing order now in effect, California dried prune handlers are subject to assessments. Funds to administer the order are derived from such assessments. It is intended that the assessment rate as issued herein will be applicable to all assessable dried prunes beginning on August 1, 2002, and continue until amended, suspended, or terminated. This rule will not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies, unless they present an irreconcilable conflict with this rule.

The Act provides that administrative proceedings must be exhausted before parties may file suit in court. Under section 608c(15)(A) of the Act, any handler subject to an order may file with the USDA a petition stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order is not in accordance with law and request a modification of the order or to be exempted therefrom. Such handler is afforded the opportunity for a hearing on the petition. After the hearing USDA would rule on the petition. The Act provides that the district court of the United States in any district in which the handler is an inhabitant, or has his or her principal place of business, has jurisdiction to review the USDA's ruling on the petition, provided an action is filed not later than 20 days after the date of the entry of the ruling.

This rule decreases the assessment rate established for the Committee for the 2002-03 and subsequent crop years from \$2.80 per ton to \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes.

The California dried prune marketing order provides authority for the Committee, with the approval of the USDA, to formulate an annual budget of expenses and collect assessments from

handlers to administer the program. The members of the Committee are producers and handlers of California dried prunes. They are familiar with the Committee's needs and with the costs for goods and services in their local area and are thus in a position to formulate an appropriate budget and assessment rate. The assessment rate is formulated and discussed in a public meeting. Thus, all directly affected persons have an opportunity to participate and provide input.

For the 2001-02 and subsequent crop years, the Committee recommended, and USDA approved, an assessment rate that would continue in effect from crop year to crop year unless modified, suspended, or terminated by USDA upon recommendation and information submitted by the Committee or other information available to USDA.

The Committee met on June 27, 2002, and unanimously recommended 2002-03 expenditures of \$386,880 and an assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes. In comparison, last year's budgeted expenditures were \$384,370. The recommended assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton is \$0.20 lower than the rate currently in effect. The \$0.20 per ton decrease in the assessment rate would allow the Committee to meet its 2002-03 expenses. The Committee was able to recommend a lower assessment rate this year because salable prune production this year is expected to be 148,800 tons, 16,750 tons higher than production last year. Although 2002-03 recommended expenses are slightly higher than 2001-02 expenses, an assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton will provide sufficient funds for Committee operations this year.

The following table compares major budget expenditures recommended by the Committee on June 27, 2002, and major budget expenditures in the revised 2001-02 budget.

Budget expense categories	2001-02 (Revised)	2002-03
Total Personnel Salaries	\$226,315	\$232,575
Total Operating Expenses	123,700	136,850
Reserve for Contingencies	34,355	17,455

The assessment rate recommended by the Committee was derived by dividing anticipated expenses by the estimated salable tons of California dried prunes. Production of dried prunes for the year is estimated at 148,800 salable tons, which should provide \$386,880 in assessment income. Income derived from handler assessments would be adequate to cover budgeted expenses.

Interest income also would be available if assessment income is reduced for some reason. The Committee is authorized to use excess assessment funds from the 2001-02 crop year (currently estimated at \$76,878) for up to 5 months beyond the end of the crop year to meet 2001-02 crop year expenses. At the end of the 5 months,

the Committee refunds or credits excess funds to handlers (\$993.81(c)).

The assessment rate established in this rule will continue in effect indefinitely unless modified, suspended, or terminated by the USDA upon recommendation and information submitted by the Committee or other available information.

Although this assessment rate is effective for an indefinite period, the Committee will continue to meet prior to or during each crop year to recommend a budget of expenses and consider recommendations for modification of the assessment rate. The dates and times of Committee meetings are available from the Committee or USDA. Committee meetings are open to the public and interested persons may express their views at these meetings. USDA will evaluate Committee recommendations and other available information to determine whether modification of the assessment rate is needed. Further rulemaking will be undertaken as necessary. The Committee's 2002–03 budget and those for subsequent crop years will be reviewed and, as appropriate, approved by USDA.

Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis

Pursuant to requirements set forth in the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA), the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has considered the economic impact of this rule on small entities. Accordingly, AMS has prepared this initial regulatory flexibility analysis.

The purpose of the RFA is to fit regulatory actions to the scale of business subject to such actions in order that small businesses will not be unduly or disproportionately burdened. Marketing orders issued pursuant to the Act, and the rules issued thereunder, are unique in that they are brought about through group action of essentially small entities acting on their own behalf. Thus, both statutes have small entity orientation and compatibility.

There are approximately 1,205 producers of dried prunes in the production area and approximately 24 handlers subject to regulation under the marketing order. Small agricultural producers are defined by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201) as those having annual receipts less than \$750,000, and small agricultural service firms are defined as those whose annual receipts are less than \$5,000,000.

An updated prune industry profile shows that 9 of the 24 handlers (37.5%) shipped over \$5,000,000 of dried prunes and could be considered large handlers by the Small Business Administration. Fifteen of the 24 handlers (62.5%) shipped under \$5,000,000 of dried prunes and could be considered small

handlers. An estimated 32 producers, or less than 3% of the 1,205 total producers, would be considered large growers with annual income over \$500,000. The majority of handlers and producers of California dried prunes may be classified as small entities.

This rule decreases the assessment rate established for the Committee and collected from handlers for the 2002–03 and subsequent crop years from \$2.80 per ton to \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes. The Committee unanimously recommended 2002–03 expenditures of \$386,880 and an assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes. The recommended assessment rate is \$0.20 lower than the current rate. The quantity of assessable dried prunes for the 2002–03 crop year is now estimated at 148,800 salable tons. Thus, the \$2.60 rate should provide \$386,880 in assessment income and be adequate to meet this year's expenses. Interest income also would be available to cover budgeted expenses if the 2002–03 expected assessment income falls short.

The following table compares major budget expenditures recommended by the Committee on June 27, 2002, and major budget expenditures in the revised 2001–02 budget.

Major budget expense categories	2001–02 (Revised)	2002–03
Total Personnel Salaries	\$226,315	\$232,575
Total Operating Expenses	123,700	136,850
Reserve for Contingencies	34,355	17,455

The Committee reviewed and unanimously recommended 2002–03 expenditures of \$386,880. Prior to arriving at this budget, the Committee considered information from various sources, such as the Committee's Executive Subcommittee. An alternative to this action would be to continue with the \$2.80 per ton assessment rate, but the anticipated larger crop, with an assessment rate of \$2.80 per ton, would generate monies in excess of that needed to fund all the budget items. The assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton of salable dried prunes was determined by dividing the total recommended budget by the estimated salable dried prunes. The Committee is authorized to use excess assessment funds from the 2001–02 crop year (currently estimated at \$76,878) for up to 5 months beyond the end of the crop year to fund 2002–03 crop year expenses. At the end of the 5 months, the Committee refunds or credits excess funds to handlers (\$ 993.81(c)). Anticipated assessment income and interest income during

2002–03 would be adequate to cover authorized expenses.

The grower price for the 2002–03 season is expected to average above the estimated 2001–02 average grower price of about \$750 per salable ton of dried prunes. Based on estimated shipments of 148,800 salable tons, assessment revenue during the 2002–03 crop year is expected to be less than 1 percent of the total expected grower revenue.

This action decreases the assessment obligation imposed on handlers. Assessments are applied uniformly on all handlers, and some of the costs may be passed on to producers. However, decreasing the assessment rate reduces the burden on handlers, and may reduce the burden on producers. In addition, the Committee's meeting was widely publicized throughout the California dried prune industry and all interested persons were invited to attend the meeting and participate in Committee deliberations on all issues. Like all Committee meetings, the June 27, 2002, meeting was a public meeting and all entities, both large and small, were able

to express views on this issue. Finally, interested persons are invited to submit information on the regulatory and informational impacts of this action on small businesses.

This action imposes no additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements on either small or large California dried prune handlers. As with all Federal marketing order programs, reports and forms are periodically reviewed to reduce information requirements and duplication by industry and public sector agencies.

The USDA has not identified any relevant Federal rules that duplicate, overlap, or conflict with this rule.

A small business guide on complying with fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop marketing agreements and orders may be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab/html>. Any questions about the compliance guide should be sent to Jay Guerber at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

After consideration of all relevant material presented, including the

information and recommendation submitted by the Committee and other available information, it is hereby found that this rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553, it is also found and determined upon good cause that it is impracticable, unnecessary, and contrary to the public interest to give preliminary notice prior to putting this rule into effect, and that good cause exists for not postponing the effective date of this rule until 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register** because: (1) The 2002–03 crop year begins on August 1, 2002, and the marketing order requires that the rate of assessment for each crop year apply to all assessable dried prunes handled during such crop year; (2) the rule would decrease the assessment rate for assessable prunes beginning with the 2002–03 crop year; (3) handlers are aware of this action which was unanimously recommended by the Committee at a public meeting and is similar to other assessment rate actions issued in past years; and (4) this interim final rule provides a 60-day comment period, and all comments timely received will be considered prior to finalization of this rule.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 993

Marketing agreements, Plums, Prunes, Reporting and Recordkeeping requirements.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 993 is amended as follows:

PART 993—DRIED PRUNES PRODUCED IN CALIFORNIA

1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 993 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

2. Section 993.347 is revised to read as follows:

§ 993.347 Assessment rate.

On and after August 1, 2002, an assessment rate of \$2.60 per ton is established for California dried prunes.

Dated: August 8, 2002.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 02–20687 Filed 8–14–02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. 2002–NE–08–AD; Amendment 39–12865; AD 2002–16–26]

RIN 2120–AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier-Rotax GmbH Type 912 F and 914 F Series Reciprocating Engines

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Final rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This amendment adopts a new airworthiness directive (AD) that is applicable to certain serial numbers (SN's) of Bombardier-Rotax GmbH type 912 F and 914 F series reciprocating engines. This action requires initial and repetitive visual inspections of the engine crankcase for cracks. This amendment is prompted by reports of several instances of engine crankcases found cracked in service. The actions specified in this AD are intended to prevent oil loss caused by cracks in the engine crankcase, which could lead to in-flight failure of the engine and forced landing.

DATES: Effective September 16, 2002.

Comments for inclusion in the Rules Docket must be received on or before October 15, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments in triplicate to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket No. 2002–NE–08–AD, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803–5299. Comments may be inspected at this location, by appointment, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. Comments may also be sent via the Internet using the following address: “9-ane-adcomment@faa.gov”. Comments sent via the Internet must contain the docket number in the subject line. Information regarding this action may be examined, by appointment, at the FAA, New England Region, Office of the Regional Counsel, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James Lawrence, Aerospace Engineer, Engine Certification Office, FAA, Engine and Propeller Directorate, 12 New England Executive Park, Burlington, MA 01803–5299; telephone (781) 238–7176; fax (781) 238–7199.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Austro Control, which is the airworthiness

authority for Austria, recently notified the FAA that an unsafe condition may exist on certain SN's of Bombardier-Rotax GmbH type 912 F and 914 F series reciprocating engines. Austro Control advises that reports have been received of three engine crankcases found cracked in service. To date, there have been no engine failures due to cracks in the crankcase. However, Austro Control has determined that an engine could fail due to oil loss from a cracked crankcase. This condition, if not corrected, could result in an inflight failure of the engine and forced landing.

Bilateral Airworthiness Agreement

Bombardier-Rotax GmbH type 912 F and 914 F series reciprocating engines are manufactured in Austria and are type certificated for operation in the United States under the provisions of § 21.29 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR 21.29) and the applicable bilateral airworthiness agreement. Pursuant to this bilateral airworthiness agreement, Austro Control has kept the FAA informed of the situation described above. The FAA has examined the findings of Austro Control, reviewed all available information, and determined that AD action is necessary for products of this type design that are certificated for operation in the United States.

FAA's Determination of an Unsafe Condition and Required Actions

Since an unsafe condition has been identified that is likely to exist or develop on other Bombardier-Rotax GmbH type 912 F and 914 F series reciprocating engines of the same type design, this AD is being issued to prevent oil loss caused by cracks in the engine crankcase, which could lead to in-flight failure of the engine and forced landing. This AD requires initial visual inspection for cracks of the engine crankcase of certain SN engines, within 50 hours time-in-service (TIS) after the effective date of this AD, and repetitive visual inspections at each 100-hour, annual, or progressive inspection, or within 110 hours TIS since last inspection, whichever occurs first. If any cracks are found the engine must be replaced with a serviceable engine. The SN's affected are, for 912 F series engines, SN's 4,412.796 or lower, and for 914 F series engines, SN's 4,420.313 or lower. Examples of lower SN's are 4,412.795, 4,412.794, and 4,412.793, and 4,420.312, 4,420.311, and 4,420.310.

Immediate Adoption of This AD

Since a situation exists that requires the immediate adoption of this