

demonstration sites, a combined total of 80 individuals will participate in focus groups (10 participants per focus group  $\times$  2 focus groups  $\times$  4 states).

*Number of Responses per Respondent:* Of the individuals participating in the initial interview, a total of 36 individuals will respond twice (once to the initial interview and once to the follow-up interview). The remaining individuals (up to 1,133) will respond only once. The 80 individuals participating in the focus groups will respond once.

*Estimated Total Responses:* Maximum total number of responses: 1,285 (= 1,169 initial commodities interviews + 36 follow up interviews + 80 focus group participants).

*Hours per Response:* Initial commodities alternative benefit interview: 20 minutes per respondent; follow-up commodities alternative benefit interview: 20 minutes per respondent; focus group: 1 hour 15 minutes per respondent.

*Total Reporting Hours:* Maximum total reporting hours: 498 hours (= 1,169 initial commodities interviews  $\times$  0.33 hours + 36 follow up interviews  $\times$  0.33 hours + 80 focus group participants  $\times$  1.25 hours).

*Comments:* Comments are invited on (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments should be sent to the address stated in the preamble. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 25, 2003.

**Susan Offut,**

*Administrator, Economic Research Service, USDA.*

[FR Doc. 03-6056 Filed 3-12-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-18-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food and Nutrition Service

#### Child Nutrition Programs—Income Eligibility Guidelines

**AGENCY:** Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice announces the Department's annual adjustments to the Income Eligibility Guidelines to be used in determining eligibility for free and reduced price meals or free milk for the period from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. These guidelines are used by schools, institutions, and facilities participating in the National School Lunch Program (and Commodity School Program), School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program for Children, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program. The annual adjustments are required by section 9 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. The guidelines are intended to direct benefits to those children most in need and are revised annually to account for changes in the Consumer Price Index.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 1, 2003.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Robert M. Eadie, Chief, Policy and Program Development Branch, Child Nutrition Division, FNS, USDA, Alexandria, Virginia 22302, or by phone at (703) 305-2620.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This action is not a rule as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601-612) and thus is exempt from the provisions of that Act.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3507), no new recordkeeping or reporting requirements have been included that are subject to approval from the Office of Management and Budget.

This action is exempted from review by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866.

These programs are listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under No. 10.553, No. 10.555, No. 10.556, No. 10.558 and No. 10.559 and are subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. (See 7 CFR Part 3015, Subpart V, and the final rule related notice published at 48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983.)

#### Background

Pursuant to sections 9(b)(1) and 17(c)(4) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.

1758(b)(1) and 42 U.S.C. 1766(c)(4)), and sections 3(a)(6) and 4(e)(1)(A) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1772(a)(6) and 1773(e)(1)(A)), the Department annually issues the Income Eligibility Guidelines for free and reduced price meals for the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR Part 210), the Commodity School Program (7 CFR Part 210), School Breakfast Program (7 CFR Part 220), Summer Food Service Program (7 CFR Part 225) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (7 CFR Part 226) and the guidelines for free milk in the Special Milk Program for Children (7 CFR Part 215). These eligibility guidelines are based on the Federal income poverty guidelines and are stated by household size. The guidelines are used to determine eligibility for free and reduced price meals and free milk in accordance with applicable program rules.

#### Definition of Income

In accordance with the Department's policy as provided in the Food and Nutrition Service publication *Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual*, "income," as the term is used in this Notice, means income before any deductions such as income taxes, Social Security taxes, insurance premiums, charitable contributions and bonds. It includes the following: (1) Monetary compensation for services, including wages, salary, commissions or fees; (2) net income from nonfarm self-employment; (3) net income from farm self-employment; (4) Social Security; (5) dividends or interest on savings or bonds or income from estates or trusts; (6) net rental income; (7) public assistance or welfare payments; (8) unemployment compensation; (9) government civilian employee or military retirement, or pensions or veterans payments; (10) private pensions or annuities; (11) alimony or child support payments; (12) regular contributions from persons not living in the household; (13) net royalties; and (14) other cash income. Other cash income would include cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts and other resources that would be available to pay the price of a child's meal.

"Income," as the term is used in this Notice, does not include any income or benefits received under any Federal programs that are excluded from consideration as income by any legislative prohibition. Furthermore, the value of meals or milk to children shall not be considered as income to their households for other benefit programs in accordance with the prohibitions in

section 12(e) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and section 11(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1760(e) and 1780(b)).

**The Income Eligibility Guidelines**

The following are the Income Eligibility Guidelines to be effective from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004.

The Department's guidelines for free meals and milk and reduced price meals were obtained by multiplying the year 2003 Federal income poverty guidelines by 1.30 and 1.85, respectively, and by rounding the result upward to the next whole dollar. Weekly and monthly guidelines were computed by dividing

annual income by 52 and 12, respectively, and by rounding upward to the next whole dollar. The numbers reflected in this notice for a family of four represent an increase of 1.66% over the July 2002 numbers for a family of the same size.

**BILLING CODE 3410-30-P**

**INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES**  
(Effective from July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004)

| Household size                                                          | Federal Poverty Guidelines |       |      | Reduced Price Meals - 185% |       |       | Free Meals - 130% |       |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------|------|
|                                                                         | Annual                     | Month | Week | Annual                     | Month | Week  | Annual            | Month | Week |
| 48 CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GUAM AND TERRITORIES |                            |       |      |                            |       |       |                   |       |      |
| 1.....                                                                  | 8,980                      | 749   | 173  | 16,613                     | 1,385 | 320   | 11,674            | 973   | 225  |
| 2.....                                                                  | 12,120                     | 1,010 | 234  | 22,422                     | 1,869 | 432   | 15,756            | 1,313 | 303  |
| 3.....                                                                  | 15,260                     | 1,272 | 294  | 28,231                     | 2,353 | 543   | 19,838            | 1,654 | 382  |
| 4.....                                                                  | 18,400                     | 1,534 | 354  | 34,040                     | 2,837 | 655   | 23,920            | 1,994 | 460  |
| 5.....                                                                  | 21,540                     | 1,795 | 415  | 39,849                     | 3,321 | 767   | 28,002            | 2,334 | 539  |
| 6.....                                                                  | 24,680                     | 2,057 | 475  | 45,658                     | 3,805 | 879   | 32,084            | 2,674 | 617  |
| 7.....                                                                  | 27,820                     | 2,319 | 535  | 51,467                     | 4,289 | 990   | 36,166            | 3,014 | 696  |
| 8.....                                                                  | 30,960                     | 2,580 | 596  | 57,276                     | 4,773 | 1,102 | 40,248            | 3,354 | 774  |
| For each add'l family member add                                        | +3,140                     | +262  | +61  | +5,809                     | +485  | +112  | +4,082            | +341  | +79  |
| ALASKA                                                                  |                            |       |      |                            |       |       |                   |       |      |
| 1.....                                                                  | 11,210                     | 935   | 216  | 20,739                     | 1,729 | 399   | 14,573            | 1,215 | 281  |
| 2.....                                                                  | 15,140                     | 1,262 | 292  | 28,009                     | 2,335 | 539   | 19,682            | 1,641 | 379  |
| 3.....                                                                  | 19,070                     | 1,590 | 367  | 35,280                     | 2,940 | 679   | 24,791            | 2,066 | 477  |
| 4.....                                                                  | 23,000                     | 1,917 | 443  | 42,550                     | 3,546 | 819   | 29,900            | 2,492 | 575  |
| 5.....                                                                  | 26,930                     | 2,245 | 518  | 49,821                     | 4,152 | 959   | 35,009            | 2,918 | 674  |
| 6.....                                                                  | 30,860                     | 2,572 | 594  | 57,091                     | 4,758 | 1,098 | 40,118            | 3,344 | 772  |
| 7.....                                                                  | 34,790                     | 2,900 | 670  | 64,362                     | 5,364 | 1,238 | 45,227            | 3,769 | 870  |
| 8.....                                                                  | 38,720                     | 3,227 | 745  | 71,632                     | 5,970 | 1,378 | 50,336            | 4,195 | 968  |
| For each add'l family member add                                        | +3,930                     | +328  | +76  | +7,271                     | +606  | +140  | +5,109            | +426  | +99  |
| HAWAII                                                                  |                            |       |      |                            |       |       |                   |       |      |
| 1.....                                                                  | 10,330                     | 861   | 199  | 19,111                     | 1,593 | 368   | 13,429            | 1,120 | 259  |
| 2.....                                                                  | 13,940                     | 1,162 | 269  | 25,789                     | 2,150 | 496   | 18,122            | 1,511 | 349  |
| 3.....                                                                  | 17,550                     | 1,463 | 338  | 32,468                     | 2,706 | 625   | 22,815            | 1,902 | 439  |
| 4.....                                                                  | 21,160                     | 1,764 | 407  | 39,146                     | 3,263 | 753   | 27,508            | 2,293 | 529  |
| 5.....                                                                  | 24,770                     | 2,065 | 477  | 45,825                     | 3,819 | 882   | 32,201            | 2,684 | 620  |
| 6.....                                                                  | 28,380                     | 2,365 | 546  | 52,503                     | 4,376 | 1,010 | 36,894            | 3,075 | 710  |
| 7.....                                                                  | 31,990                     | 2,666 | 616  | 59,182                     | 4,932 | 1,139 | 41,587            | 3,466 | 800  |
| 8.....                                                                  | 35,600                     | 2,967 | 685  | 65,860                     | 5,489 | 1,267 | 46,280            | 3,857 | 890  |
| For each add'l family member add                                        | +3,610                     | +301  | +70  | +6,679                     | +557  | +129  | +4,693            | +392  | +91  |

**Authority:** (42 U.S.C. 1758(b)(1)).

**Dated:** March 6, 2003.

**Roberto Salazar,**

*Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 03-6079 Filed 3-12-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-30-C**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### National Agricultural Statistics Service

#### Notice of Intent To Seek Approval To Conduct an Information Collection

**AGENCY:** National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

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

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request approval to conduct a new information collection, the Conservation Effects Assessment Survey.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by May 19, 2003 to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be mailed to Ginny McBride, NASS OMB Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250 or sent electronically to [gmcbride@nass.usda.gov](mailto:gmcbride@nass.usda.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Carol House, Acting Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-4333.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

*Title:* Conservation Effects Assessment Survey.

*Type of Request:* Intent to Seek Approval to Conduct a New Information Collection.

*Abstract:* The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service is to prepare and issue State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, prices, and disposition. The goal of this NASS project is to collect land management information that will assist the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in assessing environmental benefits associated with implementation of various conservation programs and installation of associated conservation practices. The 2002 Farm Bill substantially increased funding for the

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) as well as other conservation programs; a portion of the technical assistance funds for conservation programs has been allocated for use in assessing the environmental benefits of these conservation practices. The assessment will be used to report progress annually on Farm Bill implementation to Congress and the general public. The information collected will also be used to provide OMB with requested information on the cost effectiveness of the EQIP and the Conservation Reserve Program.

NRCS has been given the responsibility of leading a multi-agency effort to estimate the environmental benefits of conservation practices. Benefit measures will initially include soil quality enhancement, erosion reduction, reduction in nutrient and sediment losses from farm fields, soil carbon sequestration, water use efficiency, and reductions in in-stream nutrient and sediment concentrations. Investments are being made in additional model development to address benefits associated with reductions in pesticide losses, air quality, and wildlife habitat. The assessment is designed to be national and regional in scope. A sampling and modeling approach has been adopted to avoid the high costs associated with expanded reporting by NRCS field staff.

Benefits will be estimated by applying transport models and other physical process models at sample sites associated with the National Resources Inventory (NRI) sampling frame. The NRI is a scientifically-based, longitudinal panel survey designed to assess conditions and trends of soil, water, and related resources of the Nation's non-federal lands. The NRI is conducted for the U.S. Department of Agriculture by NRCS in cooperation with the Iowa State University Statistical Laboratory and provides critical information to address agri-environmental issues at national, regional, and State levels. Data gathered in the NRI are linked to NRCS soil survey and climate databases. These linked data, along with NRI's historical data for 1982-2001, form the basis for unique modeling applications and analytical capabilities. The NRI sampling frame will be used for this project because it captures the diversity of the Nation's agricultural resource base (soils, topography, and climate), which is a critical factor in estimating benefits of conservation practices. Also critical are the historical and linked data that already exist for each NRI sample site. The assessment of benefits is not

possible, however, without augmenting these existing data with additional information on land management and conservation practice adoption.

NASS will collaborate with NRCS in the acquisition of this additional information by conducting a survey for a sub-sample of NRI sample units in the contiguous 48 States. The survey will utilize personal interviews to administer a questionnaire that is designed to obtain from farm operators field-specific data associated with the selected sample units. Specific questions are asked about physical characteristics of the field and technical aspects of conservation practices associated with the field. Several other questions deal with production activities before and after implementation of specific conservation practice and with the operator's participation in conservation programs. The survey will be conducted in the fall of each year beginning in 2003 and extending through 2008, which is the last year covered by the 2002 Farm Bill. Approximately 15,000-20,000 interviews will be conducted each year. Each year's data collection will be for a different set of agricultural land units. The scope of the study will broaden as the models are extended to cover a broader suite of conservation practices and effects. These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a). Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by Section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response.

*Respondents:* Farm operators.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 18,000.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 18,000 hours.

Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from Ginny McBride, NASS OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 720-5778.

*Comments:* Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the