

Done in Washington, DC this 18th day of November, 2003.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 03-29234 Filed 11-21-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 03-103-1]

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension 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 an extension of approval of an information collection in support of the regulations for the importation of pork and pork products and live swine from the Mexican States of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa.

DATES: We will consider all comments we receive on or before January 23, 2004.

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. 03-103-1, 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. 03-103-1. 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. 03-103-1" 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 on the regulations regarding the importation of pork and pork products and live swine from the Mexican States of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa, contact Dr. Hatim Gubara, Senior Staff Veterinarian, Regionalization Evaluation Services Staff, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale MD 20737-1231; (301) 734-4356. 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: Classical Swine Fever; Importation of Pork and Pork Products and Live Swine from the Mexican States of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa.

OMB Number: 0579-0230.

Type of Request: Extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: Under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301-8317), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, regulates the importation of animals and animals products into the United States to prevent the introduction of animal diseases, such as classical swine fever (CSF), into the United States.

The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 allow the importation of pork and products and live swine from the Mexican States of Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa under conditions designed to ensure that the pork and pork products and live swine will not transmit CSF. This disease is not present in those States but exists in other parts of Mexico. The conditions for importation require, among other things, certification from a full-time salaried veterinary officer of the Government of Mexico that the pork or pork products or live swine originated in a CSF-free region and have not been commingled with swine or pork or pork products from CSF-affected regions.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of this information collection activity for an additional 3 years.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from 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 for 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 information collection, 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 information collection 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 1 hour per response.

Respondents: Federal animal health authorities in Mexico.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 5.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 10.

Estimated annual number of responses: 50.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 50 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the 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 18th day of November, 2003.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 03-29235 Filed 11-21-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 98-090-6]

RIN 0579-AB03

Classical Swine Fever; Availability of Risk Analysis Related to the Importation of Swine and Swine Products From France and Spain

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that a risk analysis has been prepared by the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) relative to the risk of introducing classical swine fever virus in swine and swine products imported from France and Spain. This risk analysis is a supplement to a risk analysis prepared by APHIS titled "Risk Analysis for Importation of Classical Swine Fever Virus in Swine and Swine Products from the European Union—December 2000." The supplemental risk analysis also identifies the administrative units in France and Spain that we would consider the smallest administrative units that could be considered "regions" in each of those countries. We are making this supplemental risk analysis available to the public for review and comment.

DATES: We will consider all comments we receive on or before January 23, 2004.

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. 98–090–6, 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. 98–090–6. 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. 98–090–6" on the subject line.

You may read the supplemental risk analysis and any comments that we receive on that document 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.

You may request a copy of the supplemental risk analysis by calling or writing to the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. The supplemental risk analysis is also available on the Internet. Instructions for accessing the supplemental risk analysis on the Internet are provided below under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

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. Chip Wells, Senior Staff Officer, Regionalization Evaluation Services Staff, National Center for Import and Export, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 734–4356.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (the Department) regulates the importation of animals and animal products to guard against the introduction of animal diseases into this country. The regulations pertaining to the importation of animals and animal products are set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), title 9, chapter I, subchapter D (9 CFR parts 91 through 99).

On June 25, 1999, we published in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 34155–34168, Docket No. 98–090–1) a proposal to, among other things, amend the regulations regarding the importation of swine and swine products from a region in the European Union (EU) consisting of Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and parts of Germany and Italy.

Before developing our proposed rule, we prepared a risk analysis to estimate the likelihood of introducing classical swine fever (CSF, which we referred to in the proposed rule as hog cholera) from the region, and to determine what, if any, mitigation measures we considered necessary. We assessed the likelihood of introducing CSF through the importation of live breeding swine, swine semen, and pork and pork products. We made the risk analysis available to the public during the comment period for the proposed rule.

We solicited comments concerning our proposed rule for 60 days ending August 24, 1999. One of the comments we received expressed concerns with several aspects of our risk analysis. Based on that comment, and as recommended by the Department's Office of Risk Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis, we revised our risk analysis and included a supplement that presented in more detail specific information about CSF outbreaks in the

EU. The revised risk analysis is titled "Risk Analysis for Importation of Classical Swine Fever Virus in Swine and Swine Products from the European Union—December 2000."

On April 7, 2003, we published in the **Federal Register** (68 FR 16922–16940, Docket No. 98–090–5) a final rule amending the regulations to recognize a region in the EU consisting of Austria, Belgium, Greece, the Netherlands, Portugal, and parts of Germany and Italy as free of CSF. In that final rule, APHIS did not recognize France or Spain as free of CSF because CSF outbreaks had occurred in each of those countries after the publication of our June 1999 proposed rule.

In our April 2003 final rule, we continued to consider all of France and Spain affected with CSF, even though outbreaks had occurred only in limited areas of those countries, because we had not yet defined the administrative units in those countries we would use to consider less than the entire country affected with CSF. Since the outbreaks, each of the affected countries took action to eradicate CSF. The last affected herds were depopulated in Spain on April 30, 2002, and in France on April 29, 2002.

Following the elimination of CSF in domestic swine in France and Spain, we prepared a supplemental risk analysis to examine the risk of introducing CSF from the importation of swine and swine products from those countries. For the supplemental risk analysis, we used the applicable information from the risk analyses we conducted for the June 1999 proposed rule and the April 2003 final rule, as well as information made available following the outbreak and elimination of CSF in those countries.

We are giving notice that the supplemental risk analysis is available for public review and are requesting comments on the supplemental risk analysis for 60 days. The supplemental risk analysis addresses the current CSF situation in France and Spain and identifies the administrative units we would use to regionalize France and Spain in the event of future disease outbreaks in those counties. The supplemental risk analysis and any comments received will be the basis for determining whether to publish a final rule to: (1) Include France and Spain as part of the EU region recognized in our April 2003 final rule as one in which CSF is not known to exist, and from which breeding swine, swine semen, and pork and pork products may be imported into the United States under certain conditions in the absence of restrictions associated with other

foreign animal diseases of swine; and (2) identify the smallest administrative units in France and Spain we will use to regionalize those countries in the event of a disease outbreak. We will address any comments we receive on the supplemental risk analysis in a future document in the **Federal Register**.

Accessing the Supplemental Risk Analysis on the Internet

The supplemental risk analysis is available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie/reg-request.html>. At the bottom of that Web site page, click on "Information previously submitted by Regions requesting export approval and their supporting documentation." At the next screen, click on the triangle beside "European Union/ Not Specified/ Classical Swine Fever," then click on the triangle beside "Response by APHIS," which will reveal a link for "APHIS Supplemental Risk Analysis for Importation of the Classical Swine Fever Virus in Swine and Swine Products from France and Spain." Following that link will allow you to view the supplemental risk analysis.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 450, 1622, 7701–7772, and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 42 U.S.C. 4331 and 4332; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 18th day of November, 2003.

Kevin Shea,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 03–29231 Filed 11–21–03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Housing Service

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Rural Utilities Service

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Request for Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCIES: Rural Housing Service (RHS), Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA.

ACTION: Proposed collection; comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Agencies intention to request an extension for a

currently approved information collection in support of the Real Estate Title Clearance and Loan Closing regulation.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by January 23, 2004, to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gale Richardson, Loan Specialist, Single Family Housing Direct Loan Division, Rural Housing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mail STOP 0783, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, DC 20250–0783, Telephone: (202) 720–1459. (This is not a toll free number.)

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: 7 CFR 1927–B, Real Estate Title Clearance and Loan Closing.

OMB Number: 0575–0147.

Expiration Date of Approval: May 31, 2004.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: Section 501 of Title V of the Housing Act of 1949, as amended, authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to extend financial assistance to construct, improve, alter, repair, replace, or rehabilitate dwellings, farm buildings, and/or related facilities to provide decent, safe, and sanitary living conditions and adequate farm buildings and other structures in rural areas. Sections 302, 311, and 321 of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, as amended, authorize the Secretary to extend agricultural credit to farmers and ranchers. Title clearance is required to assure the Agency(s) that the loan is legally secured and has the required lien priority.

The Agencies will be collecting information to assure that those participating in this program remain eligible to proceed with loan closing and to ensure that loans made with Federal funds are legally secured. The respondents are individuals or households, farms, businesses, and nonprofit institutions. The information required is used by USDA personnel to verify that the required lien position has been obtained. The information is collected at the field office responsible for processing a loan application through loan closing. The information is also used to insure the program is administered in a manner consistent with legislative and administrative requirements. If not collected, the Agency would be unable to determine if the loan is adequately and legally secured.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information

is estimated to average .28 hours per response.

Respondents: Individuals or households, farms, businesses, non-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 100,074.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Number of Responses: 100,074.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 27,922 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Renita Bolden, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692–0035.

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 burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques, or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Renita Bolden, Regulation and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Stop 0742, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250–0742. 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.

Dated: November 12, 2003.

Arthur A. Garcia,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

Dated: November 6, 2003.

John Rosso,

Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

Dated: November 5, 2003.

Curtis M. Anderson,

Acting Administrator, Rural Utilities Service.

Dated: November 7, 2003.

James Little,

Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 03–29211 Filed 11–21–03; 8:45 am]

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