

# 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. 98-085-2]

#### Aquaculture; Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** This is to notify the aquaculture industries, interested parties, and the general public that a public meeting will be held to discuss how and to what extent the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service should regulate aquatic species, and to discuss any other issues concerning possible regulation of aquaculture by the Agency.

**DATES:** The public meeting will be held on Thursday, January 25, 2001, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The public meeting will be held at the Disney Coronado Springs Resort, 1000 West Buena Vista Drive, Lake Buena Vista, FL, in conjunction with the Aquaculture 2001 Conference.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information about the APHIS public meeting, contact Dr. Otis Miller, Jr., National Aquaculture Coordinator, Center for Planning, Certification, and Monitoring, VS, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 46, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231, (301) 734-6188.

Information regarding the Aquaculture 2001 Conference is available on the Internet at [http://www.wasmeetings.org/Pages/Orlando2001\\_RegBroc.html](http://www.wasmeetings.org/Pages/Orlando2001_RegBroc.html).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On May 4, 1999, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) published in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 23795-23796, Docket No. 98-085-1) an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR) titled "Aquaculture: Farm-Raised Fin Fish." We published this

ANPR after receiving petitions<sup>1</sup> asking us to regulate aquaculture in various ways. Many petitioners asked us to define farmed aquatic animals as livestock. In general, the petitioners seemed to be interested in receiving the same services that domestic producers of livestock receive for animals moving in interstate and foreign commerce. However, based on the petitions alone, it was difficult for us to determine what segments of the industry want services and exactly what services they want. It was also difficult to determine the objectives sought by the petitioners who were requesting Federal regulation. We published the ANPR in an attempt to clarify the industry's needs, the nature of the services sought, and the concerns the petitioners had with regard to such regulations.

We received 55 comments<sup>2</sup> in response to the ANPR. A majority of the commenters supported the idea of APHIS regulation of cultured fin fish. Unfortunately, the commenters generally did not clearly distinguish between fin fish raised for food and ornamental fin fish. Commenters who wanted regulation were, however, very clear that they want programs to prevent and control disease and to support increased commerce, both domestic and export.

The commenters also suggested that any rulemaking initiated by APHIS be a negotiated rulemaking. In negotiated rulemaking, industry representatives and other interested persons meet with APHIS officials and draft proposed regulations together. The proposed regulations are then published for public comment. Negotiated rulemaking is designed to ensure that all interested persons are involved together from the start to develop regulations.

Unfortunately, negotiated rulemaking is not suitable for all situations. It works well when there is a small number of interested parties and the parties are easy to identify. This is not the case with regard to aquaculture. The aquaculture industry is very large and

diverse. It would be difficult for us to identify everyone who should be represented in a negotiated rulemaking. In addition, there are many parties outside aquaculture that would have a substantial interest in such a rulemaking. In our view, the number of people who would need to participate in a negotiated rulemaking would be too large and would suggest that negotiated rulemaking is not appropriate. Furthermore, a large negotiated rulemaking would be expensive, and APHIS does not have adequate funds. Therefore, we have concluded that it would not be appropriate to pursue an aquaculture negotiated rulemaking.

We have not, however, decided whether to pursue aquaculture rulemaking by other means. Before we make that decision, we want to have as much information as possible from all interested persons, and we want to provide the aquaculture industries and other interested persons with as much opportunity as possible to discuss with us and inform us regarding the relevant issues.

Therefore, we are planning to hold a series of public meetings. Public meetings will allow anyone who is interested—industry representatives, producers, consumers, and others—to present their views and to exchange information among themselves and with APHIS.

There will be no set agendas for the meetings. Any issues and concerns related to aquaculture and possible APHIS regulatory action can be discussed. However, there are three specific issues on which we would like more information. These are issues that the people and organizations who commented on our ANPR either did not address or were unclear about. Specifically, if APHIS does propose regulations: (1) Should our program be mandatory or voluntary; (2) should we cover shell fish; and (3) should we cover ornamental fin fish?

Information elicited at the meetings could result in a new APHIS regulatory program, or in changes to aquaculture-related services currently provided by APHIS. We have scheduled the first public meeting for Thursday, January 25, 2001, at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, FL.

If you wish to speak at the meeting, please register in advance by calling the Regulatory Analysis and Development

<sup>1</sup> All the petitions and comments we received are a part of the rulemaking record for Docket No. 98-085-1. You may read the petitions and comments 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.

voice mail at (301) 734-8139. Leave a message with your name, telephone number, organization, if any, and an estimate of the time you need to speak. You may also register at the meeting itself. Please register at the meeting room between 8:30 a.m. and 9 a.m., before the meeting officially begins. Starting with the advance registrants, we will call speakers in the order in which they registered.

The meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and is scheduled to end at 3 p.m. We may end the meeting early if all the registered speakers have had a chance to speak and if no one else wants to speak. We may also extend the meeting, or limit the time allowed for each speaker, if necessary, so all interested persons have an opportunity to participate.

An APHIS representative will preside at the meeting. The meeting will be recorded. We encourage speakers to present written statements, though it is not required. If you choose to present a written statement, please provide the chairperson with a copy. The complete record, including the transcript and all written comments, will be available to the public.

This meeting is the first in a planned series of public meetings. We plan to hold additional meetings in Idaho, Illinois (Chicago), Maine, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Washington. We will publish a notice or notices in the **Federal Register** announcing the dates, times, and locations of the meetings.

Done in Washington, DC, this 16th day of November 2000.

**Bobby R. Acord,**

*Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.*

[FR Doc. 00-29831 Filed 11-21-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-U

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Farm Service Agency

#### Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

**AGENCY:** Farm Service Agency, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of extension of time limit for requesting additional nominations.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary of Agriculture intends to renew the charter of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers (Committee). The Committee provides advice to the Secretary on ways to encourage Federal and State beginning farmer programs to provide joint financing to beginning farmers and ranchers. A notice was published in the **Federal Register** on August 24, 2000, soliciting nominations

of persons to serve on the Committee, and a September 25, 2000, deadline was established for accepting nominations. In order to obtain a sufficient pool of nominees, USDA is extending the deadline to December 7, 2000.

**DATES:** Nominations should be submitted by December 7, 2000 to Mark Falcone, Designated Federal Official (DFO) for the Committee, at the address below.

**ADDRESSES:** Mark Falcone, DFO for the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers, Farm Service Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 5438-S, STOP 0522, Washington, DC 20250-0522; telephone (202) 720-1632; FAX (202) 690-1117; e-mail mark\_falcone@wdc.fsa.usda.gov.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mark Falcone at (202) 720-1632.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 5 of the Agricultural Credit Improvement Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102-554) required the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Committee for the purpose of advising the Secretary on, among other issues, the development of a program of coordinated financial assistance to qualified beginning farmers and ranchers and methods of maximizing the number of new farming and ranching opportunities created through the program.

The law requires that Committee members include representatives from the Farm Service Agency (FSA); State beginning farmer programs (as defined in section 309(i)(5) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act); commercial lenders; private nonprofit organizations with active beginning farmer or rancher programs; the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; community colleges or other educational institutions with demonstrated experience in training beginning farmers or ranchers; and other entities or persons providing lending or technical assistance to qualified beginning farmers or ranchers. The Secretary has also appointed farmers and ranchers to the Committee.

FSA is now accepting nominations of individuals to serve for a 2-year term on the Committee, which is comprised of 18 individuals. One-third of the existing Committee membership will be replaced when the Committee charter expires on November 25, 2000. No member, other than a USDA employee, can serve for more than 6 consecutive years.

Nominations are being sought through the media, the **Federal Register**, and other appropriate methods. Persons nominated for the Committee will be

required to complete and submit an Advisory Committee Membership Background Information Questionnaire (Form AD 755). The questionnaire is available on the Internet at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafl/LoanForms.htm>. Questionnaires can be completed on-line. However, nominees must print their completed forms from an Adobe PDF file and mail or fax them to the above address or fax number. The form may also be requested by telephone, fax, or e-mail. All inquiries and submissions should be made to Mark Falcone at the addresses and numbers listed above.

Appointments to the Committee will be made by the Secretary of Agriculture. Equal opportunity practices, consistent with USDA policies, will be followed in all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership should include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens.

Signed in Washington, D.C. on November 9, 2000.

**Parks Shackelford,**

*Acting Administrator, Farm Service Agency.*

[FR Doc. 00-29818 Filed 11-21-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Farm Service Agency

#### President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Communities Dependent on Tobacco Production While Protecting Public Health

**AGENCY:** Farm Service Agency, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**SUMMARY:** Executive Order 13168 published September 22, 2000, established the President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Communities Dependent on Tobacco Production While Protecting Public Health (Commission). This meeting will be devoted to reviewing written and oral comments received to establish a list of issues on tobacco and health related issues the Commission will consider in issuing its Reports to the President. This notice announces a public meeting to be conducted by the Commission on December 5, 2000. All meetings are open to the public; however, seating is limited and available on a first-come basis. Written comments may be filed with the committee before or after the