

methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) 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 may be sent to Dexter Thomas, Senior Marketing Specialist, PACA Branch, F & V Programs, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Room 2095-So. Bldg., Mail Stop 0242, Washington, DC 20250-0242. E-mail—dexter.thomas@usda.gov.

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

Dated: December 4, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 03-30599 Filed 12-9-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[No. LS-04-02]

Beef Promotion and Research: Certification and Nomination for the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is accepting applications from State cattle producer organizations or associations and general farm organizations, as well as cattle or beef importer organizations, who desire to be certified to nominate producers or importers for appointment to vacant positions on the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board (Board). Organizations which have not previously been certified that are interested in submitting nominations must complete and submit an official application form to AMS. Previously certified organizations do not need to reapply. Notice is also given that vacancies will occur on the Board and that during a period to be established, nominations will be accepted from eligible organizations and individual importers.

DATES: Applications for certification must be received by close of business January 9, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Certification form as well as copies of the certification and nomination procedures may be requested from Kenneth R. Payne, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch, LS, AMS, USDA; STOP 0251-Room 2638-S; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-0251. The form may also be found on the Internet at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/beef/ls25.pdf>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth R. Payne, Chief, Marketing Programs Branch on 202/720-1115.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985 (Act)(7 U.S.C. 2901 *et seq.*), enacted December 23, 1985, authorizes the implementation of a Beef Promotion and Research Order (Order). The Order, as published in the July 18, 1986, **Federal Register** (51 FR 26132), provides for the establishment of a Board. The current Board consists of 100 cattle producers and 8 importers appointed by USDA. The duties and responsibilities of the Board are specified in the Order.

The Act and the Order provide that USDA shall either certify or otherwise determine the eligibility of State cattle producer organizations or associations and general farm organizations, as well as any importer organizations or associations to nominate members to the Board to ensure that nominees represent the interests of cattle producers and importers. Nominations for importer representatives may also be made by individuals who import cattle, beef, or beef products. Persons who are individual importers do not need to be certified as eligible to submit nominations. When individual importers submit nominations, they must establish to the satisfaction of USDA that they are in fact importers of cattle, beef, or beef products, pursuant to § 1260.143(b)(2) of the Order [7 CFR 1260.143(b)(2)]. Individual importers are encouraged to contact AMS at the above address to obtain further information concerning the nomination process, including the beginning and ending dates of the established nomination period and required nomination forms and background information sheets. Certification and nomination procedures were promulgated in the final rule, published in the April 4, 1986, **Federal Register** (51 FR 11557) and currently appear at 7 CFR § 1260.500 through § 1260.640. Organizations which have previously been certified to nominate members to the Board do not need to reapply for

certification to nominate producers and importers for the upcoming vacancies.

The Act and the Order provide that the members of the Board shall serve for terms of 3 years. The Order also requires USDA to announce when a Board vacancy does or will exist. The following States have one or more members whose terms will expire in early 2005:

State or unit	Number of vacancies
Alabama	1
Arkansas	1
California	2
Colorado	1
Florida	1
Idaho	1
Illinois	1
Indiana	1
Iowa	2
Kansas	2
Kentucky	1
Minnesota	1
Missouri	2
Montana	1
Nebraska	2
New York	1
North Dakota	1
Ohio	1
Oklahoma	2
Oregon	1
Pennsylvania	1
South Dakota	1
Tennessee	1
Texas	5
Virginia	1
Wisconsin	1
Northwest Unit	1
Southeast Unit	1
Importer Unit	1

Since there are no anticipated vacancies on the Board for the remaining States' positions, or for the positions of the Northwest unit, nominations will not be solicited from certified organizations or associations in those States or units.

Uncertified eligible producer organizations and general farm organizations in all States that are interested in being certified as eligible to nominate cattle producers for appointment to the listed producer positions, must complete and submit an official "Application for Certification of Organization or Association," which must be received by close of business [January 9, 2004]. Uncertified eligible importer organizations that are interested in being certified as eligible to nominate importers for appointment to the listed importer positions must apply by the same date. Importers should not use the application form but should provide the requested information by letter as provided for in 7 CFR 1260.540(b). Applications from States or units without vacant positions

on the Board and other applications not received within the 30-day period after publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** will be considered for eligibility to nominate producers or importers for subsequent vacancies on the Board.

Only those organizations or associations which meet the criteria for certification of eligibility promulgated at 7 CFR § 1260.530 are eligible for certification. Those criteria are:

(a) For State organizations or associations:

(1) Total paid membership must be comprised of at least a majority of cattle producers or represent at least a majority of cattle producers in a State or unit,

(2) Membership must represent a substantial number of producers who produce a substantial number of cattle in such State or unit,

(3) There must be a history of stability and permanency, and

(4) There must be a primary or overriding purpose of promoting the economic welfare of cattle producers.

(b) For organizations or associations representing importers, the determination by USDA as to the eligibility of importer organizations or associations to nominate members to the Board shall be based on applications containing the following information:

(1) The number and type of members represented (*i.e.*, beef or cattle importers, etc.),

(2) Annual import volume in pounds of beef and beef products and/or the number of head of cattle,

(3) The stability and permanency of the importer organization or association,

(4) The number of years in existence, and

(5) The names of the countries of origin for cattle, beef, or beef products imported.

All certified organizations and associations, including those that were previously certified in the States or units having vacant positions on the Board, will be notified simultaneously in writing of the beginning and ending dates of the established nomination period and will be provided with required nomination forms and background information sheets.

The names of qualified nominees received by the established due date will be submitted to USDA for consideration as appointees to the Board.

The information collection requirements referenced in this notice have been previously approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) under the provisions of 44 U.S.C., Chapter 35 and have been

assigned OMB No. 0581-0093, except Board member nominee information sheets are assigned OMB No. 0505-0001.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 2901 *et seq.*

Dated: December 4, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 03-30604 Filed 12-9-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket Number FV-04-303]

United States Standards for Grades of Field Grown Leaf Lettuce

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), prior to undertaking research and other work associated with creating an official grade standard, is soliciting comments on the petition to create the United States Standards for Grades of Field Grown Leaf Lettuce. At a recent meeting of the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee, AMS was asked to review all the fresh fruit and vegetable grade standards for usefulness in serving the industry and identify commodities that may be better served if a grade standard was developed. As a result, AMS has noted that the industry is interested in the creation of standards for field grown leaf lettuce.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 9, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments to the Standardization Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Room 1661 South Building, Stop 0240, Washington, DC 20250-0240, fax (202) 720-8871, E-mail

FPB.DocketClerk@usda.gov. Comments should make reference to the dates and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public inspection in the above office during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

David L. Priester, at the above address or call (202) 720-2185, e-mail *David.Priester@usda.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At a recent meeting of the Fruit and

Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee, AMS was asked to review all the fresh fruit and vegetable grade standards for usefulness in serving the industry and to identify commodities that may be better served if a grade standard was developed. AMS has identified field grown leaf lettuce as a possible commodity for development of United States Standards for Grades of Field Grown Leaf Lettuce. Currently, there are U.S. Standards for Grades of Greenhouse Leaf Lettuce, but no standards for leaf lettuce grown in open fields. When requested to inspect field grown leaf lettuce, the greenhouse leaf lettuce standards may be used as a reference, but cannot be used for grade determination.

A new standard for leaf lettuce grown in open fields could contain sections pertaining to grades, tolerances, application of tolerances, pack requirements, definitions, and other relevant and necessary provisions. Prior to undertaking detailed work to develop the proposed standards for field grown leaf lettuce, AMS is soliciting comments on the possible development of the standards for grades of field green leaf lettuce and the probable impact on distributors, processors, and growers.

This notice provides for a 60-day comment period for interested parties to comment on the development of the standards. Should AMS conclude that there is a need for the development of the standards, the proposed standards will be published in the **Federal Register** with a request for comments in accordance with 7 CFR part 36.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621-1627.

Dated: December 4, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. FV-04-328]

United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Celery

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is establishing the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Celery. USDA received a petition from a grower and a processor of celery