

modification described in § 340.1(b)(1), but enable a developer to more efficiently obtain a complete loss of function of a targeted gene. We are also making available for public review scientific literature that we consulted prior to initiating the proposal. The literature supports exempting plants with these additional modifications.

Under the first additional genetic modification proposed, plants would not be subject to the regulations when cellular repair of a targeted DNA break in the same location on two homologous chromosomes, in the absence of a repair template, results in homozygous or heterozygous biallelic mutations, each of which is a loss of function mutation. A double strand break followed by cellular repair often occurs in both paternal and maternal alleles (biallelic) during genome editing. As a range of DNA indels frequently occur after a double strand break, the mutation in the paternal allele often differs from the mutation in the maternal allele. Biallelic knockout mutations are easily obtained in conventional breeding through self-fertilizing or backcrossing and selection. In this case, the biallelic mutation is usually homozygous. However, in cases where the deletions are not identical but both deletions lead to a loss of function of the allele, the phenotype will be the same as the homozygous biallelic mutation obtained through conventional breeding. If both alleles are modified by indels such that neither allele is functional, the size, position, and sequence of the indels within the gene need not be identical to qualify for the exemption.

The second additional genetic modification proposed is a contiguous deletion of any size resulting from cellular repair of a targeted DNA break in the presence of an externally supplied repair template. The deletion can occur on one or two homologous chromosomes. This modification is similar to the one described in § 340.1(b)(1), except that it allows an externally supplied repair template to be used. When genome editing is used to create a single DNA break, a range of indels result from the cellular repair mechanism. To limit the range of mutations recovered and, therefore, to more efficiently obtain a complete loss of function of the targeted gene(s), some developers also add a template to guide the repair process. To limit this proposed additional modification to what is achievable through conventional breeding, it would only apply to deletions created by the double strand break and externally supplied repair template.

The third additional genetic modification proposed is for a change resulting from cellular repair of two targeted DNA breaks on a single chromosome or at the same location on two homologous chromosomes, when the repair results in a contiguous deletion of any size in the presence or absence of a repair template, or in a contiguous deletion of any size combined with an insertion of DNA in the absence of a repair template. The insertion cannot result from the insertion of exogenous construct DNA. The modifications on two homologous chromosomes can be heterozygous as long as each results in a loss of function of the targeted gene(s). To qualify for the exemption, the plant must have mutations that are restricted to a pair of homologous chromosomes in diploids and allopolyploids or any two homologous chromosomes in autopolyploids. Radiation mutagenesis, which is commonly used in conventional breeding, can create any size deletion. As mutations are typically detrimental to the organism, what is achievable in practice is limited by the viability and fertility of the organism. Large mutations can be maintained in a heterozygous state but do not tend to undergo homozygous inheritance (Naito, 2005).² For example, in *Arabidopsis*, which has a genome size of 135 Mb (*Arabidopsis* Genome Initiative, 2000), a radiation-induced deletion of 3.1 Mb was obtained that disrupted 852 genes and was maintainable only as a heterozygote, presumably because genes essential for survival are present in the deleted region (Kazama, *et al.*, 2017).³ Polyploid plants and those with large genomes are better able to accommodate even larger deletions (Men *et al.*, 2002).⁴ For example, in hexaploid wheat, X-ray mutagenesis was used to create a mutant, *ph1*, widely used in breeding programs, that has a 70 Mb deletion (Sears, 1977).⁵ To put the size of this

² Naito, K., M. Kusaba, N. Shikazono, T. Takano, A. Tanaka, T. Tanisaka, and M. Nishimura (2005). Transmissible and nontransmissible mutations induced by irradiating *Arabidopsis thaliana* pollen with gamma-rays and carbon ions. *Genetics*, 169, 881–889.

³ Kazama, Y., K. Ishii, T. Hirano, T. Wakana, M. Yamada, S. Ohbu, and T. Abe (2017). Different mutational function of low- and high-linear energy transfer heavy-ion irradiation demonstrated by whole-genome resequencing of *Arabidopsis* mutants. *Plant J.* 92, 1020–1030.

⁴ Men, A.E., T.S. Laniya, I.R. Searle, I. Iturbe-Ormaetxe, I. Gresshoff, Q. Jiang, B.J. Carroll, and P.M. Gresshoff (2002). Fast Neutron Mutagenesis of Soybean (*Glycine soja* L.) Produces a Supernodulating Mutant Containing a Large Deletion in Linkage Group H. *Genome Letters* 3: 147–155.

⁵ Sears, E.A. (1977). An induced mutant with homoeologous pairing in common wheat. *Canadian J of Genetics and Cytology* 19: 585–593.

wheat deletion in perspective, it is larger than half of the entire genome of *Arabidopsis*. Based on the use of plants with large deletion mutations in conventional breeding programs, any size contiguous deletion created by two double strand breaks should be exempted because it falls well within what could be achieved through conventional breeding.

After reviewing any comments we receive, we will announce our decision regarding the three new modifications that plants could contain and qualify for exemption in a subsequent notice.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772 and 7781–7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 14th day of July, 2021.

Michael Watson,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2021–15236 Filed 7–16–21; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2021–0032]

Notice of Request for Revision to and Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; National Poultry Improvement Plan

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Revision to and 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 a revision to and extension of approval of an information collection associated with the National Poultry Improvement Plan.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before September 17, 2021.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** Go to www.regulations.gov. Enter APHIS–2021–0032 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.

- **Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery:** Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS–2021–0032, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A–03.8, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at www.regulations.gov or in our reading room, which is located in room 1620 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) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the National Poultry Improvement Plan, contact Dr. Elena Behnke, DVM, Senior Coordinator, National Poultry Improvement Plan, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 1506 Klondike Road SW, Suite 101, Conyers, GA 30094; (770) 922-3496. For more detailed information on the information collection, contact Mr. Joseph Moxey, APHIS' Paperwork Reduction Act Coordinator, at (301) 851-2483.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: National Poultry Improvement Plan.

OMB Control Number: 0579-0007.

Type of Request: Revision to and extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: Under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 *et seq.*), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is authorized, among other things, to administer the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP), the primary purpose of which is to protect the health of the U.S. poultry population. NPIP is a Federal-State-industry cooperative program for the improvement of poultry flocks and products through disease control techniques. Participation in all NPIP programs is voluntary, but flocks, hatcheries, and dealers of breeding poultry must first qualify as "U.S. Pullorum-Typhoid Clean" as a condition for participation in NPIP programs. The NPIP regulations are contained in 9 CFR part 56 and parts 145 through 147.

To administer the NPIP, APHIS requires a number of activities that include memoranda of understanding; flock selecting and testing reports and commercial waterfowl/game bird egg producing flock surveillance; reports of sales of hatching eggs, chicks and poults (including printing and mailing computerized printouts for small shipments); summaries of breeding flock, table-egg layer flock, meat-type chicken and turkey slaughter plant participation; reports of hatcheries, dealers, and independent flocks, table-egg producers, meat-type chicken and

turkey slaughter plants participating in the NPIP; investigations of salmonella isolations in poultry; flock inspection and check testing reports; and hatchery inspection forms. Activities also include banding or marking of sentinel birds for identification prior to flock vaccination; requests for salmonella serotyping; applications for U.S. Avian influenza and Newcastle Clean Compartment and Clean Component Registrations and requests for removal; component audits; auditor applications for NPIP AI Clean Compartment Program; and compliance statements. Activities further include descriptions of animal identification and traceability processes; laboratory examination for Newcastle disease and reporting; diagnostic test evaluations; Newcastle disease biosecurity plans; indemnity compliance agreements; appraisal and indemnity claims for animals or materials destroyed; initial state response and containment plan; and recordkeeping.

The information collection requirements listed above represent activities currently filed under Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number 0579-0007, National Poultry Improvement Plan, and OMB control number 0579-0474, National Poultry Improvement Plan and Auxiliary Provisions. After OMB approves this combined information collection package (0579-0007), APHIS will retire OMB control number 0579-0474.

We are asking OMB to approve our use of these information collection activities, as described, 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 collection of information, 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 collection of information 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 burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.475 hours per response.

Respondents: State agriculture officials; flock owners; breeders; hatchery operators; table-egg, meat-type chicken, and meat-type turkey producers; feedlot and slaughter plant personnel; approved laboratory personnel; prospective and certified auditors; visitors; and associated entities.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 2,867.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 82.

Estimated annual number of responses: 234,630.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 111,339 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 6th day of July 2021.

Jack Shere,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2021-15185 Filed 7-16-21; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

[Docket ID FSA-2021-0007]

Notice of Funds Availability; Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP)

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notification of funding availability.

SUMMARY: The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is issuing this notice announcing the availability of funds for the Pandemic Livestock Indemnity Program (PLIP) to provide assistance to producers for losses of livestock and poultry depopulated from March 1, 2020, through December 26, 2020, due to insufficient processing access as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and for the cost of depopulation and disposal. FSA is implementing PLIP, as authorized by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (CAA).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kimberly Graham, Director; telephone: (202) 720-6825; email:

Kimberly.Graham@usda.gov. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication should contact the USDA Target Center at (202)