

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

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

January 3, 2011.

The Department of Agriculture has submitted the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13. Comments regarding (a) 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; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden 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 through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology should be addressed to: Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA_Submission@OMB.EOP.GOV or fax (202) 395-5806 and to Departmental Clearance Office, USDA, OCIO, Mail Stop 7602, Washington, DC 20250-7602. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling (202) 720-8958.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to

the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration

Title: USDA Race, Ethnicity and Gender Data Collection.

OMB Control Number: 0503-NEW.

Summary of Collection: Section 14006 and 14007 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, 7 U.S.C. 8701 (referred to as the 2008 Farm Bill) establishes a requirement for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to annually compile application and participation rate data regarding socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers by computing for each program of the USDA that serves agriculture producers and landowners (a) raw numbers of applicants and participants by race, ethnicity, and gender, subject to appropriate privacy protection, as determined by the Secretary; and (b) the application and participation rate, by race, ethnicity and gender as a percentage of the total participation rate of all agricultural producers and landowners for each county and State in the United States.

Need and Use of the Information: Data will be collected on a voluntary basis through a questionnaire to determine the race, ethnicity and gender of farmers and ranchers who apply for and who participate in USDA programs and services. The data will enable the Secretary and the Office of Advocacy and Outreach and the agencies' outreach offices in reaching current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner to focus resources in a particular county or region where low participation is indicated by the data to improve the participation of those farmers and ranchers in USDA programs. This is not a random sampling and is in no way considered to be a statistically significant analysis. The data is intended to be used as one indicator in targeting and designing outreach activities and in assessing compliance with civil rights laws in program delivery. The data may also be used as an indicator in directing compliance reviews to geographic areas where there are indications of low participation in USDA programs by minorities and women, thus serving as an "early warning system" that warrants further investigations. Failure to collect

this information will have a negative impact on USDA's outreach activities and could result in an inability of the agencies to equitably deliver programs and services to applicant and producers.

Description of Respondents:

Individuals or households.

Number of Respondents: 3,200,000.

Frequency of Responses: Reporting: Other (once).

Total Burden Hours: 106,667.

Ruth Brown,

Departmental Information Collection Clearance Officer.

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