

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

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket No. ST-00-001]

Plant Variety Protection Board; Open Meeting

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice sets forth the schedule and proposed agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Plant Variety Protection Board.

DATES: March 23, 2000, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., open to the public.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the George Washington Carver Center, 5602 Sunnyside Avenue, Beltsville, Maryland, 20705.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ann Marie Thro, Commissioner, Plant Variety Protection Office, Science & Technology, AMS, USDA. Address: Room 500, National Agricultural Library Building, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, MD 20705-2351, (301) 504-5518 or -7475, or fax: (301) 504-5291.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to the provisions of section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. No. 92-463 5 U.S.C. App.), this notice is given concerning a Plant Variety Protection Board meeting. The Board is constituted under section 7 of the Plant Variety Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 2327).

The proposed agenda for the meeting will include discussions of: Plant Variety Protection Office Application Process, Plant Variety Protection Office Progress Report, and other related topics. Written comments may be submitted to the contact person listed above before or after the meeting.

Dated: February 25, 2000.

Kathleen A. Merrigan,
Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

Tentative Agenda

Plant Variety Protection Board Meeting, March 23, 2000. USDA/AMS/S&T/PVPO—George Washington Carver Center, 5602 Sunnyside Avenue, Beltsville, Maryland, 20705.

Call to Order

Ann Marie Thro, Commissioner, PVPO Introductions

William J. Franks, Jr., Deputy Administrator, AMS/S&T

Opening Remarks

Kathleen A. Merrigan, Administrator, AMS Adoption of Agenda

Adoption of 1999 Minutes

Introduction for new Board members to the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA) and the Plant Variety Protection Office (PVPO)

Senior Examining Staff, PVPO PVPO Progress report

Ann Marie Thro, Commissioner, PVPO Appeals to the Secretary of Agriculture (if any)

Ann Marie Thro, Commissioner, PVPO Topics brought forward by Board Members PVPO Board Members

Meeting summary

Ann Marie Thro, Commission, PVPO Adjourn

[FR Doc. 00-4904 Filed 2-29-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. 00-004N]

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. 00N-0597]

Codex Alimentarius: Meeting of the Codex Committee on General Principles, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development: Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety

AGENCIES: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA; Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice; public meeting and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Office of Food Safety, and the Food Safety and Inspection

Service (FSIS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), are sponsoring a public meeting on March 22, 2000, to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items that will be discussed at the Fourteenth Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles, April 10-14, 2000, and to provide information and receive public comments on papers submitted and issues to be discussed at the Second Session of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety, scheduled for March 27-28, 2000. Both groups are scheduled to meet in Paris, France. The co-sponsors of the March 22nd public meeting recognize the importance of providing interested parties the opportunity to obtain background information on the General Principles Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), and the Ad Hoc Task Force on Food Safety of the OECD, and to address issues coming before those bodies.

DATES: The public meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, 2000, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Comments must be received by April 24, 2000.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held in the Madison Room, Washington Plaza Hotel, 10 Thomas Circle, Massachusetts Avenue and 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20005. Copies of the documents listed in the notice will be available for inspection at the office of the FSIS Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700, or the Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852. The Codex documents will also be accessible via the World Wide Web at the following address: http://www.fao.org/waicent/faoinfo/economic/esn/codex/ccgp15/gp00_01e.htm. Copies of the United States' submission to the OECD compendium of national food safety systems will be available on the Internet at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fs-toc.html> on approximately March 1, 2000. Send an original and two copies of comments to: FSIS Docket Clerk, Docket #00-004N, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety

and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700 or FDA/ Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305), 5630 Fishers Lane, Rm. 1601, Rockville, MD 20852. All comments submitted in response to this notice will be available for public inspection in the Docket Clerk's Office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Patrick J. Clerkin, Associate U.S. Manager for Codex, U.S. Codex Office, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 4861, South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, 20250; Telephone: (202) 205-7760; Fax: (202) 720-3157; or, for the OECD Ad Hoc Working Group on Food Safety, Lois Ann Beaver, Office of International Programs, FDA, 5600 Fishers Lane, 15A16, Rockville, MD 20852; Telephone: (301) 827-4480; Fax: (301) 443-0235. Persons requiring a sign language interpreter or other special accommodations should notify Patrick J. Clerkin, telephone (202) 205-7760; Fax: (202) 720-3157.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Codex Committee on General Principles

Codex was established in 1962 by two United Nations organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Codex is the major international organization for encouraging fair international trade in food and protecting the health and economic interests of consumers. Through adoption of food standards, codes of practice, and other guidelines developed by its committees, and by promoting their adoption and implementation by governments, Codex seeks to ensure that the world's food supply is sound, wholesome, free from adulteration, and correctly labeled. In the United States, USDA, FDA, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) manage and carry out U.S. Codex activities.

The Codex Committee on General Principles was established to deal with such procedural and general matters as are referred to by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Such matters have included the establishment of the general principles that define the purpose and scope of the Codex Alimentarius, the nature of Codex standards and the forms of acceptance by countries of Codex standards, and the development of guidelines for Codex committees.

Codex Issues To Be Discussed at the Public Meeting

(1) Matters referred by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees; Document: CX/GP 00/2

(2) Risk Analysis

- Working Principles for Risk Analysis; Documents: CL1999/16GP, CX/GP 00/3, Government comments CX/GP00/3-Add.1

- Food Safety Objectives; Document: CX/GP 00/4

(3) Measures intended to facilitate consensus; Document: CX/GP 00/5

(4) Composition of the Executive Committee and related matters; Document: CX/GP 00/6

(5) Review of the Statements of Principle on the Role of Science and the Extent to which Other Factors are taken into account; Documents: CX/GP 00/7 Role of science and other factors in relation to risk analysis

(6) Revision of the Code of Ethics for International Trade in Foods; Documents: CL 1999/19-GP, CX/GP 00/8, Government comments CX/GP00/8-Add.1

(7) Consumer Participation in Codex Work and related matters; Documents: CX/GP 00/9, Government comments, CX/GP00/9-Add.1

OECD Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety

The Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety convened for its first session January 24-25, 2000, in Paris at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This group was established by the OECD Council late last year in response to the request for reports on biotechnology and other aspects of food safety issued by the G-8 (Group of 7 largest economies in the world: US, Japan, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Canada and Russia) after its June 1999 Summit in Cologne. The Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety was formed to develop a report on national food safety systems, including how controversial issues related to biotechnology and other aspects of food safety are managed, and a report based on submissions from international organizations involved in food safety. These reports, in the form of compendia, as well as reports from the OECD Working Group on Harmonization of Regulatory Oversight in Biotechnology and the OECD Task Force on Novel Foods and Feeds will be submitted to the G-8 in advance of the July, 2000, Summit in Okinawa.

On November 18, 1999, the OECD Council agreed that the mandate for the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety, was to:

(1) Supervise the compilation of a

compendium of international food safety systems; (2) compile a compendium of national food safety systems; and (3) provide a report to the Council on the results of its work. Operational guidance indicated that the final report to the OECD Council should reflect the views of member countries, not the Secretariat, identify food safety activities without evaluations or policy recommendations, be finished by the end of April, 2000, and be based on current information without undertaking new work.

Participants in the First Session of the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety, which included 130 representatives from the 29 OECD member countries and five representatives from the EC Commission, with one Russian observer, met to design the program of work for the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety. Representatives of WHO, FAO and WTO were also present as observers. The US delegation was co-led by USDA Undersecretary for Food Safety Catherine Woteki and FDA Commissioner Jane Henney, Deputy Commissioner Sharon Smith Holston, Robert Lake, and Lois Ann Beaver from FDA, Sally McCommon from USDA and Richard White from EPA. Members of the US Mission to the OECD present during the session included Ambassador Bondurant, Gary Larson, Peter O. Thomas and Breck Milroy.

To guide its activities, the Ad Hoc Group elected a Bureau Chaired by E. Wermuth, The Netherlands, with USDA Undersecretary Woteki and K. Tomita, Japan, as Vice-Chairs.

The Ad Hoc group adopted a program of work under which:

(1) Countries would submit reports for a compendium of national food safety systems that would identify what is being done to address current and emerging food safety issues. The national reports should be 5-10 pages in length, include factual information, and have a one-page synthesis identifying key principles, changes, and areas of continuing development, and an optional annex. Food quality, availability and costs, animal welfare and biodiversity were cited as emerging issues. It was agreed that member countries might address in their national reports how such non-scientific concerns are treated in national decision-making processes in the national reports. As envisaged by the Terms of Reference, the "precautionary approach and principles" will be addressed by member countries in their reports and in optional annexes of relevant references. Under the guidance of the Bureau, the Secretariat will present the information received on the

precautionary approach and principles in a structured manner to the Second Session of the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety.

(2) Selected international organizations (the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Office of International Epizootics, the World Trade Organization and the OECD) would contribute to a compendium of international food safety activities.

The Draft reports from OECD members and from international organizations are due to the OECD Secretariat by the end of February, 2000, in preparation for the Ad Hoc Group's second session, scheduled for March 27–28.

The time-frame for completion of the work of the Ad Hoc Group on Food Safety is very short. Participants agreed that the two compendia should be in suitable form by the end of April 2000 for transmittal, via the OECD Council, to the G–8.

The program of work described above, and the US' submission to the compendium of national food safety systems will be discussed at the public meeting.

Additional Public Notification

Public awareness of all segments of rulemaking and policy development is important. Consequently, in an effort to better ensure that minorities, women, and persons with disabilities are aware of this meeting notice, FSIS will announce it and provide copies of this **Federal Register** publication in the FSIS Constituent Update. FSIS provides a weekly FSIS Constituent Update, which is communicated via fax to over 300 organizations and individuals. In addition, the update is available on line through the FSIS web page located at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>. The update is used to provide information regarding FSIS policies, procedures, regulations, **Federal Register** notices, FSIS public meetings, recalls, and any other types of information that could affect or would be of interest to our constituents/stakeholders. The constituent fax list consists of industry, trade, and farm groups, consumer interest groups, allied health professionals, scientific professionals, and other individuals that have requested to be included. Through these various channels, FSIS is able to provide information to a much broader, more diverse audience. For more information and to be added to the constituent fax list, fax your request to the Congressional and Public Affairs Office, at (202) 720–5704.

Done at Washington, DC on: February 24, 2000.

Patrick J. Clerkin,

Associate U.S. Manager for Codex Alimentarius.

Margaret M. Dotzel,

Acting Associate Commissioner for Policy.

[FR Doc. 00–4849 Filed 2–29–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE FSIS 3410–DM–P; FDA 4160–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Reinstatement of a Previously Approved Information Collection; Request for Comments; Visitor's Permit Form FS–2300–30 and Visitor Registration Card FS–2300–32

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the Forest Service announces its intention to request reinstatement of a previously approved information collection for Visitor's Permit Form FS–2300–30 and Visitor Registration Card Form FS–2300–32. The collected information will help the Forest Service ensure that visitors' use of National Forest System lands is in the public interest and is compatible with the mission of the agency. Information will be collected from National Forest System land visitors, who will be asked to describe their intended use of the land and their estimated duration of use.

DATES: Comments must be received in writing on or before May 1, 2000.

ADDRESSES: All comments should be addressed to the Wilderness Program Manager; Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Staff; Mail Drop 1125; Forest Service, USDA; P.O. Box 96090; Washington, DC 20090–6090.

Comments also may be submitted via facsimile to (202) 205–1145 or by email to jstokes/wo@fs.fed.us.

The public may inspect comments in the Office of the Director, Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Staff, 201 14th Street, SW, Washington DC. Visitors are encouraged to call (202) 205–1706 to facilitate entrance into the building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jerry Stokes, Wilderness Program Manager, Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources Staff at (202) 205–0925.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Organic Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 473), Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131), Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16

U.S.C. 1271), and Executive Order 11644 of February 8, 1972, (Use of Off-Road Vehicles on the Public Lands) authorize the Forest Service to manage National Forest System lands to benefit the land and the people for present and future generations.

Each year, millions of people visit National Forest System lands. These lands include wilderness and special management areas, such as wild and scenic rivers, restricted off-road vehicle areas, and campgrounds. Access to many of these areas requires reservations and/or permits.

The Forest Service developed Visitor's Permit Form FS–2300–30 and Visitor Registration Card Form FS–2300–32 to facilitate visitor access to wilderness and special management areas. Forest Service personnel collect information from visitors as they register or apply for permits to use or visit wilderness or special management areas.

Visitors will be asked to provide their name and address, the site they plan to visit, their expected length of stay, the number of people in their group, their point of entry and point of exit, their primary method of travel, the number of pack or saddle animals they plan to bring, and number of watercraft or vehicles they plan to bring.

Data gathered in this information collection is not available from other sources.

Description of Information Collection

The following describes the information collection to be reinstated:

Title: FS–2300–30, Visitor's Permit.

OMB Number: 0596–0019.

Expiration Date of Approval: October 31, 1999.

Type of Request: This is a request for reinstatement of an information collection previously authorized by the Office of Management and Budget.

Abstract: The Forest Service will analyze the collected data to identify the National Forest System lands and wilderness areas most frequently visited by the public.

Visitor's Permit Form FS–2300–30 will be used only where public access must be managed and/or monitored to prevent damage to the natural resources, to preserve the quality of the visitor's experience, or to provide for public safety.

When asking visitors to complete Form FS–2300–30, Forest Service personnel will take the opportunity to discuss with visitors how they can protect the natural resources while visiting, proper camping techniques they should use, fire prevention, safety, and sanitation requirements. The very