

grower revenue could range between 1.4 and 2 percent.

This action decreases the assessment obligation imposed on handlers. Assessments are applied uniformly on all handlers, and some of the costs may be passed on to producers. However, decreasing the assessment rate reduces the burden on handlers, and may reduce the burden on producers. In addition, the Board's meeting was widely publicized throughout the walnut industry and all interested persons were invited to attend the meeting and participate in Board deliberations on all issues. Like all Board meetings, the September 12, 2003, meeting was a public meeting and all entities, both large and small, were able to express views on this issue. Finally, interested persons are invited to submit information on the regulatory and informational impacts of this action on small businesses.

This action imposes no additional reporting or recordkeeping requirements on either small or large California walnut handlers. As with all Federal marketing order programs, reports and forms are periodically reviewed to reduce information requirements and duplication by industry and public sector agencies.

USDA has not identified any relevant Federal rules that duplicate, overlap, or conflict with this rule.

A small business guide on complying with fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop marketing agreements and orders may be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>. Any questions about the compliance guide should be sent to Jay Guerber at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

After consideration of all relevant material presented, including the information and recommendation submitted by the Board and other available information, it is hereby found that this rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553, it is also found and determined upon good cause that it is impracticable, unnecessary, and contrary to the public interest to give preliminary notice prior to putting this rule into effect, and that good cause exists for not postponing the effective date of this rule until 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register** because: (1) The 2003–04 marketing year began on August 1, 2003, and the order requires that the rate of assessment for each marketing year apply to all merchantable walnuts handled during the year; (2) this action decreases the assessment rate for

merchantable California walnuts; (3) handlers are aware of this action which was unanimously recommended by the Board at a public meeting and is similar to other assessment rate actions issued in past years; and (4) this interim final rule provides a 60-day comment period, and all comments timely received will be considered prior to finalization of this rule.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 984

Walnuts, Marketing agreements, Nuts, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

■ For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 984 is amended as follows:

PART 984—WALNUTS GROWN IN CALIFORNIA

■ 1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 984 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

■ 2. Section 984.347 is revised to read as follows:

§ 984.347 Assessment rate.

On and after August 1, 2003, an assessment rate of \$0.0101 per kernelweight pound is established for California merchantable walnuts.

Dated: November 14, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 03–29061 Filed 11–20–03; 8:45 am]

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

16 CFR Part 305

Rule Concerning Disclosures Regarding Energy Consumption and Water Use of Certain Home Appliances and Other Products Required Under the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (“Appliance Labeling Rule”)

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Federal Trade Commission (“Commission”) announces that the current ranges of comparability for refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers will remain in effect until further notice.

EFFECTIVE DATES: February 19, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Hampton Newsome, Attorney, Division of Enforcement, Federal Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20580, (202–326–2889); hnewsome@ftc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Rule was issued by the Commission in 1979,

44 FR 66466 (Nov. 19, 1979), in response to a directive in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (“EPCA”).¹ The Rule covers several categories of major household appliances including refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers.

I. Background

The Rule requires manufacturers of all covered appliances to disclose specific energy consumption or efficiency information (derived from the DOE test procedures) at the point of sale in the form of an “EnergyGuide” label, fact sheets (for some appliances), and in catalogs. The Rule requires manufacturers to include, on labels and fact sheets, an energy consumption or efficiency figure and a “range of comparability.” This range shows the highest and lowest energy consumption or efficiencies for all comparable appliance models so consumers can compare the energy consumption or efficiency of other models similar to the labeled model. The Rule also requires manufacturers to include, on labels for some products, including those that are the subject of this notice, a secondary energy usage disclosure in the form of an estimated annual operating cost based on a specified DOE national average cost for the fuel the appliance uses.

Section 305.8(b) of the Rule requires manufacturers, after filing an initial report, to report certain information annually to the Commission by specified dates for each product type.² These reports, which are to assist the Commission in preparing the ranges of comparability, contain the estimated annual energy consumption or energy efficiency ratings for the appliances derived from tests performed pursuant to the DOE test procedures. Because manufacturers regularly add new models to their lines, improve existing models, and drop others, the data base from which the ranges of comparability are calculated is constantly changing. To keep the required information on labels consistent with these changes, the Commission will publish new ranges if an analysis of the new information indicates that the upper or lower limits of the ranges have changed by more than 15%. Otherwise, the Commission

¹ 42 U.S.C. 6294. The statute also requires the Department of Energy (“DOE”) to develop test procedures that measure how much energy the appliances use, and to determine the representative average cost a consumer pays for the different types of energy available.

² Reports for refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers are due August 1.

will publish a statement that the prior ranges remain in effect for the next year.

II. 2003 Refrigerator Information

The annual submissions of data for refrigerators, refrigerator-freezers, and freezers have been made and analyzed by the Commission. The ranges of comparability for the products have not changed significantly for these products.³ Therefore, the current ranges for these products (16 CFR part 305, Appendices A1 through A8 and B1 through B3) will remain in effect until further notice.⁴

List of Subjects in 16 CFR Part 305

Advertising, Energy conservation, Household appliances, Labeling, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

The authority citation for Part 305 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 6294.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03–29101 Filed 11–20–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6750–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

21 CFR Part 573

[Docket No. 1998F–0522]

Food Additives Permitted in Feed and Drinking Water of Animals; Formaldehyde

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is amending the regulations for food additives permitted in feed to provide for the safe use of formaldehyde to improve the handling characteristics of canola and soybean oilseeds and/or meals in feed for beef and dairy cattle, and to provide a description of the food additive. This action is in response to a food additive petition filed by Rumentek Industries Pty Ltd.

DATES: This rule is effective November 21, 2003. Submit written objections and

request for hearing by January 20, 2004. The Director of the Office of the Federal Register approves the incorporation by reference in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR 51 of certain publications in 21 CFR 573.460 as of November 21, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Submit written objections and request for hearing to the Division of Dockets Management (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852. Submit objections electronically to <http://www.fda.gov/dockets/ecomments>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Karen Ekelman, Center for Veterinary Medicine (HFV–222), Food and Drug Administration, 7500 Standish Pl., Rockville, MD 20855, 301–827–6653, e-mail: kekelman@cvm.fda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

In a notice published in the **Federal Register** of August 11, 1998 (63 FR 42856), FDA announced that a food additive petition (animal use) (FAP 2241) had been filed by Rumentek Industries Pty Ltd., 63–69 Market St., South Melbourne, Vic 3205 Australia. The petition proposed to amend the food additive regulations in part 573 (21 CFR part 573) to provide for the safe use of formaldehyde to improve the handling characteristics of soybean and canola oilseeds and/or meals in feeds for beef and dairy cattle. The notice of filing provided for a 60-day comment period on the petitioner's environmental assessment. No substantive comments have been received.

In the regulation in § 571.1(c) (21 CFR 571.1(c)), paragraph E of the form for petitions requires full reports of investigations of the safety of a food additive. The Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) evaluated information in the petition and in the scientific literature and has determined that the use of formaldehyde to improve the handling characteristics of soybean and canola oilseeds and/or meals in feeds for beef and dairy cattle is safe under the conditions of use prescribed in the amended regulation (§ 573.460).

II. Conclusion

FDA concludes that the data establish the safety and utility of formaldehyde for use as proposed and that the food additive regulations should be amended as set forth in this document.

III. Public Disclosure

In accordance with § 571.1(h), the petition and the documents that FDA considered and relied upon in reaching

its decision to approve the petition are available for inspection at the CVM by appointment with the information contact person listed previously. As provided in § 571.1(h), the agency will delete from the documents any materials that are not available for public disclosure before making the documents available for inspection.

IV. Environmental Impact

The agency has determined under 21 CFR 25.32(r) that this action is of a type that does not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

V. Objections and Hearing Requests

Any person who will be adversely affected by this regulation may file with the Division of Dockets Management (see **ADDRESSES**) written objections (see **DATES**). Each objection must be separately numbered, and each numbered objection must specify with particularity the provisions of the regulation to which objection is made and the grounds for the objection. Each numbered objection on which a hearing is requested must state that a hearing is requested. Failure to request a hearing for any particular objection will constitute a waiver of the right to a hearing on that objection. Each numbered objection for which a hearing is requested must include a detailed description and analysis of the specific factual information intended to be presented in support of the objection in the event that a hearing is held. Failure to include such a description and analysis for any particular objection will constitute a waiver of the right to a hearing on the objection. Three copies of all documents must be submitted and must be identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Any objections received in response to the regulation may be seen in the Division of Dockets Management between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

List of Subjects in 21 CFR Part 573

Animal feeds, Food additives, Incorporation by reference.

■ Therefore, under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act and under authority delegated to the Commissioner of Food and Drugs and redelegated to the Center for Veterinary Medicine, 21 CFR part 573 is amended as follows:

³ The Commission's analysis excluded models with energy consumption figures that do not meet the current DOE energy conservation standards. See 62 FR 23102 (April 28, 1997).

⁴ See November 19, 2001 (66 FR 57867), November 26, 2001, (66 FR 59050), December 10, 2001 (66 FR 63749), and January 29, 2002 (67 FR 4173).