

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

[FV-99-330]

United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Field Peas and Frozen Black-Eye Peas

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is soliciting comments on its proposal to revise the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Field Peas and Frozen Black-Eye Peas. Specifically, USDA is proposing to provide for the "individual attributes" procedure for product grading with sample sizes, acceptable quality levels (AQL's), tolerances and acceptance numbers (number of allowable defects) to be included in the standards; and provide a uniform format consistent with other recently revised U.S. grade standards by adopting definitions for terms and replacing textual descriptions with easy-to-read tables. These changes have been requested by the industry in order to improve use of the standards.

DATES: Written comments may be submitted on or before April 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Written comments may be submitted to Randle A. Macon, Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, STOP 0247, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090-6456; faxed to (202) 690-1527; or e-mailed to Randle.Macon@usda.gov. Comments should reference the date and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**. All comments received will be made available for public inspection at the above address during regular business hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). And on the Internet.

The current United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Field Peas and

Frozen Black-Eye Peas, along with the proposed changes, are available either through the above address or by accessing AMS's website on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/standards/. The United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Field Peas and Frozen Black-Eye Peas do not appear in the Code of Federal Regulations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Randle A. Macon at (202) 720-5021 or e-mailed to Randle.Macon@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended, directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture "to develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices. . . ." AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and makes copies of official standards available upon request.

AMS is proposing to change the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Field Peas & Frozen Black-Eye Peas using the procedures that appear in Part 36 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36). The grade standards were last revised in September 1996.

The Western Technical Advisory Committee of the American Frozen Food Institute petitioned the USDA to revise the U.S. grade standards for frozen field peas and frozen black-eye peas in 1997. It was requested that the "individual attributes" system of grading, be incorporated into the revision. "Individual attributes" provide statistically derived acceptable quality levels (AQL's) based on the tolerances in the grade standards.

The current standards are based on an older "attributes" model. It is proposed that the standards be modified to convert them to the improved "individual attributes" grading system, similar to the U.S. grade standards for canned green and wax beans (58 FR4295; January 14, 1993). This change would bring the standards in line with current marketing practices and innovations in processing techniques. In addition to these changes, the revision would modify the standards to present them in a simplified easy-to-use format. Consistent with recent revisions of other

U.S. grade standards, definitions of terms and easy-to-read tables would replace the textual descriptions. These changes are intended to facilitate better understanding and more uniform application of the grade standards.

AMS is publishing this notice with a 60 day comment period which will provide a sufficient amount of time for interested persons to comment on the revision of the standard.

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

Dated: February 9, 2000.

Robert C. Keeney,

Deputy Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

[FR Doc. 00-3423 Filed 2-14-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-02-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce (DOC) has submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 USC Chapter 35).

Agency: Patent and Trademark Office (PTO).

Title: Statutory Invention Registration.

Agency Form Number(s): PTO/SB/94.

OMB Approval Number: 0651-0036.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Burden Hours: 33.2 hours.

Number of Respondents: 83.

Average Hours Per Response: Based on PTO time and motion studies, the agency estimates that the burden hours required by the public to gather, prepare and submit a Request for a Statutory Invention Registration (PTO/SB/94), a petition to review final refusal to publish, or a petition to withdraw a publication request to be 24 minutes for each item.

Needs and Uses: The information is necessary to ensure that the requirements of 35 USC 157 and 37 CFR 1.293-1.297 are met. The public uses form PTO/SB/94, Request for Statutory Invention Registration, to request and authorize publication of a regularly-filed patent application as a statutory invention registration, to waive the right to receive a United States patent on the same invention claimed in the

identified patent application, and to agree that the waiver will be effective upon publication of the statutory invention registration. The PTO uses form PTO/SB/94, Request for a Statutory Invention Registration, to review, grant, or deny a request for a statutory invention registration.

No forms are associated with the petition to review final refusal to publish a statutory invention registration or the petition to withdraw a publication request. The petition to review final refusal to publish a statutory invention registration is used by the public to petition the PTO's rejection of a request for a statutory invention registration. The PTO uses the petition to withdraw a publication request to review requests to stop publication of a statutory invention registration.

Affected Public: Individuals or households, businesses or other for-profit organizations; not-for-profit institutions; farms; the Federal Government; or State, Local or Tribal Governments.

Frequency: On occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Required to obtain or retain a benefit.

OMB Desk Officer: Peter Weiss, (202) 395-3630.

Copies of the above information collection proposal can be obtained by calling or writing Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, (202) 482-3272, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20230 or via the Internet at (LEngelme@doc.gov).

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication to Peter Weiss, OMB Desk Officer, Room 10236, New Executive Office Building, 725 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20503.

Dated: February 9, 2000.

Linda Engelmeier,

Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 00-3563 Filed 2-14-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-16-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Census Bureau

National Employers Survey—(NES 2000)

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before April 17, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5027, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at LEngelme@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Michael Hartz, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Room 2535-3—EPCD, Washington, DC 20233-6100; (301-457-2633).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Census Bureau conducted three earlier National Employers Surveys (1994, 1995 and 1997) for the National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce (EQW), a nonprofit research group. This survey will be sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the National School-to-Work Office. These groups focus on discovering relationships among employment, hiring, training, education, and business success. This information collection seeks to build upon the results of the previous surveys.

This information collection goes beyond the previous National Employers Surveys in that it seeks to explore employees' histories and to identify employees' perceptions regarding employer-provided training and job-related educational requirements. The collection will relate these employees' responses to similar information collected from employers. The purpose is to identify those areas where employee and employer views are similar and where they are different. This information then will be used to suggest areas where additional emphasis regarding employer job requirements are needed to enable potential employees to qualify for employment.

This new survey will incorporate a telephone survey of employers that responded to the 1997 National Employers survey (NES-3) and a mail questionnaire to be sent to

approximately 15,000 employees of a sample of the surveyed companies. During the telephone survey, employers will be asked to volunteer to participate in the employee survey. Companies which volunteer will be sent a package of 30 questionnaires along with instructions on how to distribute these questionnaires to a sample of their employees. The employees will fill out the questionnaires and send them back to the Census Bureau in postage paid envelopes provided. The questionnaire will include about 74 questions that solicit employees' views regarding employment qualifications and training opportunities available to them that relate to their employment. These survey questions are constructed to eliminate the need for respondents to review any records relating to the subject of this collection. We expect that each respondent will spend about 20 minutes completing the questionnaire.

II. Method of Collection

The Census Bureau will conduct the NES 2000 using both a telephone survey and a mail questionnaire. The telephone survey will cover about 3,000 employers that provided information for the NES-3 in 1997. The telephone interview will last less than 30 minutes. During the telephone interview, the employer will be asked to participate in the employee survey. Although we expect more than 500 employers to volunteer for the employee survey, we will limit participation to 500. We will select employers so that we get a representative sample. Employers which volunteer to participate and are selected, will be sent a package of 30 questionnaires along with instructions on how to distribute these questionnaires to a sample of their employees. The employees will fill out the questionnaires and send them back to the Census Bureau in postage paid envelopes provided. The employee questionnaire will be distributed to approximately 15,000 employees. The questionnaire will consist of approximately 74 questions. Most questions will be constructed using a "check-box" format. The check boxes primarily will be questions requiring a "yes/no" or "on a range of 1 to 5" response.

Employees completing the questionnaires will send them directly to the Census Bureau, using pre-addressed, postage-paid return envelopes. Employers will not be allowed access to the questionnaires completed by the employees or the information reported on the questionnaires. Confidentiality is guaranteed by Title 13, United States