

August 2008

The Council Caller

Regulatory Issue

The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE) is a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the application of economics to food, agricultural, and resource issues at the national level. *The Council Caller, Regulatory Issue* is a monthly e-newsletter provided by C-FARE with informational updates for agricultural and applied economists.

Consumer Concerns, Food, Health and Safety

For further information on any of the notices listed below please visit: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> where you can search using the date of the notice, page number or topic.

Request for Nominations for Food Advisory Committee

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is requesting nominations for voting members to serve on the Food Advisory Committee (FAC), Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN). FDA has a special interest in ensuring that women, minority groups, and individuals with disabilities are adequately represented on advisory committees and, therefore, encourages nominations of qualified candidates from these groups. Nominations must be received before August 11, 2008 for membership on the Food Advisory Committee. For more details view the July 11, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 134; pages 39972-39973).

School Food Safety Program Based

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 requires school food authorities participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) to implement a school food safety program for the preparation and service of school meals served to children. This proposal would enable schools to take systematic action to prevent or minimize the risk of foodborne illness in the NSLP and SBP. Comments must be received before September 19, 2008. For more details view the August 5, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 151; pages 45359-45364).

Directory of Officials and State Food Safety Resource Survey Support Project

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA), Division of Federal-State Relations (DFSR) is announcing the availability of a Sole Source to the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) to provide funding for a 3-year cooperative agreement award to support a Special Project Cooperative Agreement program. For more details view the July 23, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 142); pages 42814-42816).

Food Safety and Security Monitoring Project

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA), Division of Federal-State Relations (DFSR), is announcing the availability of cooperative agreements for equipment, supplies, personnel, training, and facility upgrades to Food Emergency Response Laboratory Network (FERN) chemistry laboratories of State, local, and tribal governments. For more details view the July 23, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 142; page 42816-42819).

Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is requesting comments relevant to the implementation of the section which prohibits the interstate shipment of certain foods to which an approved drug or a licensed biological product has been added, and prohibits the interstate shipment of foods containing an added drug or a biological product that has been the subject of substantial clinical investigations, the existence of which has been made public. For more information view the July 29, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 146; pages 43937-43940). Comments are due by October 27, 2008.

Availability of Lists of Retail Consignees During Meat or Poultry Product Recalls

The Food Safety and Inspection Service is amending the Federal meat and poultry products inspection regulations to provide that the Agency will make available to the public the names and locations of the retail consignees of meat and poultry products that have been recalled by a federally-inspected meat or poultry establishment if the recalled product has been distributed to the retail level. For more details view the July 17, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 138; pages 40939-40948).

Agriculture's Global Competitiveness and Profitability

For further information on any of the notices listed below please visit: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> where you can search using the date of the notice, page number or topic.

Commodity Credit Corporation - Payment Limitation and Payment Eligibility

The July 14, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 135; page 40283) announced that the Commodity Credit Corporation is implementing the provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the 2008 Farm Bill) regarding payment limitation and payment eligibility provisions for the 2008 crop, fiscal, or program year. The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes payment limitations and payment eligibility provisions that were previously authorized for preceding commodity and conservation programs under the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. As a result of this notice, CCC will be able to commence administration of payment limitation and payment eligibility provisions applicable to commodity and conservation programs for the 2008 crop, fiscal, or program year. Through a subsequent rule, CCC will implement payment limitation and payment eligibility provisions for 2009 through 2012.

Commodity Credit Corporation - 2008 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program

The June 30, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 126; pages 36839-36840) announces the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is implementing the provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 regarding direct and counter-cyclical payments for the 2008 crop year. The 2008 Farm Bill authorizes direct and counter-cyclical payments, with some changes, that were previously authorized for preceding crops under the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002. As a result of this notice, CCC will be able to commence administration of the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program for the 2008 crop. Through a subsequent rule, CCC will implement DCP for the 2009 through 2012 crops.

Farmer and Fisherman Income Averaging

The July 22, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 141; pages 42522-42526) contains final and temporary regulations relating to the averaging of farm and fishing income in computing income tax liability. The regulations provide guidance to individuals engaged in a farming or fishing business who elect to reduce their tax liability by treating all or a portion of the current taxable year's farm or fishing income as if one-third of it had been earned in each of the prior three taxable years.

Notice of the Specialty Crop Committee's Stakeholder Listening Sessions

The USDA announces three stakeholder listening sessions of the Specialty Crop Committee, under the auspices of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board. For details view the July 30, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 147; page 44211).

NASS Collection of Milk and Milk Products Survey

The July 25, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 144; page 43403) announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to request approval to revise and extend a currently approved information collection, the Milk and Milk Products Surveys. Comments are due by September 23, 2008.

Common Crop Insurance Regulations; Coverage Enhancement Option Provisions

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation finalizes the Coverage Enhancement Option Provisions. The intended effect of this action is to restrict the effect of the current Pilot Coverage Enhancement Option to the 2008 and prior crop years and replace with revised permanent CEO provisions, and to better meet the needs of insured producers. The changes will apply for the 2009 and succeeding crop years. For more details view the July 28, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 145; pages 43607-43611).

Public Hearing Concerning China's Compliance With WTO Commitments

The interagency Trade Policy Staff Committee will convene a public hearing and seek public comment to assist the Office of the United States Trade Representative in the preparation of its annual report to the Congress on China's compliance with the commitments made in connection with its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Persons wishing to testify at the hearing must provide written notification of their intention, as well as a copy of their testimony by September 18, 2008. For more details view the July 31, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 148; pages 44783-44785).

Notice of Entering Into a Compact With the Government of Burkina Faso

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is publishing a summary and the complete text of the Millennium Challenge Compact between the United States of America, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the Government of Burkina Faso. For more details view the July 22, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 141; pages 42601-42626).

United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement

The July 23, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 142; pages 42679-42681) adopts as a final rule, with two technical corrections which were published in the Federal Register on October 16, 2007 to implement the preferential tariff treatment and other customs-related provisions of the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement entered into by the United States and the Kingdom of Bahrain.

United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement

The August 5, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 151; pages 45351-45354) adopts as a final rule to implement the preferential tariff treatment and other customs-related provisions of the United States-Morocco Free Trade Agreement signed by the United States and the Kingdom of Morocco.

International Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-Setting Activities

In accordance with legislation implementing the results of the Uruguay Round of negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the July 28, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 145; pages 43676-43683) informs the public of the international standard-setting activities of the World Organization for Animal Health, the Secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention, and the North American Plant Protection Organization. Public comments will be considered.

Monitoring of U.S. Imports of Tomatoes; Monitoring of U.S. Imports of Peppers

The Commission monitors U.S. imports of fresh or chilled tomatoes and fresh or chilled peppers, other than chili peppers, for the purpose of expediting an investigation under certain U.S. safeguard laws. For more details view the July 29, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 146; pages 43950-43951).

Inviting Applications for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill

The Agricultural Marketing Service is withdrawing the July 9, 2008, Federal Register notice, which was published in error, announcing the availability of funds to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops. For more details view the July 30, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 147; pages 44211-44213).

Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling of Covered Commodities

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill), the 2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act (2002 Appropriations), and the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) amended the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to require retailers to notify their customers of the country of origin of covered commodities. Covered commodities include muscle cuts of beef (including veal), lamb, chicken, goat, and pork; ground beef, ground lamb, ground chicken, ground goat, and ground pork; wild and farm-raised fish and shellfish; perishable agricultural commodities; macadamia nuts; pecans; ginseng; and peanuts. In order to meet the September 30, 2008, implementation date and to provide the newly affected industries the opportunity to provide comments prior to issuing a final rule, the Department is issuing this interim final rule. Comments must be submitted before September 30, 2008. For more information view the August 1, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 149; pages 45105-45151).

Economic Opportunities in Rural Areas

For further information on any of the notices listed below please visit: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> where you can search using the date of the notice, page number or topic.

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

The July 3, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 129; pages 38155-38159) would amend regulations for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). The changes are intended to improve program service, ensure consistency between FDPIR and the Food Stamp Program, and respond to concerns expressed by the National Association of Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations that the current FDPIR resource limit was insufficient for the target population and served as a barrier to participation. Comments must be received before September 2, 2008.

Environmental and Natural Resource Issues

For further information on any of the notices listed below please visit: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html> where you can search using the date of the notice, page number or topic.

Changes to the National Handbook of Conservation Practices

Notice is given in the July 14, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 135; pages 40283-40285) of the intention of NRCS to issue revised conservation practice standards in its National Handbook of Conservation Practices. Also view changes in the July 30, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 147; page 44218).

Strategic Plan for USDA Climate Change Research, Education, and Extension

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is a member of the United States Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) and has undertaken research on issues related to climate change and natural resources over the past two decades. USDA recently prepared a major scientific assessment of the effects of climate change on agriculture, land resources, water resources, and biodiversity in the United States for the CCSP. USDA is requesting input from the public on its effort to prepare a Strategic Plan for Climate Change Research, Education, and Extension. The final version of the Strategic Plan will be published on USDA's Web site. Comments must be received by September 19, 2008. For details view the August 6, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 152; pages 45693-45694).

National Environmental Policy Act Procedures

The July 24, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 143; pages 43084-43099) gives Forest Service NEPA procedures more visibility, consistent with the transparent nature of the Forest Service's environmental analysis and decision making.

FIFRA Scientific Advisory Panel; Notice of Rescheduled Public Meeting

There will now be a 3-day meeting of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act Scientific Advisory Panel to consider and review the Agency's Evaluation of the Toxicity Profile of Chlorpyrifos. The meeting will be held on September 16-18, 2008. Written comments must be submitted by September 9, 2008 and requests for oral comments be submitted by September 11, 2008. For more information view the July 9, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 132; pages 39292-39294).

Global Change Research Program Assessment of the Impacts on Regional U.S. Air Quality

EPA is announcing a 45-day public comment period for the draft document titled, "2007 Interim Report of the U.S. EPA Global Change Research Program Assessment of the Impacts of Global Change on Regional U.S. Air Quality: A Preliminary Synthesis of Climate Change Impacts on O₃". The document was prepared by the National Center for Environmental Assessment within EPA's Office of Research and Development. EPA is releasing this draft document solely for the purpose of pre-dissemination peer review under applicable information quality guidelines. It does not represent and should not be construed to represent any Agency policy or determination. The public comment period ends August 25, 2008. For more details view the July 10, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 133; pages 39695-39696).

National Organic Program – Sunset Review (2008)

This proposed rule would amend the USDA's National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances regulations to reflect recommendations submitted to the Secretary of Agriculture by the National Organic Standards Board on November 30, 2007, and May 22, 2008. Comments must be received by August 13, 2008. For more details view the July 14, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 135; pages 40194-40197).

EPA Science Advisory Board on Future Development of Report on the Environment

The U.S. EPA Science Advisory Board Staff Office is soliciting nominations of nationally recognized scientists for consideration of membership on an SAB committee to provide advice on future development of EPA's Report on the Environment. Nominations should be submitted by August 13, 2008. For more details view the July 23, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 142; pages 42801-42802).

Land-Use Scenarios Consistent With Climate Change Emissions Storylines

EPA is announcing a 30-day public comment period for the draft document entitled, "The Development of Land-Use Scenarios Consistent with Climate Change Emissions Storylines." The document was prepared by the National Center for Environmental Assessment within EPA's Office of Research and Development. The public comment period ends August 25, 2008. For details view the July 25, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 144; pages 43442-43443).

Pesticides; Revised Fee Schedule for Registration Applications

EPA is publishing a revised list of pesticide registration service fees applicable to specified applications and tolerance actions. The new fees and decision review periods become effective on October 1, 2008. For information view the August 5, 2008 Federal Register (Volume 73, Number 151; pages 45438-45450).

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

If you have any feedback for C-FARE or would like to inform us of a research area you have been working on, please contact Tamara Wagester, Executive Director at 202-408-8522 or by e-mail tamarawagester@cfare.org. If you are not currently getting our monthly e-newsletter directly from C-FARE, and would like to subscribe to "The Council Caller," please send an E-mail directly to CFAREinfo@aol.com.

C-FARE is a non-profit, non-partisan association actively working to represent agricultural and applied economists in matters of science policy, priority setting, and budget determination at the federal level, and to collaborate with other scientific organizations and government agencies in these activities.