

September/October/November 2009

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.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Modernization Initiatives

The September 24, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 184 pages 48709-48710) invites comments by November 23, 2009 on proposed information collection for Performance Standards and Reporting for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Modernization Initiatives.

Reporting for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Modernization Initiatives

The notice in the September 24, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 184; pages 48709-48710) invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on a new information collection for Performance Standards and Reporting for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Modernization Initiatives. Comments must be received on or before November 23, 2009.

Reportable Food Registry

The Food and Drug Administration is announcing the availability of a guidance document entitled "Questions and Answers Regarding the Reportable Food Registry as Established by the Food and Drug Administration Amendments Act of 2007." For details view the September 9, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 173; pages 46434-46435).

Use of the Voluntary Claim "Natural" in the Labeling of Meat and Poultry

The Food Safety and Inspection Service issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the September 14, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 176; pages 46951-46957) to assist the Agency in defining the conditions under which it will permit the voluntary claim "natural" to be used in the labeling of meat and poultry products. Comments are due by November 13, 2009.

Leafy Green Vegetables Handled in the United States

The September 3, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 170; pages 45565-45574) provides notice of a public hearing to consider a proposed marketing agreement to cover the handling of leafy green vegetables and products in the United States. The proposed agreement would authorize the development and implementation of production and handling regulations.

Interstate Shipment of Meat and Poultry Products; Proposed Rule

The Food Safety and Inspection Service is proposing regulations to implement a new voluntary cooperative program under which State-inspected establishments with 25 or fewer employees will be eligible to ship meat and poultry products in interstate commerce. Submit comments before November 16, 2009. For more details visit: September 16, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 178; pages 47647-47669).

Evaluation of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

The September 1, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 168; pages 45159-45161) invites comments on the proposed information collection for the Food and Nutrition Service Evaluation of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to examine how the Program is currently being implemented and to estimate program impacts on participating students. Comments are due before November 2, 2009.

School Food Safety Inspections

The September 2, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 169; pages 45305-45307) posts a final rule the food safety inspections requirements for the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program set forth in a previous interim rule issued by the Food and Nutrition Service as a result of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

Future Technologies and Infrastructure Investments

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.

On-Farm Renewable Energy Production

The September 21, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 181; page 48051) seeks approval to conduct a new information collection, the 2009 On-Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey. Comments on this notice must be received by November 20, 2009 to be assured of consideration.

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.

Provisions for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service is publishing a set of specific administrative requirements for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program to supplement the Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-Formula Federal Assistance Programs. Comments are due by November 3, 2009. For details visit: September 4, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 171; pages 45967-45972).

Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

The Secretary of Agriculture is renewing the charter of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. The Committee provides advice to the Secretary on ways to encourage Federal and State beginning farmer programs to provide joint financing to beginning farmers and ranchers, and other methods of creating new farming and ranching opportunities. The September 3, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 170; pages 45607-45608) invites nominations for persons to service on the Committee.

Provisions for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service is publishing as a final rule one set of administrative requirements that contain elements common to all of the competitive and noncompetitive non-formula Federal assistance programs the Agency administers. This allows CSREES to apply basic rules to Federal assistance programs that had been operating without them, including new non-formula Federal assistance programs created by the enactment of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 and to efficiently implement changes to programs with existing regulations as required by FCEA. For more details visit: September 4, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 171; pages 45736-45752)

Eligibility of Candidate Countries for Millennium Challenge Account

The report to Congress in the September 16, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 178; pages 47620-47623) is the Report on the Criteria and Methodology for Determining the Eligibility of Candidate Countries for Millennium Challenge Account Assistance in Fiscal Year 2010 Summary.

Millennium Challenge Corporation Quarterly Report

The Millennium Challenge Corporation is reporting for the quarter April 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009. The following report will be made available to the public by publication in the Federal Register and on the Internet Web site of the MCC (<http://www.mcc.gov>). For more information visit the October 1, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 189; pages 50824-50840).

National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers

The Office of the United States Trade Representative is required to publish annually the National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers. With the notice in the September 24, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 184; pages 48811-48813), the Trade Policy Staff Committee is requesting comments by November 4, 2009 to assist it in identifying significant barriers to U.S. exports of goods, services, and U.S. foreign direct investment.

Catastrophic Risk Protection Endorsement

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation finalizes the Catastrophic Risk Protection Endorsement, the Group Risk Plan of Insurance Regulations, and the Common Crop Insurance Regulations, Basic Provisions to revise those provisions as mandated by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Visit the September 3, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 170; pages 45537-45544).

Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency is seeking comments on an extension and revision of a currently approved information collection associated with Disaster Assistance programs. Comments must be received on or before November 16, 2009. For details view the September 15, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 177; pages 47186-47187).

Notice of Meeting of the National Organic Standards Board

The Agricultural Marketing Service is announcing a forthcoming meeting on November 3-5, 2009 of the National Organic Standards Board. For details view the September 9, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 173; pages 46411-46413).

Market Access Program

The September 8, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 172; page 46027-46040) posts a proposed rule that would revise and amend the regulations used to administer the Market Access Program by updating and merging the application requirements and the activity plan requirements to reflect the Unified Export Strategy system currently in place; clarifying the eligibility of activities designed to address international market access issues; modifying the list of eligible and ineligible contributions; revising the portions of the regulation regarding evaluations, contracting procedures, and the compliance review and appeals process; eliminating the Export Incentive Program/Market Access Program as a separate subcomponent; and making other administrative changes for clarity and program integrity. Comments must be received by November 9, 2009.

Livestock Forage Disaster Program

The September 9, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 173; pages 46434-46435) posts a rule which implements specific requirements for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program and the Livestock Forage Disaster Program authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Revised Fees for the Export Credit Guarantee (GSM-102) Program

The September 21, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 181; pages 48014-48016) solicits comments on proposed revisions to the fee rate schedule for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Commodity Credit Corporation Export Credit Guarantee Program. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 amended certain GSM-102 program provisions related to fees. CCC's goals in proposing this revised fee structure are to create fees more commensurate with risk, generate additional program revenue in fiscal year 2010 to offset program costs, and consider allowing program participation by riskier countries.

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.

Funds Availability for Local and Regional Procurement of Food Aid

The September 21, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 181; page 48052) announces that the Foreign Agricultural Service, on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation, is issuing a set of guidelines for the administration and implementation of Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Pilot Project authorized under the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. The "Interim Guidelines for the Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Project" can be found at <http://www.fas.usda.gov/food-aid.asp>.

Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2010

The October 14, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 197; pages 52736-52740) invites applications for funds under the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant program.

New Era Rural Technology Competitive Grants Program

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service is publishing a set of specific administrative requirements for the New Era Rural Technology Competitive Grants Program to supplement the Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs-- General Award Administrative Provisions for this program. Comments are due before January 4, 2010. For details visit the September 4, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 171; pages 45972-45975).

Temporary Agricultural Employment of H-2A Aliens

The Department of Labor is proposing to amend its regulations governing the certification of temporary employment of nonimmigrant workers in temporary or seasonal agricultural employment and the enforcement of the contractual obligations applicable to employers of such nonimmigrant workers. For more details view the September 4, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 171; pages 45905-45965).

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.

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Conservation Reserve Program

The September 3, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 170; pages 45606-45607) announces that the Farm Service Agency, on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation, intends to complete a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement assessing the environmental impacts of changes to the Conservation Reserve Program required by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

Changes to the National Handbook of Conservation Practices for NRCS

Notice is given in the August 28, 2009 Federal Register (Volume 74, Number 166; pages 44347-44349) of the intention of NRCS to issue a series of revised conservation practice standards in the National Handbook of Conservation Practices.

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.