

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 62, No. 32

Tuesday, February 18, 1997

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

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Notice of Intent To Extend and Revise a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Rural Business-Cooperative Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Rural Business-Cooperative Service's (RBS) intention to request an extension for and revision to a currently approved information collection, the annual survey of farmer cooperatives, as authorized in the Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before April 21, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles A. Kraenzle, Director, Statistics and Technical Services Staff, RBS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 3256, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, D.C. 20250-3256, Telephone (202) 720-3189.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Annual Survey of Farmer Cooperatives.

OMB Number: 0570-0007.

Expiration Date of Approval: September 30, 1997.

Type of Request: Intent to extend and revise a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The primary objective of Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS) is to promote understanding, use and development of the cooperative form of business as a viable option for enhancing the income of agricultural producers and other rural residents.

Cooperative Services' (CS) direct role is providing knowledge to improve the effectiveness and performance of farmer cooperative businesses through technical assistance, research, information, and education. The annual survey of farmer cooperatives collects basic statistics on cooperative business volume, net income, members, financial status, employees, and other selected information to support CS' objective and role. Cooperative statistics are published in various reports and used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperative leaders, educators, and others in planning and promoting the cooperative form of business.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 29 minutes per response.

Respondents: Farmer cooperatives.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 3,082.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1,487 Hours.

Copies of this information collection and repeated instructions can be obtained from Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Division, at (202) 720-9588.

Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to: Sam Spencer, Regulations and Paperwork Management Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0743, Washington, DC 20250-0743. All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All

comments will also become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 5, 1997.

Dayton J. Watkins,
Administrator, Rural Business-Cooperative Service.

[FR Doc. 97-3846 Filed 2-14-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-XY-U

Sunshine Act Meeting

AGENCY: Rural Telephone Bank, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of cancellation of Board meeting.

SUMMARY: At the December 11, 1996, regular meeting of the Rural Telephone Bank (Bank) Board of Directors, the Board established February 19 and 20, 1997, as the dates for its next staff briefing and regular Board meeting, respectively. The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that the February 19 and 20 meetings have been rescheduled. The Bank will publish notice of the rescheduled meeting dates in the Federal Register, and the Bank will send the stockholders written notification of these dates.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Peters, Assistant Governor, Rural Telephone Bank, telephone (202) 720-9554.

Dated: February 10, 1997.

Wally Beyer,
Governor, Rural Telephone Bank.

[FR Doc. 97-3989 Filed 2-12-97; 4:25 pm]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-M

Rural Utilities Service

Rural Telephone Bank

Amendment to the Rural Electrification Act's "Buy American" Provision

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service and Rural Telephone Bank, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Amendment to the Rural Electrification Act's "Buy American" Provision.

SUMMARY: The Uruguay Round Agreements Act, (108 Stat. 4954, Public Law 103-465, December 8, 1994), amends the "Buy American" provision, (7 U.S.C. 903 note) of the Rural Electrification Act of 1936, as amended (7 U.S.C. 901 *et seq.*) (the "RE Act"). In the provision, as amended by the Uruguay Round Agreements Act, the

words "Mexico, or Canada" are replaced with "or in any eligible country". The United States Trade Representative (USTR) determines what countries are "eligible". As amended, the provision directs the Secretary of Agriculture, for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), (previously the Rural Electrification Administration) to require that, to the extent practicable and the cost not unreasonable, a borrower use funds lent under the RE Act only for such unmanufactured articles, materials, and supplies, as have been mined or produced in the United States or eligible country and only such manufactured articles, materials, and supplies as have been manufactured in the United States or an eligible country substantially all from articles, materials or supplies mined, produced, or manufactured, as the case may be, in the United States or an eligible country.

This action is intended to provide borrowers receiving loans made by the Rural Telephone Bank (RTB) or loans made or guaranteed by RUS, as well as material and equipment manufacturers and the public, with information for compliance with the amended RE Act "Buy American" provision.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For electric program matters: George Bagnall, Director, Electric Staff Division, RUS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1569, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1569. Telephone number (202) 720-1900, fax (202) 720-7491.

For telecommunications program matters: Orren E. Cameron, III, Director, Telecommunications Standards Division, RUS, U.S. Department of Agriculture, STOP 1598, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250-1598. Telephone number (202) 720-8663, fax (202) 720-4099.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 342(g) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act, amended the RE Act "Buy American" provision by replacing the words "Mexico, or Canada" with "or in any eligible country" and by authorizing the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to determine what countries are eligible. The "Buy American" provision now reads:

"In making loans pursuant to * * * the Rural Electrification Act of 1936 * * * the Secretary of Agriculture shall require that, to the extent practicable and the cost of which is not unreasonable, the borrower agree to use in connection with the expenditure of such funds only such unmanufactured articles, materials and supplies, as have been mined or produced in the United States or in any eligible country, and

only such manufactured articles, materials, and supplies as have been manufactured in the United States or in any eligible country, substantially all from articles, materials, or supplies mined, produced, or manufactured, as the case may be, in the United States or in any eligible country. For purposes of this section, an 'eligible country' is any country that applies with respect to the United States an agreement ensuring reciprocal access for United States products and services and United States suppliers to the markets of that country, as determined by the United States Trade Representative."

The RUS "Buy American" provision applies to any loan made by the RTB or made or guaranteed by the RUS. Whether a particular product is domestic or non-domestic for purposes of the RE Act "Buy American" provision depends upon such factors as the country of origin of the product and its component parts and whether the product is purchased by an electric borrower or a telecommunications borrower.

The eligibility status of Canada and Mexico has not changed. Products produced in Canada or Mexico substantially consisting of components produced in Canada, Mexico, or the United States and purchased with RTB or RUS electric or telephone loan funds are treated as United States domestic products.

At this time the USTR has determined that only Canada and Mexico are eligible countries for purchases made by telecommunications borrowers. Therefore, products produced in countries other than the United States, Canada, or Mexico and purchased by RUS telecommunications borrowers are not treated as domestic products for purposes of the RE Act "Buy American" provision. The amendment makes no change in the treatment of these purchases unless and until the USTR determines additional "eligible countries" for telecommunications borrowers.

At this time, the USTR has determined that the following countries have agreements ensuring reciprocal access regarding products used by electric borrowers, and are therefore "eligible countries" for purchases made by electric borrowers:

Austria
Belgium
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Ireland

Israel
Italy
Japan
Korea
Luxembourg
The Netherlands
Norway
Portugal
Singapore
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom

Products from an eligible country consisting substantially of components produced in the United States or any eligible country and purchased by RUS electric borrowers with RUS loan funds will be considered to be domestic products for purposes of the RE Act "Buy American" provision.

The USTR may at any time declare one or more additional countries to be "eligible countries" for either electric or telecommunications borrowers. The Chair of Technical Standards Committee "A" (Electric) will be the point of contact for RUS with respect to USTR determinations of eligible countries. Each RUS borrower is responsible for assuring that its procurement complies with the requirements of the RE Act "Buy American" provision.

RUS is making technical revisions to its existing forms of loan contracts and loan contract amendments to conform them to the RE Act "Buy American" provision as amended. In addition, RUS will make similar technical revisions to its standard forms of contracts providing for the purchase of materials and equipment and for "furnish and install" type construction. Until these forms are revised, the borrower should make the appropriate changes in its contract forms.

Dated: February 5, 1997.

Wally Beyer,

Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, and Governor, Rural Telephone Bank.

[FR Doc. 97-3794 Filed 2-14-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-15-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

[A-427-811]

Certain Stainless Steel Wire Rods From France: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review

AGENCY: Import Administration, International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce.