

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

Commodity Credit Corporation

Notice of Request for Reinstatement and Revision of a Previously Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, this notice announces the intentions of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to request reinstatement and revision to an information collection previously approved in support of the Production Flexibility Contract (PFC) program. The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, provided owners and producers on farms the opportunity to enter into the production flexibility contracts with the CCC for fiscal years 1996 through 2002. Owners and producers who participate and fully comply with the terms of the production flexibility contracts and regulations will receive payments. PFCs, revisions to the PFCs and permanent reductions of all or a portion of the production flexibility contract acreage must be documented.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before January 14, 2000, to be assured consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Lynn H. Tjeerdsma, Branch Chief, Emergency Preparedness and Programs Branch, USDA, FSA, STOP 0517, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D. C. 20250-0517, (202) 720-6602.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Production Flexibility Contracts for Wheat, Feed Grains, Rice and Upland Cotton, 7 CFR part 1412.

OMB Control Number: 0560-0092.

Type of Request: Reinstatement and revision of a previously approved information collection.

Abstract: Eligible owners or producers signed a Production Flexibility Contract (PFC) to participate in the program authorized by Title I of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (1996 Act). The 1996 Act provides that farms having a history of participating in government programs could be enrolled in a PFC. The production flexibility contract worksheet is provided to the owner or producer to confirm the acreage that will be enrolled for participation, designate each producer's share request an advance payment, and provide for undesignated shares for any fiscal year where payment shares are unknown. In addition, the worksheet allows for producers to adjust the level of participation and projects payments for the contract period. The owner is provided the ability to make voluntary requests to reduce the contract acreage for a crop on the farm in order to remain eligible for the PFC. As a condition of eligibility for contract payments, the operator or owner must timely submit a report of fruit and vegetable acreage. The county Farm Service Agency (FSA) committee determines whether requests are properly completed, whether payment shares are proper and whether program requirements are met for payment approval. Information collected for the PFC program is required for participation and is not available from any other source.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 60 minutes per response.

Respondents: Individual Producers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,592,500.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 5.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 2,296,250 hours.

Proposed topics for comment include: (a) whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected; or (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of the information on those who are to respond, including through the use of

appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503 and to Lynn H. Tjeerdsma, Branch Chief, USDA, Farm Service Agency, Production, Emergencies, and Compliance Division, Stop 0517, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-0517, (202) 720-6602. 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.

Signed at Washington, DC, on November 5, 1999.

Keith Kelly,

Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation

[FR Doc. 99-29724 Filed 11-12-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Announcement of the Quality Samples Program

AGENCY: Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Commodity Credit Corporation is establishing, on a pilot basis, a "Quality Samples Program" to help develop and expand markets for U.S. agricultural commodities.

DATES: All proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, December 15, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, Room 4932-S, Stop 1042, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-1042, or telephone: (202) 720-4327.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announces that proposals may be submitted for participation in a "Quality Samples Program" (QSP). The QSP is a pilot program designed to encourage the development and expansion of export

markets for U.S. agricultural commodities, under the authority of the CCC Charter Act, 15 U.S.C. 714c(f). The QSP is designed to assist U.S. entities in providing commodity samples to potential foreign importers to promote a better understanding and appreciation for the high quality of U.S. agricultural commodities. CCC will consider providing funds on a grant basis to U.S. entities to assist them in providing such samples if a proposal has been submitted by the interested U.S. entity and accepted by CCC. CCC will review all proposals it receives against the evaluation criteria contained herein and award QSP funds on a competitive basis.

Under the QSP, CCC will enter into agreements with those entities whose proposals have been accepted. QSP participants will be responsible for procuring (or arranging for the procurement of) commodity samples, exporting the samples, and providing the technical assistance necessary to facilitate successful use of the samples by importers. After completion of a QSP project, participants may submit claims for reimbursement of the costs associated with providing the samples to the extent that CCC has agreed to pay such costs. For example, CCC may agree to reimburse the cost of procuring and exporting the samples, including the commodity purchase price, document preparation fees, and commodity transportation costs. CCC will not reimburse the costs of providing technical assistance. The QSP agreement between CCC and the participant will include a maximum amount that may be reimbursed. A QSP participant will be reimbursed after CCC reviews its claim and determines that the claim is complete. The QSP activity will be subject to verification by the FAS Compliance Review Staff. Upon request, a QSP participant shall provide to CCC the original documents which support the participant's reimbursement claims. CCC may deny a claim for reimbursement if the claim is not supported by adequate documentation.

The QSP will be administered by personnel of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). CCC will carefully monitor the operation of the pilot QSP through Fiscal Year 2000. Based upon experience gained during this pilot phase, CCC will, after opportunity for public comment, consider continuing the program. CCC will not obligate more than \$2.5 million for the QSP during this pilot phase.

Proposal Process

To be considered for participation in the QSP, interested parties should

submit proposals to: Kent Sisson, Marketing Operations Staff, Foreign Agricultural Service, Room 4932-S, Stop 1042, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-1042. Telephone: (202) 720-4327. QSP proposals must contain complete information about the proposed sample projects. Interested parties can request a suggested format for proposals from the same address. Organizations which submitted QSP-type proposals in their Unified Export Strategy (UES) applications in March 1999 do not need to resubmit those proposals as they will automatically be considered. However, such applicants are welcome to modify and resubmit their proposals after reading this announcement.

General Scope of QSP Projects

As a general matter, QSP projects should be designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Projects should benefit the represented industry and not a specific company or brand;
- Projects should promote a new use or market for a U.S. product, or a new varietal type of a U.S. product, rather than promote the substitution of one established U.S. product for another;
- Sample commodities provided in a QSP project must be readily available on a commercial basis;
- Sample commodities must be subject to further processing or substantial transformation in the importing country;
- Samples provided in a QSP project shall not be used as part of a retail promotion or supplied directly to consumers; and
- Samples shall be in quantities less than a typical commercial sale and limited to the amount sufficient to achieve the project goal (e.g., not more than a full commercial mill run in the destination country).

QSP projects shall target foreign importers who:

- Have not previously purchased a particular U.S. commodity;
- Are unfamiliar with a particular U.S. variety, quality attribute, or end-use characteristic;
- Have been unsuccessful in previous attempts to import, process, and market a particular U.S. commodity (e.g., because of improper specification, blending, or formulation; or sanitary or phytosanitary (SPS) issues);
- Are interested in testing or demonstrating the benefits of a particular U.S. commodity; or
- Need technical assistance in processing or using a particular U.S. commodity.

Entities interested in participating in the QSP are not required to submit proposals in any specific format; however, FAS recommends that proposals contain, at a minimum, the following: (a) Organizational information, including:

- Organization's name, address, Chief Executive Officer (or designee), and Federal Tax Identification Number (TIN);
- Type of organization;
- Name, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the primary contact person;
- A description of the organization and its membership;
- A description of the organization's prior export promotion experience; and
- A description of the organization's experience in implementing an appropriate trade/technical assistance component;

(b) Market information, including:

- An assessment of the market;
- A long-term strategy in the market;

and

- U.S. export value/volume and market share (historic and goals) for 1997-2005;

(c) Project information, including:

- A brief project title;
- Request for funding;
- A brief description of the specific market development trade constraint to be addressed by the project, performance measures for the years 2000-2002 which will be used to measure the effectiveness of the project, a benchmark performance measure for 1999, the viability of long term sales to this market, the goals of the project, and the expected benefits to the represented industry;

- A description of the activities planned to address the constraint, including how the sample will be used in the end-use performance trial, the attributes of the sample to be demonstrated and their end-use benefit, and details of the trade/technical servicing component associated with the sample;

- A sample description (*i.e.*, commodity, quantity, quality, type, and grade), including a justification for selecting a sample with such characteristics;

- An itemized list of all estimated costs associated with the project for which reimbursement will be sought (e.g., commodity costs, freight, inspection and weighing, freight forwarding services, and document preparation fees); and

- Ports of export and delivery;

(d) Importer information, including:

- Name, address, and telephone of primary contact person;

- The reason why the importer was selected for the project; and
- The importer's role in the project regarding handling and processing the commodity sample; and

(e) Information indicating all funding sources, and amounts to be contributed by each entity that will contribute to implementation of the proposed project. This may include the organization that submitted the proposal, private industry entities, host governments, foreign third parties, CCC, FAS, or other Federal agencies. Contributed resources may include cash, goods, and services.

Review Process

FAS will use the following criteria in evaluating proposals:

- The overall quality of the proposal;
- The ability of the organization to provide an experienced staff with the requisite technical and trade experience to execute the proposal;
- The extent to which the proposal is targeted to a market in which the United States is generally competitive;
- The potential for expanding commercial sales in the proposed market;
- The nature of the specific market constraint involved and how well it is addressed by the proposal;
- The extent to which the importer's contribution in terms of handling and processing enhances the potential outcome of the project;
- The amount of reimbursement requested and the organization's willingness to contribute resources, including cash and goods and services of the U.S. industry and foreign third parties; and
- How well the proposed technical assistance component assures that performance trials will effectively demonstrate the intended end-use benefit.

FAS will establish a QSP Committee (Committee) for the purpose of reviewing proposals for eligibility and completeness and allocating CCC funds. The Committee will evaluate each proposal against the factors described above. The purpose of this review is to identify meritorious proposals, recommend an appropriate funding level for each proposal based upon these factors, and submit the proposals and funding recommendations to the Deputy Administrator, Commodity and Marketing Programs.

Agreements

Following approval of a proposal, CCC will enter into an agreement with the organization that submitted the proposal. Agreements will incorporate the proposal as approved by FAS. Each

agreement will identify terms and conditions pursuant to which CCC will reimburse certain costs of the project. Agreements will also outline the responsibilities of the participant, including, but not limited to, procurement (or arranging for procurement) of the commodity sample at a fair market price, arranging for shipment of the commodity sample within the time limit specified in the agreement (generally 90 days), compliance with cargo preference requirements (shipment on United States flag vessels, as may be required), timely and effective implementation of technical assistance, and submission of a written evaluation report within 6 months of completion of the project. Evaluation reports should address the performance measures presented in the proposal.

Closing Date for Proposals

All proposals must be submitted in triplicate and received by 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, [insert date 30 days after date of publication in the **Federal Register**], at one of the following addresses:

Hand Delivery (including FedEx, DHL, etc.): U.S. Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service, Marketing Operations Staff, Room 4932-S, 14th and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-1042.

U.S. Postal Delivery: Marketing Operations Staff, STOP 1042, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-1042.

Dated: November 4, 1999.

Timothy J. Galvin,

*Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service,
Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.*

[FR Doc. 99-29656 Filed 11-12-99; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3410-10-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Upland Cotton Domestic User/Exporter Agreement

AGENCY: Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to advise potential Upland Cotton Domestic User/Exporter Agreement (Agreement) holders and other interested parties of the implementation and effective date of the new Revision 6 Agreement that the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) will use to carry out

the Upland Cotton User Marketing Certificate (Step 2) Program, authorized under the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996, as amended.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 15, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barry Klein, Warehouse and Inventory Division, Farm Service Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., STOP 0553, Washington, D.C. 20250-0553, telephone (202) 720-4647, or FAX (202) 690-0014, E-Mail:

Barry_Klein@wdc.fsa.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In keeping with the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2000, enacted October 22, 1999, CCC will reinstate the Step 2 Program for eligible upland cotton beginning October 1, 1999. All potential Domestic and Exporter Agreement holders who sign and return the Revision 6 Agreement to the Kansas City Commodity Office, P.O. Box 419205, Kansas City, MO 64141-6205, by no later than November 30, 1999, will be eligible to receive the Step 2 payment in effect during the week in which the upland cotton bales were consumed or exported. Prompt Payment Act provisions will not apply retroactively. Prompt Payment interest will be calculated beginning 30 days from receipt of the completed application for payment. Those potential Agreement holders who fail to sign and return the new Revision 6 Agreement by November 30, 1999, will have an effective date upon signature and acceptance by CCC. An electronic copy of the Revision 6 Agreement is available on the World Wide Web at www.fsa.usda.gov/daco/step2.

Signed at Washington, DC, on November 3, 1999.

Keith Kelly,

Executive Vice President, Commodity Credit Corporation.

[FR Doc. 99-29726 Filed 11-12-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities; Proposed Collection; Comment Request; The Summer Food Service Program Claim Reimbursement Form FNS-143

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.