

of a biological control project to suppress papaya mealybug.

Since the publication of our October 1999 notice, a fourth genus of nonindigenous wasp—*Pseudaphycus* (Hymenoptera: Encyrtidae)—that attacks the papaya mealybug has been identified. Research conducted in quarantine has shown *Pseudaphycus* spp. wasps to be a primary parasite of papaya mealybug, and this genus is only known to attack species of mealybug. Thus, a request has been made to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for the release of *Pseudaphycus* spp. wasps into the environment for the suppression of papaya mealybug infestations throughout the United States.

The *Pseudaphycus* spp. wasps will be imported from Mexico into U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-certified insect quarantine facilities at the Beneficial Insects Introduction Research Laboratory (BIIRL) in Newark, DE. At BIIRL, species identifications would be confirmed by USDA and State taxonomists, and undesirable organisms, such as hyperparasites, would be screened out and properly eliminated. Laboratory colonies would be established by APHIS and State cooperators. The wasps would then be released by APHIS and State cooperators in areas invaded by the papaya mealybug. Such areas include the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and Florida, where the papaya mealybug is now present. The papaya mealybug may also spread to other States due to the presence of hosts and favorable habitats. These areas include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. If the papaya mealybug does spread to these areas, APHIS and State cooperators will release the wasps in the affected areas also.

We expect that these stingless wasps would become established and reproduce naturally without further human intervention.

If APHIS does release *Pseudaphycus* spp. wasps, the release of these wasps will complement our previous releases of *Anagyrus*, *Apoanagyrus*, and *Acerophagus* spp. wasps, which were the first exotic biological control agents approved for release against papaya mealybug in the United States.

To document APHIS' review and analysis of the environmental impact and plant pest risk associated with releasing *Pseudaphycus* spp. wasps into the environment as biological control agents, we have prepared a supplement

to our October 1999 environmental assessment that examined the release into the environment of *Anagyrus*, *Apoanagyrus*, and *Acerophagus* spp. wasps. We are making the supplement to that environmental assessment available to the public for review and comment.

The supplement to our October 1999 environmental assessment has been prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1B), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372).

Done in Washington, DC, this 22nd day of June 2000.

Bobby R. Acord,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 00–058–1]

Public Meetings; Pine Shoot Beetle

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service plans to host three public meetings to discuss issues related to how we should administer our pine shoot beetle program.

DATES: We invite you to comment on this docket. We will consider all comments that we receive by August 28, 2000.

The public meetings will be held in: (1) Salem, OR, on July 24, 2000; (2) Albany, NY, on July 26, 2000; and (3) Forest Park, GA, on July 28, 2000. Each public meeting will begin at 1 p.m. and is scheduled to end at 5 p.m., local time.

ADDRESSES: If you cannot attend a public meeting, please send your written comment and three copies to: Docket No. 00–058–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238.

Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 00–058–1.

You may read any comments that we receive on this docket in our reading

room. The reading room is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 690–2817 before coming.

APHIS documents published in the **Federal Register**, and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>.

The public meetings will be held at the following locations:

- (1) Salem, OR: Oregon Department of Agriculture, Hearing Room, 635 Capitol NE, Salem, OR.
- (2) Albany, NY: New York Department of Agriculture and Marketing, State Conference Room, 1 Winners Circle, Albany, NY.
- (3) Forest Park, GA: Atlanta Farmers' Market, Welcome Center, 16 Forest Parkway, Forest Park, GA.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Coanne E. O'Hern, National Survey Coordinator, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 134, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–8247.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) plans to host three public meetings to discuss how we should administer our pine shoot beetle program.

Our pine shoot beetle program is based on our pine shoot beetle regulations (7 CFR 301.50–1 through 301.50–10, referred to below as the regulations). The regulations govern the interstate movement of regulated articles from areas quarantined because of pine shoot beetle. Section 301.50–2 of the regulations provides a list of articles regulated because of pine shoot beetle. Regulated articles are the following pine (*Pinus* spp.) products: Bark nuggets (including bark chips), Christmas trees, logs with bark attached, lumber with bark attached, nursery stock, pine wreaths and garlands, raw pine materials for pine wreaths and garlands, and stumps. In addition, any other article determined to present a risk of spreading pine shoot beetle may be designated as a regulated article. Section 301.50–3 of the regulations lists areas quarantined because of pine shoot beetle. Quarantined areas include counties in the following States: Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, West Virginia,

and Wisconsin. Sections 301.50–4 through 301.50–10 provide requirements for moving regulated articles interstate from quarantined areas to nonquarantined areas. These sections include requirements for certificates and limited permits and for treatment of regulated articles.

From 1992, when pine shoot beetle was first detected in the United States, through 1997, the pine shoot beetle program was funded through APHIS contingency funding. From fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2000, funding for the program (approximately \$185,000) came from miscellaneous pest line item funding. These funds are limited for use in the eastern region of the United States. We are not certain whether there will be adequate funding to conduct pine shoot beetle program activities in fiscal year 2001 and beyond.

In spite of our efforts to control the spread of pine shoot beetle through the regulations, infested counties continue to be detected each year. Because of this, we must annually add many counties to the list of quarantined areas. The public meetings will provide an opportunity for interested persons to comment on whether APHIS should continue to administer the pine shoot beetle program in accordance with the regulations or if we should pursue another course of action. Please note, however, that while the information gathered during the meetings may indicate the need for changes to our current regulatory program, the meetings will not directly result in any changes to the regulations. If we determine that changes to the regulations are appropriate, we will publish a document in the **Federal Register** for public comment.

Topics

Because of the potential for inadequate funding and the continued spread of pine shoot beetle, we would like interested persons to comment on the following topics:

1. Should the pine shoot beetle program be maintained?
2. How effective is the pine shoot beetle program?
3. What changes could be made to the program to make it more effective?
4. If we maintain the program, how should it be funded?

Comments on these, or other related topics, are welcome during the public meetings.

Meeting Procedures/Registration

A representative of APHIS will preside at each public meeting. Any interested person may appear and be

heard in person, by attorney, or by another representative. Written statements may be submitted and will be made part of the meeting record. Persons who wish to speak at a meeting will be asked to provide their names and organizations. We ask that anyone who reads a statement or submits a written statement provide two copies to the presiding officer at the meeting.

Registration for each public meeting will take place from 12:30 p.m. to 1 p.m. on the day of the meeting at the meeting room. Each public meeting will begin at 1 p.m. and is scheduled to end at 5 p.m., local time. However, any meeting may end at any time after it begins if all persons desiring to speak have been heard. If the number of speakers at a meeting warrants it, the presiding officer may limit the time for presentations so that everyone wishing to speak has the opportunity.

Written Comments

If you cannot attend a public meeting, you may submit written comments on the topics outlined in this notice. To submit written comments, please follow the instructions listed under the heading **ADDRESSES** near the beginning of this document.

Done in Washington, DC, this 22nd day of June 2000.

Bobby R. Acord,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 00–16316 Filed 6–27–00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Economic Research Service

Notice of Intent To Seek Approval to Collect Information

AGENCY: Economic Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104–13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Economic Research Service's (ERS) intention to request approval for a new information collection from participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); from local WIC agency staff; and from food store cashiers, to address the legislative mandate in the William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998 (Pub. L.

105–336, 112 Stat. 3143) to study the impact of cost containment in the WIC program. This information will be used in the Assessment of WIC Cost-Containment Practices to analyze the effects of current cost-containment practices established by States on program participation, selected participant outcomes, and program costs.

DATES: Written comments on this notice must be received by September 1, 2000 to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS:

Requests for additional information should be directed to Phil R. Kaufman, Food Markets Branch, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M. St., NW, Room N2118, Washington, D.C. 20036–5801. For further information contact: Phil R. Kaufman, 202–694–5376. Submit electronic comments to pkaufman@ers.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Paperwork Reduction Act Submission (OMB–83–1).

Type of Request: New collection of information.

Abstract: ERS of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for conducting studies and evaluations of the Nation's food assistance programs that are administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), U.S. Department of Agriculture. WIC is the second largest domestic food-assistance program in the United States. In Federal fiscal year 1998, WIC served approximately 7.4 million participants each month at an annual cost approaching \$4 billion (FNS, 1998). WIC is administered through grants to the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the American Virgin Islands, and 33 Indian Tribal Organizations. State WIC agencies administer the program through roughly 2,000 local agencies representing about 10,000 service delivery sites.

WIC provides a comprehensive set of services including supplemental foods, nutrition education, and increased access to health care and social services for pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women; infants; and children up to the age of five years. To qualify for WIC, a health or nutritional risk must be documented by a health professional and participants must be income-eligible.

WIC is not an entitlement program. Each State must operate within annual funding levels established via a formula devised by FNS to distribute funds appropriated by the Congress. This