

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

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

Agricultural Research Service

National Food Safety Research Conference

AGENCY: Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; and Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of National Food Safety Research Conference.

SUMMARY: Section 615 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, specifies that "the Secretary shall sponsor a conference to be known as the National Conference on Food Safety Research, for the purpose of beginning the task of prioritization of food safety research. The Secretary shall sponsor annual workshops in each of the subsequent 4 years after the conference so that priorities can be updated or adjusted to reflect changing food safety concerns." By this notice the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) announce a National Food Safety Research Conference which is planned to solicit comment for setting priorities of USDA food safety research programs. The goal of the conference will be to identify the gaps in the knowledge base of safe food production, processing, handling, storage and preparation.

All food products which are considered to be significant sources of food-borne illness will be addressed at the conference—meat, poultry, eggs, milk, fresh fruits, vegetables, and other plant-based foods.

The agencies seek broad input from producers, processors, food handlers, consumers, and regulatory agencies who are users of food safety research information.

Day 1 will consist of presentations from the public research community profiling current food safety research programs throughout the pre- and post-harvest, transport, handling and storage, and retail/consumer components of the food chain.

Day 2 will be devoted to receiving individual commentary and input from stakeholders on research needs and priorities for future food safety research. Input is sought primarily from organizations which represent broad constituencies and can speak to the national priorities.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 12, and Friday, November 13, 1998, from 8:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

ADDRESSES: The conference will be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel Old Town, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Individuals or organizations who wish to make oral presentations during the comment session on November 13, 1998, are asked to pre-register by contacting Dr. Jennifer Kuzma in writing indicating the organization and area(s) of food safety issues which you wish to address. Please send your written request to Dr. Jennifer Kuzma, USDA-CSREES, STOP 2220, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2220, e-mail to jkuzma@reusda.gov, phone: 202/401-6223, or fax: 202-401-4888.

Presentations will be arranged by food system areas, i.e., pre-harvest, post-harvest, and transport/storage/consumer, with equal time for all presenters. It is anticipated that individual oral comments will not exceed five minutes. Written comments are welcome and should be sent to Dr. Kuzma at the above address either prior to the meeting or to be received no later than December 1, 1998.

All persons wishing to attend are required to pre-register by contacting Mrs. Armindia Fleming at (202) 401-6617; fax, (202) 401-4888; or e-mail, afleming@reusda.gov. A registration fee will not be charged. Registration materials are available upon request. Hotel reservations may be made at the Ramada Plaza Hotel Old Town by calling (703) 683-6000. A block of rooms has been reserved under the name USDA/CSREES/Food Safety Conference. Reservations must be made

by October 11, 1998. After that date, reservations will be accepted on an availability basis at the regular published rate.

To obtain additional information, contact Dr. William Wagner, USDA-CSREES, at the above address, or by phone on (202) 401-4952; or Dr. Jane Robens, USDA-ARS, BARC, Bldg. 005, Beltsville, MD 20708; phone (301) 504-5381; e-mail, jfr@ars.usda.gov.

Done in Washington DC, on this 25th day of September, 1998

Colien Hefferan,

Acting Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

Floyd Horn,

Administrator, Agricultural Research Service.

[FR Doc. 98-26236 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Foreign Agricultural Service

Foreign Currencies Available for the Development of Foreign Markets

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Foreign Agricultural Service ("FAS") invites proposals from interested parties to use Costa Rican, Dominican Republic, Guatemalan, Jamaican, and Sri Lankan currencies acquired by the United States government for market development projects and technical assistance activities in those countries. These currencies were acquired pursuant to agreements under title I of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, (Pub. L. 480).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Evans Browne, Program Development Division, Export Credits, Foreign Agricultural Service, Room 4506, South Building, Stop 1034, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-1034. Telephone: (202) 720-4228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Title I, Pub. L. 480 authorizes the United States to finance the sale and exportation of agricultural commodities to foreign governments on concessional terms. Between 1986 and 1991, the United States entered into various title I, Pub. L. 480 agreements with foreign governments, on terms which required

repayment to the United States in local currencies. These agreements were commonly referred to as constituting the "section 108 program."

On July 8, 1998, FAS published a notice in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 36872) announcing that FAS was inviting proposals to use Tunisian or Moroccan currencies acquired under the section 108 program for market development projects and technical assistance activities in those countries. That notice also set forth the criteria FAS would use in evaluating and accepting such proposals. The purpose of the present notice is to invite proposals to use Costa Rican, Dominican Republic, Guatemalan, Jamaican, and Sri Lankan currencies for market development projects and technical assistance activities in those countries. The procedures for submitting proposals and the FAS' evaluation criteria for any such proposals will be identical to that set forth in the July 8, 1998, **Federal Register** notice.

Signed at Washington D.C. on September 21, 1998.

Lon Hatamiya,

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

[FR Doc. 98-26237 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-10-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Opportunity To Comment on the Applicants for the Alton (IL) Area

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: GIPSA requests comments on the applicants for designation to provide official services in the geographic area assigned to Alton Grain Inspection Department (Alton).

DATES: Comments must be postmarked, or sent by telecopier (FAX) by October 31, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be submitted in writing to USDA, GIPSA, Janet M. Hart, Chief, Review Branch, Compliance Division, STOP 3604, Room 1647-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20250-3604. Telecopier (FAX) users may send comments to the automatic telecopier machine at 202-690-2755, attention:

Janet M. Hart. All comments received will be made available for public inspection at the above address located at 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Janet M. Hart, telephone 202-720-8525.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866 and Departmental Regulation 1512-1; therefore, the Executive Order and Departmental Regulation do not apply to this action.

In the August 3, 1998, **Federal Register** (63 FR 41224), GIPSA asked persons interested in providing official services in the Alton area to submit an application for designation by September 1, 1998. There were two applicants: Alton and the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Each applied for designation to provide official services in the entire Alton area.

GIPSA is publishing this notice to provide interested persons the opportunity to present comments concerning the applicants. Commenters are encouraged to submit reasons and pertinent data for support or objection to the designation of the applicants. All comments must be submitted to the Compliance Division at the above address. Comments and other available information will be considered in making a final decision. GIPSA will publish notice of the final decision in the **Federal Register**, and GIPSA will send the applicants written notification of the decision.

Authority: Pub. L. 94-582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*)

Dated: September 24, 1998.

Neil E. Porter,

Director, Compliance Division.

[FR Doc. 98-26238 Filed 9-30-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-EN-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

Opportunity for Designation in the Central Illinois (IL), Plainview (TX), Barton (KY), and North Dakota (ND) Areas, and Request for Comments on the Central Illinois, Plainview, Barton, and North Dakota Agencies

AGENCY: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The designations of the official agencies listed below will end in May and June 1999. GIPSA is asking persons interested in providing official services in the areas served by these agencies to submit an application for designation. GIPSA is also asking for comments on the services provided by these currently designated agencies:

Central Illinois Grain Inspection, Inc. (Central Illinois);

Plainview Grain Inspection and Weighing Service, Inc. (Plainview);

J.W. Barton Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (Barton); and

North Dakota Grain Inspection Service, Inc. (North Dakota).

DATES: Applications and comments must be postmarked or sent by telecopier (FAX) on or before October 30, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Applications and comments must be submitted to USDA, GIPSA, Janet M. Hart, Chief, Review Branch, Compliance Division, STOP 3604, Room 1647-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-3604. Applications and comments may be submitted by FAX on 202-690-2755. If an application is submitted by FAX, GIPSA reserves the right to request an original application. All applications and comments will be made available for public inspection at this address located at 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet M. Hart, at 202-720-8525.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This action has been reviewed and determined not to be a rule or regulation as defined in Executive Order 12866 and Departmental Regulation 1512-1; therefore, the Executive Order and Departmental Regulation do not apply to this action.

Section 7(f)(1) of the United States Grain Standards Act, as amended (Act), authorizes GIPSA's Administrator to designate a qualified applicant to provide official services in a specified area after determining that the applicant is better able than any other applicant to provide such official services.

Section 7(g)(1) of the Act provides that designations of official agencies shall end not later than triennially and may be renewed according to the criteria and procedures prescribed in Section 7(f) of the Act.

1. Current Designations Being Announced for Renewal