

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

Farm Service Agency

Notice of Request for Extension and Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Farm Service Agency, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Farm Service Agency's intention to request an extension and a revision to an approved information collection in support of the Disaster Assistance Program. The collection requirements have been revised to make clearer the purpose of determining an area eligible to receive emergency loans. The collection requirements have also been revised to amend the total burden hours reflected in the number of requests for Secretarial natural disaster assistance during the 1999 crop year.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before March 13, 2000, to be assured of consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Comments may be sent to Diane Sharp, Director, Production, Emergencies, and Compliance Division, Farm Service Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, STOP 0517, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0517, telephone (202) 720-7641, e-mail Diane_S Sharp@wdc.fsa.usda.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Helen Smith, at the above address and phone number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:
Title: Disaster Assistance (General).
OMB Control Number: 0560-0170.
Expiration Date of Approval:
 December 31, 2000.

Type of Request: Extension and Revision of Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: The information collected under OMB Number 0560-0170, as identified above, is needed for FSA to effectively administer the regulations relating to identifying disaster areas, thereby making qualified farmers and ranchers who have suffered weather-related physical and production losses in such areas, eligible for emergency loans. However, before emergency loans can become available, information needs to be collected to determine if the disaster areas meet the criteria of having a qualifying loss in order to be considered an eligible county. The information collection will be used to determine the county eligibility.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .4205 hour per response.

Respondents: Farmers and ranchers.
Estimated Number of Respondents: 2,454.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1,032.

Comments are sought on these requirements including: (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 to be collected; (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 other forms of information technology.

Comments regarding this information collection should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503 and to Diane Sharp, Director, Production, Emergencies, and Compliance Division, Farm Service Agency, United States Department of Agriculture, STOP 0517, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0517, telephone (202) 720-7641, e-mail Diane_S Sharp@wdc.fsa.usda.gov.

Comments regarding paperwork burden will be summarized and

included in the request for OMB approval of the information collection.

All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed at Washington, DC, on January 4, 2000.

Keith Kelly,

Administrator, FSA.

[FR Doc. 00-577 Filed 1-10-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Food Stamp Program: Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Disaster Food Stamp Assistance

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on proposed information collections. This information collection is based on the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and Section 5(h) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, which provide the Secretary of Agriculture with the authority to develop an emergency food stamp program to address the needs of families temporarily in need of food assistance after a disaster. The information collection under this notice is required for the establishment and operation of emergency food stamp assistance programs.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before March 13, 2000.

ADDRESSES: 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 shall 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; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who respond, including through the use of appropriate

automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Margaret Batko, Assistant Branch Chief, Certification Policy Branch, Program Development Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302. Comments may also be faxed to the attention of Ms. Batko at (703) 305-2486. The internet address is: Margaret.Batko@FNS.USDA.GOV. All written comments will be open for public inspection at the office of the Food and Nutrition Service during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday) at 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302, Room 720.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to Ms. Batko at (703) 305-2516.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Emergency Food Stamp Assistance for Victims of Disasters.

OMB Number: 0584-0336.

Form Number: Not a form.

Expiration Date: 1/31/2000.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: Pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and Section 5(h) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, the Secretary of Agriculture has the authority to develop an emergency food stamp program to address the temporary food needs of families following a disaster. The information collection under this notice is required to be provided by households in order to determine eligibility for emergency food stamp benefits as the result of a disaster.

The number of disasters that occur annually and the average number of households affected by disasters cannot be accurately predicted. In reviewing the number of disasters for the last four fiscal years, we found that although the number of disasters remained relatively constant, most disasters covered small geographic areas and affected small populations resulting in a decreased reporting burden. In 1996, there were six disasters with the number of disaster-affected households ranging from 143 to 186,488. In 1997 there were six disasters and the number of disaster-affected households ranged from 108 to 2,361. In 1998, there were eight

disasters and the number of disaster-affected households ranged from 15 to 4,254. In 1999, there were three disasters, and the number of disaster-affected households ranged from 495 to 2,610. Based on this data we calculated an estimated burden of 26,401 hours. We wish to emphasize that although this estimate of burden hours represents a significant decline from our prior estimate of 48,114 hours, the number and magnitude of disasters cannot be accurately estimated, and that although the annual number of affected households (respondents) averaged 63,362 per year over the last four years, in 1992 and 1994, there were single disasters with 206,735 and 242,834 applicant households, respectively. We anticipate that disasters of this magnitude will occur in the future.

Affected Public: Food Stamp recipients; State and local governments.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 63,362.

Estimated Time per Response: 25 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 26,401 hours.

Dated: November 23, 1999.

George A. Braley,

Acting Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service.

[FR Doc. 00-551 Filed 1-10-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-30-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request—Form FNS-209, Status of Claims Against Households

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on proposed information collections. Sections 11, 13, and 16 of the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (the Act) are the bases for the information collected on Form FNS-209, Status of Claims Against Households. Section 11 of the Act requires that State agencies submit reports and other information that are necessary to determine compliance with the Act and its implementing regulations. Section 13 of the Act requires State agencies to establish claims and collect overpayments to households. Section 16 of the Act authorizes State agencies to retain a

portion of what is collected. The FNS-209 is used as the mechanism for State agencies to report the claim establishment, collection and retention amounts.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before March 13, 2000 to be assured consideration.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Barbara Hallman, Chief, State Administration Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA, 22302.

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 other forms of information technology.

All comments will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection. All comments will become a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Daniel Wilusz, (703) 305-2391.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Status of Claims Against Households.

OMB Number: 0584-0069.

Form Number: FNS-209.

Expiration Date: December 31, 1999.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection with no change in burden hours.

Abstract: The Food Stamp Program regulations at 7 CFR 273.18 require that State agencies establish, collect and efficiently manage food stamp recipient claims. Section 273.18(i) requires State agencies to submit at the end of every quarter the completed Form FNS-209, Status of Claims Against Households. The information required for the FNS-209 report is obtained from a State accounting system responsible for establishing claims, sending demand letters, collecting claims, and managing other claim activity. In general, State agencies must report the following information on the FNS-209: the current outstanding aggregate claim balance; claims established; collections; any balance and collection adjustments;