

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

Foreign Agricultural Service

Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee for Trade and the Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees for Trade; Reestablishment, Establishment, and Nominations

AGENCY: Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App. II), notice is hereby given that the Secretary of Agriculture (Secretary), after consultation with the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), intends to reestablish the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) for Trade and the five existing Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees (ATAC) for Trade; and establish a new ATAC for Trade in Processed Foods. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is requesting nominations for persons to serve on these seven committees.

DATES: Written nominations must be received by FAS before the close of business on April 4, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Nominations must be hand-delivered (including FedEx, DHL, UPS, etc.) to the Legislative Affairs Office, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA, Room 5065-S, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Inquiries or comments regarding the establishment or reestablishment of these committees can also be sent by electronic mail to LegAffairs@fas.usda.gov, or by fax to (202) 720-8097 or (202) 720-5936. The Legislative Affairs Office can be contacted by telephone at (202) 720-7829, with inquiries directed to Chanda Beckman or Tanya Fariña.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

The APAC and the ATACs are authorized by sections 135(c)(1) and (2) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (Pub. L. No. 93-618, 19 U.S.C. 2155). The purpose of these committees is to advise the Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) concerning agricultural trade policy. The committees are intended to ensure that representative elements of the private sector have an opportunity to express their views to the U.S. Government.

Rechartering of Existing Committees and Establishment of New Committees

Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. Appendix), the FAS gives notice that the Secretary and the USTR intend to reestablish the APAC and the following five ATACs:

- Animals and Animal products;
- Fruits and Vegetables;
- Grains, Feed, and Oilseeds;
- Sweeteners and Sweetener Products; and
- Tobacco, Cotton, Peanuts, and Planting Seeds.

FAS also gives notice that the Secretary and the USTR intend to establish a new ATAC for Processed Foods.

In 1974, Congress established a private sector advisory committee system to ensure that U.S. trade policy and negotiation objectives adequately reflect U.S. commercial and economic interests. The private sector advisory committee system currently consists of three tiers:

- The President's Advisory Committee on Trade and Policy Negotiations;
- Five general policy advisory committees, including the APAC and;
- 28 technical advisory committees, including the ATAC for Processed Foods.

The establishment and renewal of such committees is in the public interest in connection with the duties of the USDA imposed by the Trade Act of 1974, as amended.

Committee Membership Information

- All committee members are appointed by the Secretary and the USTR, and serve at the discretion of the Secretary and the USTR.
- Committee size will be limited up to approximately 35 members each.

- All committee appointments will expire in 2 years, but the Secretary and USTR may renew an appointment for one or more additional terms.

- All committee members must be U.S. citizens.

- To attend certain meetings, committee members must have a current security clearance or have submitted an application for a security clearance.

- Committee members serve without compensation; they are not reimbursed for their travel expenses.

- No person can serve on more than one USDA advisory committee at the same time.

General Committee Information

- Each committee has a chairperson, who is elected from the membership of that committee.

- All committee meetings will be held in Washington, DC.

- Committee meetings will be open to the public, unless the USTR determines that a committee will be discussing issues that justify closing a meeting or portions of a meeting, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(c).

- In addition to their other advisory responsibilities, all committees are required to meet at the conclusion of negotiations of any trade agreement, and to provide a report on each agreement to the President, Congress, and the USTR.

Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee for Trade

The APAC is composed of a broad spectrum of agricultural interests. The APAC provides advice concerning:

- Negotiating objectives and bargaining positions before the U.S. enters into a trade agreement;
- The operation of various U.S. trade agreements; and
- Other matters arising from the administration of U.S. trade policy.

Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees for Trade

The ATACs provide advice and information regarding trade issues which affect both domestic and foreign production in their commodities, drawing upon the technical competence and experience of its members. There will be six ATACs, one for each of the following sectors:

- Animals and Animal Products;
- Fruits and Vegetables;
- Grains, Feed, and Oilseeds;