

be viewed at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/fv/moab.html>. Any questions about the compliance guide should be sent to Jay Guerber at the previously mentioned address in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

A 15-day comment period is provided to allow interested persons to respond to this proposed rule. Fifteen days is deemed appropriate because: (1) The fiscal period is August 1 to July 31 and the marketing order requires that the rate of assessment for each fiscal period apply to all assessable potatoes handled during such fiscal period; (2) handlers usually begin shipping Idaho-Eastern Oregon potatoes on or about August 1; (3) the Committee needs to have sufficient funds to pay its expenses which are incurred on a continuous basis; and (4) handlers are aware of this action which was unanimously recommended by the Committee and is similar to other assessment rate actions issued in past years.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 945

Marketing agreements, Potatoes, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 945 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 945—POTATOES GROWN IN DESIGNATED COUNTIES IN IDAHO, AND MALHEUR COUNTY, OREGON

1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 945 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

2. Section 945.249 is revised to read as follows:

§ 945.249 Assessment rate.

On and after August 1, 2003, an assessment rate of \$0.0045 per hundredweight is established for Idaho-Eastern Oregon potatoes.

Dated: August 22, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

[FR Doc. 03–21990 Filed 8–27–03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

9 CFR Part 93

[Docket No. 00–022–1]

Standards for Privately Owned Quarantine Facilities for Ruminants

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Proposed rule.

SUMMARY: We are proposing to amend the regulations for the importation of ruminants into the United States to establish standards for privately owned quarantine facilities. The regulations authorize the establishment of privately operated quarantine facilities for ruminants, which are subject to approval and oversight by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. However, the regulations do not provide specific standards for the approval, operation, and oversight of such facilities, with the exception of privately operated quarantine facilities for sheep or goats. Based on recent interest in establishing such facilities for cattle, we are proposing standards for privately owned quarantine facilities covering all ruminants to ensure public participation in their development and to ensure that any facilities that may be approved for this purpose operate in a manner that protects the health of the U.S. livestock population.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before October 27, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by postal mail/commercial delivery or by e-mail. If you use postal mail/commercial delivery, please send four copies of your comment (an original and three copies) to: Docket No. 00–022–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comment refers to Docket No. 00–022–1. If you use e-mail, address your comment to regulations@aphis.usda.gov. Your comment must be contained in the body of your message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in your message and “Docket No. 00–022–1” on the subject line.

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>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Arnaldo Vaquer, Senior Staff Veterinarian, National Center for Import and Export, VS, APHIS, USDA, 4700 River Road Unit 39, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; (301) 734–3277.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in 9 CFR part 93 govern the importation into the United States of specified animals and animal products in order to help prevent the introduction of various animal diseases into the United States. The regulations in part 93 require, among other things, that certain animals, as a condition of entry, be quarantined upon arrival in the United States. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture operates animal quarantine facilities. We also authorize the use of quarantine facilities that are privately owned and operated for certain animal importations.

The regulations at subpart D of part 93 (9 CFR 93.400 through 93.435, and referred to below as the regulations) pertain to the importation of ruminants. Ruminants include all animals that chew the cud, such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats, deer, antelopes, camels, llamas, and giraffes. Section 93.411 requires that ruminants imported into the United States be quarantined upon arrival for at least 30 days, with certain exceptions. Ruminants from Canada and Mexico are not subject to this quarantine requirement.

In § 93.412, paragraph (a) authorizes the establishment of privately operated quarantine facilities, subject to APHIS approval and oversight. Paragraph (a) provides, in part, that the “quarantine facility must be suitable for the quarantine of such ruminants and must be approved by the Administrator prior to the issuance of any import permit.” This paragraph also provides that APHIS will “supervise the quarantine” at such facilities.

Section 93.434 of the regulations contains standards for approval, operation, and APHIS oversight of privately operated quarantine facilities