

A proposed rule concerning this action was published in the **Federal Register** on April 9, 2003 (68 FR 17325). Copies of the rule were mailed or sent via facsimile to all Committee members and Walla Walla sweet onion handlers. Finally, the rule was made available through the Internet by the Office of the Federal Register and USDA. A 60-day comment period ending June 9, 2003, was provided to allow interested persons to respond to the proposal. One comment was received but was not relevant to the fiscal period change.

A small business guide on complying with fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop marketing agreements and orders may be viewed at: <http://www.ama.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.

After consideration of all relevant matter presented, including the information and recommendation submitted by the Committee and other available information, it is hereby found that this rule, as hereinafter set forth, will tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 956

Marketing agreements, Onions, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

■ For the reasons set forth in the preamble, 7 CFR part 956 is amended as follows:

PART 956—SWEET ONIONS GROWN IN THE WALLA WALLA VALLEY OF SOUTHEAST WASHINGTON AND NORTHEAST OREGON

■ 1. The authority citation for 7 CFR part 956 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 601–674.

■ 2. A new § 956.113 is added to subpart “Rules and Regulations” to read as follows:

§ 956.113 Fiscal period.

■ Pursuant to § 956.13, *fiscal period* shall mean the period beginning January 1 and ending December 31 of each year.

§ 956.142 [Amended]

■ 3. Section 956.142 is amended by removing the words “of each fiscal period” in the second sentence.

§ 956.180 [Amended]

■ 4. Section 956.180 is amended by removing the words “of each fiscal period” in the introductory text.

Dated: September 29, 2003.

A.J. Yates,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 1220

[No. LS–03–03]

Soybean Promotion and Research: Amend the Order To Adjust Representation on the United Soybean Board

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This final rule adjusts the number of members for certain States on the United Soybean Board (Board) to reflect changes in production levels that have occurred since the last time the Board was reapportioned in 2000. These adjustments are required by the Soybean Promotion and Research Order (Order). The results of the adjustments are an additional member for Maryland and Michigan. New York is no longer part of the Eastern Region unit. The State has sufficient soybean production to qualify as a separate State unit with one representative on the Board. New Jersey is merged into the Eastern Region unit. The State no longer has sufficient soybean production to be a separate State unit. As a result of these changes, the total Board membership increases from 62 members to 64 members. These changes to the Board are effective with the Secretary of Agriculture’s 2004 appointments.

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 3, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Kenneth R. Payne, Chief; Marketing Programs Branch; Livestock and Seed Program; Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), USDA, Room 2638–S; STOP 0251; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250–0251; telephone 202/720–1115.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Executive Orders 12866

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has waived the review process required by Executive Order 12866 for this action.

Executive Orders 12988

This final rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12988, Civil

Justice Reform. This rule is not intended to have a retroactive effect. This rule would not preempt any State or local laws, regulations, or policies unless they present an irreconcilable conflict with this rule.

The Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (Act) provides that administrative proceedings must be exhausted before parties may file suit in court. Under § 1971 of the Act, a person subject to the Order may file a petition with the Secretary stating that the Order, any provision of the Order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the Order, is not in accordance with law and requesting a modification of the Order or an exemption from the Order. The petitioner is afforded the opportunity for a hearing on the petition. After a hearing, the Department of Agriculture (Department) would rule on the petition. The Act provides that the district courts of the United States in any district in which such person is an inhabitant, or has their principal place of business, has jurisdiction to review USDA’s ruling on the petition, if a complaint for this purpose is filed within 20 days after the date of the entry of the ruling.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The Administrator of AMS has determined that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), because it merely adjusts representation on the Board to reflect changes in production levels that have occurred since the Board was reapportioned in 2000. As such, these changes will not have an impact on those persons subject to the program. There are an estimated 600,813 soybean producers who pay assessments and an estimated 10,000 first purchasers who collect assessments, most of whom would be considered small entities under the criteria established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201).

Paperwork Reduction Act

In accordance with OMB regulations (5 CFR part 1320), which implements the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the information collection requirements and recordkeeping requirements contained in the Order have been previously approved by OMB under OMB control number 0581–0093.