



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Agricultural
Marketing
Service

Washington, DC
20250

TO: Nathan Frey
Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget

THROUGH: Charlene Parker
Departmental Clearance Officer
Office of the Chief Information Officer

FROM: David R. Shipman *David R. Shipman* JUL 03 2008
Associate Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Review and Approval for a New Information
Collection Request

We are requesting emergency review and approval of a new information collection. A burden is being imposed on eligible State departments of agriculture for the collection of reporting requirements under section 101 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 USC 1621 note); amended by Section 10109 of the of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill).

The 2008 Farm Bill directs the Secretary of Agriculture to make available \$10 million in fiscal year 2008. Given the limited time remaining in this fiscal year, State departments of agriculture are mandated by the 2008 Farm Bill to develop appropriate grant applications for the 2008 fiscal year program and the Department is mandated to adequately evaluate these new proposals and obligate the funds. Accordingly, we request emergency approval of the information collection by July 16, 2008, so that the Department can allocate the grant funds as required by 2008 Farm Bill.

The information collection under review pertains to the amendments made in the 2008 Farm Bill which adds four new grant applicants, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In addition the 2008 Farm Bill requires new application procedures to include a plan for conducting a competitive grant process, as well as conducting outreach to socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers.

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is publishing an interim final rule which would establish eligibility and application requirements, the review and approval process, and grant administration procedures for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program - 2008 Farm Bill (SCBGP-FB). The SCBGP-FB is executed in accordance with applicable

parts of USDA's Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations (7 CFR 3015 et seq). This program is administered by AMS.

As previously stated, because this action was mandated by Congress under the 2008 Farm Bill and the Department needs to allocate \$10 million in grant funds by the end of the fiscal year, we request emergency approval of the information collection by July 16, 2008.

In compliance with OMB regulations (5 CFR Part 1320) which implement the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13), the information collection and recordkeeping requirements that may be imposed by this action are submitted to OMB for emergency review and approval. The additional reporting requirements would not become effective prior to OMB review.

Attached are the OMB 83-I, the Supporting Statement, and AMS-71 spreadsheet.

Attachments