

**May 2011**  
**Supporting Statement**  
**Importation of Fresh Pitaya Fruit from**  
**Central American into the Continental United States**  
**Docket No. APHIS-2010-0113**  
**OMB No. 0579-XXXX**

**A. Justification**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.**

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), is responsible for preventing plant pests and noxious weeds from entering the United States, preventing the spread of plant diseases not widely distributed in the United States, and eradicating those imported pests and noxious weeds when eradication is feasible.

Under the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 – et seq), the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to carry out operations or measures to detect, eradicate, suppress, control, prevent, or retard the spread of plant pests new to the United States or not known to be widely distributed throughout the United States.

The regulations in “Subpart – Fruits and Vegetables” (Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 319.56 through 319.56-50, referred to as the regulations), prohibit or restrict the importation of fruits and vegetables into the United States from certain parts of the world to prevent the introduction and dissemination of plant pests, that are new to or not widely distributed with the United States.

APHIS is proposing to amend the fruits and vegetables regulations to allow the importation of fresh pitaya fruit from Central America into the continental United States. As a condition of entry, pitaya fruit from Central America would be subject to a systems approach that would include requirements for monitoring and oversight, establishment of pest-free places of production, and procedures for packing the pitaya fruit.

This action would allow for the importation of pitaya fruit from Central America into the continental United States while continuing to provide protection against the introduction of quarantine pests.

APHIS is asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve its use of these information collection activities associated with its efforts to prevent the spread of plant pests and plant diseases into the United States.

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Respondents are growers and shippers from Central America, and National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs).

**Exporting Country's NPPO Must Certify Each Production Site** – The exporting country's NPPO must certify that each place of production has effective fruit fly trapping programs, and follows control guidelines, when necessary, to reduce quarantine pest populations. APHIS may monitor the places of production.

**Review and Maintain Documents** – The NPPO must review and maintain all forms and documents related to export program activities in places of production and packinghouses for a least 1 year and, as requested, provide them to APHIS for review.

**Registration of Packinghouses** – The packinghouses would have to be registered with the NPPO of the exporting country. In addition, the packinghouse could only accept fruit from registered places of production while the packinghouse is in use for exporting pitaya fruit to the United States.

**Workplan** - The NPPO of the exporting country will be required to provide a workplan to APHIS that details the activities the NPPO will carry out to meet the requirements of the systems approach, subject to APHIS' approval of the workplan.

**Records of Fruit Fly Detections and Update Records Each Time That Traps are Checked** - The NPPO would have to keep records of fruit fly detections for each trap, update the records each time the traps are checked, and make the records available to APHIS inspectors upon request. The records would have to be maintained for at least 1 year.

**Shipping Documents Identifying the Places of Production** – Shipping documents identifying the place(s) of production in which the fruit was produced and the packing shed(s) in which the fruit was processed must accompany each lot of fruit presented for inspection at the port of entry to the United States. This identification must be maintained until the fruit is released for entry into the United States.

**Phytosanitary Certificate (foreign) w/Additional Declaration** – Each consignment of pitaya fruit must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of the exporting country, containing an additional declaration stating that the fruit in the consignment was produced in accordance with requirements in 7 CFR 319.56.51.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for**

**adopting this means of collection. Also, describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

APHIS has no control or influence over when foreign countries will automate the phytosanitary certificates or any other written documentation.

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purpose described in item 2 above.**

The information APHIS collects is exclusive to its mission of preventing the entry of injurious plant pests, diseases, and noxious weeds and is not available from any other source.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

The information APHIS collects in connection with this program is the minimum needed to protect the United States from insect pests such as the Mediterranean fruit fly from entering the United States. APHIS has determined that 100 percent of the respondents are small entities.

**6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

Failing to collect this information would cripple APHIS' ability to ensure that fresh pitaya from Central America are not carrying fruit flies. If Medfly is introduced into pepper growing areas of the United States, growers in these areas would suffer hundreds of millions of dollars in losses.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.**

- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**

- **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.

**8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting form, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.**

In 2010-2011, APHIS held productive consultations with the following individuals concerning the information collection activities associated with its program to import fresh pitaya fruit from Central American countries:

Joco Produce, Johanna Membreno  
2950 NW 74<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Miami, FL 33122-1426  
(305) 716-1009

Conexion Trade SA, Omar Jemenez  
Torres Advanced 099  
Piso 13 Area Bancaria  
Panama, Panama  
(507) 658-4769

W.P. Produce

Willy Pardo  
1471 NW 21st Street  
Miami, FL 33142  
(305) 326-8333

APHIS' proposed rule (APHIS 2010-0113) will describe its information gathering requirements, and also provide a 60-day comment period. During this time, interested members of the public will have the opportunity to provide APHIS with their input concerning the usefulness, legitimacy, and merit of the information collection activities APHIS is proposing.

**9. Explain any decisions to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

This information collection activity involves no payments (other than appropriate, program-related payments) or gifts to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

No additional assurance of confidentiality is provided with this information collection. However, the confidentiality of information is protected under 5 U.S.C.552a.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and others that are considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

This information collection activity asks no questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.**

**• Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.**

See APHIS Form 71 for hour burden estimates.

**• Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

Respondents are growers and shippers from Central America, and National Plant Protection Organizations. The total burden cost to the respondents is \$2,638.86. APHIS arrived at this figure by multiplying the total hours (122) by the estimated average hourly wage of the above respondents (\$21.63).  $122 \times \$21.63 = \$2638.86$ .

The hourly wage was provided by APHIS' International Services via plant protection officials in Honduras, Costa Rica, and Guatemala.

**13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.**

There is zero annual cost burden associated with capital and start-up costs, maintenance costs, and purchase of services in connection with this program.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

The estimated cost for the Federal Government is \$1,374. (See APHIS Form 79.)

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.**

This is a new Information Collection. APHIS is proposing to amend the fruits and vegetables regulations to allow the importation of fresh pitaya fruit from Central America into the continental United States.

**16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.**

APHIS has no plans to tabulate or publish the information collected.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

There are no USDA forms associated with this information collection.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."**

APHIS is able to certify compliance with all the provisions in the Act.

**B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

Statistical methods are not used in this information collection.