

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)  
Farm Service Agency (FSA)  
Supporting Statement  
OMB Number 0560-0232  
Volunteer Programs

Purpose

FSA is requesting for an extension without change on the currently approved information collection.

Background

Section 1526 of the Food and Agriculture Action of 1981 [7 U.S.C. 2272] permits the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by of USDA. 5 U.S.C. 3111 [as affected by Part 308 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations] grants Agencies the authority to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. Documentation of service performed without compensation by persons who do not receive Federal appointment is required by Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Volunteers are permitted to perform a wide range of activities to carry out programs of or supported by the Agency. While serving as an FFAS volunteer each individual is subject to the same responsibilities and guidelines for conduct to which Federal employees are expected to adhere. These program(s) will provide a valuable service to the Agencies while allowing the participants to receive training, supervision and work experience.

Agencies are responsible for determining how to document volunteer appointments (e.g., self-developed forms, letters, etc. However, Agencies must clearly inform volunteers of the nature of their appointment with respect to service credit for leave or other employee benefits. Agencies cannot use an official personnel folder for this purpose.

Justification

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

Section 1526 of the Food and Agriculture Action of 1981 [7 U.S.C. 2272] permits the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by of USDA. 5 U.S.C. 3111 [as affected by Part 308 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations] grants Agencies the authority to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. The OPM Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 33 and USDA, Departmental Regulation 4230-1 requires documentation of service performed without compensation by persons who do not receive Federal appointment. A copy of Chapter 33 and DR 4230-1 is included in this

submission. This information collection request is necessary in order to continue implementation of the programs, which allows Agencies to use volunteers to perform a wide range of activities to carry out the programs of or supported by the Agency.

**2. Indicate how, by whom and for what purpose the information is to be used.**

Those applicants who are accepted in the program will complete the “Service Agreement and Attendance Record”. The programs will be used by FFAS in Washington, DC, State, Local and Regional Offices. The Agency will use the recorded information to respond to requests for information on volunteers from the USDA Office of Human Resources Management. The following is a list of the new collections and the estimated burden associated with each. A breakdown of burden hours for forms covered under existing collections is also listed on the attached FSA-85-1.

**Student Volunteer Program Service Agreement:** Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form, signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. This service agreement is only used for students without sponsorship. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

**Individual Volunteer Program Service Agreement:** Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The volunteer reviews this form, signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. This service agreement is only used for individuals without sponsorship. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

**Sponsored Volunteer Program Service Agreement:** Required by the Agency to document acceptance of the conditions of program and work assignments. The sponsoring organization and the volunteer reviews this form, signs and dates it and provides some basic demographic information to document that he/she understands the program’s conditions of service. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

**Volunteer Attendance Record:** Required by the Agency to document time and attendance of the volunteer. Each volunteer completes top portion of this form and documents work dates, arrival and departure times, number of hours worked and duty location. A total of .25 hours for the collection are required.

The Volunteer Programs require volunteers to read, sign and date a “Program Service Agreement” explaining the conditions or limitation of acceptance of assignments. The “Service Agreement” will serve as the volunteer’s official record of appointment of service. The “Attendance Record” will serve as the volunteer’s official attendance documentation. 60 respondents is the estimated who will be accepted into this program.

### **3. Use of information technology.**

These forms are available on FFAS e-forms website for public access to print. Documents require signatures before customers will be required to send or deliver completed documents to appropriate office. FFAS e-forms website is at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms/welcomeAction.do?Home>.

### **4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

FFAS is using the forms that are approved by OMB. In compliance with OMB requirements, FSA is requesting approval of four forms which may be used by other entities. The FSA Human Resources Division has reviewed the information required under this collection to ensure that no extraneous or unnecessary duplicate information is being collected.

### **5. Methods to minimize burden on small business or other small entities.**

The forms for this program are required of all volunteers (students, individuals and/or sponsored organizations). There is no additional burden being placed on a business of any particular size. FFAS would be unable to document service performed without compensation by persons in the program if this information were not collected for each volunteer.

### **6. Consequences if information collection is less frequent.**

The information collections will be required of all volunteers accepted into the program. The requirements have been kept to the minimum necessary to ensure accurate and reliable data. However, if the information were not collected for each volunteer, FSA would be unable to document service performed without compensation by persons in the program.

### **7. Special Circumstances.**

- a. requiring respondents to report information to the Agency more often than quarterly;

Collection of volunteer service agreement information will be required once each time they are accepted into the program. Volunteer attendance record will require completion every time a volunteer reports to duty. Information collection from the participating employing office will be required each fiscal year.

- b. requiring respondents to prepare written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it.

Volunteer attendance record will require completion every time a volunteer reports to duty. There are no other information collection requirements that

require reporting on more than a quarterly basis.

- c. requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;

This information collection requires only an original document.

- d. requiring respondents to retain records, other than health medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;

There are no such requirements.

- e. 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;

There are no such requirements.

- f. 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

There are no such requirements.

- g. requiring respondents to submit propriety 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 such requirements.

#### **8. Federal Register notice, summarization of comments and consultation with persons outside the Agency.**

A Notice was published in the Federal Register (76 FR 29720) for comment on May 23, 2011, and the comment period ended July 22, 2011. [FSA received only one comment \(considered outside the scope of the information collection request\) which was a general statement about FSA budget and about 4-H \(not a part of FSA\).](#)

FSA has consulted with the following individuals concerning this collection:

Ms. Jessica Cooper  
8628 Valley Drive  
Waldorf, MD 20603

Ms. Denise Lyn  
3300 Huddlestone Drive, # 103

Raleigh, NC 27612

Ms. Colby Kimball  
Route 2, Box 117  
Salem, WV 26426

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.**

Respondents will not receive payment, gift or remuneration for their responses.

**10. Confidentiality provided to respondents.**

All of the information collected by FSA will be treated as confidential in compliance with the Privacy Act and the Freedom of Information Act. The social security number and date of birth blocks have been removed from the forms.

**11. Questions of sensitive nature.**

It is not expected that any questions on the required forms will be of a sensitive nature. The social security number and date of birth blocks have been removed from the forms.

**12. Estimate of burden.**

See the attached Form FSA-85-1 for burden breakdown. The estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information is as follows:

Total number of respondents: 60.

Total annual responses: 80.

Total time per average response: .25 hour.

Total travel time per respondent: 1 hour.

Total annual burden hours: 30.

Respondents cost per hour: \$12.50. (Average pay rate – Program will include the use of individuals working in a variety of positions which include clerical, professional and administrative professions.)

Total annual respondent cost: \$375.

**13. Total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers.**

There is not capital or start-up cost associated with this information collection.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.**

**Summary of annualized cost to the Federal Government:**

The cost for creation and distribution of forms is \$.07 per form. Applications will be processed by Administrative Personnel, whose hourly rate of \$28.88 (GS-12 step 1) will be used in this calculation. The administrative personnel will review the application materials for approximately 2 hours to determine selection. An estimated 20 applications will be processed.

2 hours X 28.88/hr X 20 applications x .7 cent per form = \$8,086.

It is expected that \$8086 will be the annualized cost to the Federal Government.

**15. Reason for changes in burden.**

There are no changes to this information collection since the last OMB approval.

**16. Tabulation, analysis, and publication plans.**

There are no plans to publish the results of the information collected and no public disclosure of the information is anticipated.

**16. Reason display of expiration date of OMB approval is inappropriate.**

There are no reasons why display of the expiration date is not appropriate.

**17. Exceptions to 83-1 certification statement.**

There are no exceptions to this certification statement.

**18. How is this information collection related to the Customer Service Center?**

This information is collected through State, Local and Regional Offices.