



United States
Department of
Agriculture


Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Foreign
Agricultural
Service

1400 Independence
Ave, SW
Stop 1001
Washington, DC
20250-1001

TO: Cortney Higgins
Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget

THROUGH: Ruth Brown
Departmental Clearance Officer
Office of the Chief Information Officer

FROM: Phil Karsting 
Administrator
Foreign Agricultural Service

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Approval for a New Information Collection
Request (ICR) for the Local and Regional Procurement Program

This request is for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) review and emergency approval of a new collection of information for the Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) Program. The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is implementing the 2014 Farm Bill authority for LRP of international food aid. The 2016 Appropriations Act provided \$5 million to be used for LRP. The LRP Program aims to support development activities to strengthen the capacity of food-insecure developing countries and address the cause of chronic food insecurity. Other objectives of the LRP Program are to support the consumption of locally produced food and strengthen local value chains and all associated procurement activities.

The LRP Program will be used for development projects, and focus on supplementing U.S. commodity purchases through the McGovern Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition (McGovern-Dole) Program. The LRP Program will focus on developing appropriate supply chains for the procurement of commodities from local producers. School meals using locally purchased foods will add locally known varieties to the meals, which will make them more appealing to the children and help increase nutrition. In countries where supply chains need to be strengthened in order to support a workable and reliable supply of food, the LRP Program can work with producers, school authorities, and local municipalities in communities around schools to provide technical and management expertise to build reliable supply systems, as well as to procure commodities.

FAS will create a new information collection, ICR 0551-NEW upon OMB approval. FAS is doing an emergency request processing instead of the regular processing because OMB's ROCIS system requires this request be submitted as an emergency request. FAS was not required to do a proposed rule for the program due to the discretion afforded by the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), to choose whether to use notice-and-comment procedures when publishing rules related to public property, loans, grants, benefits, or contracts, except as otherwise provided by law.

The collected information is needed to evaluate an applicant's eligibility and to determine the feasibility of the proposed operation. The type of information to be collected will largely mirror the information currently collected under the McGovern-Dole. Under the LRP Program, information will be gathered from applicants desiring to receive grants or enter into cooperative agreements to determine the viability of requests for resources to implement activities in foreign countries. Recipients of grants or cooperative agreements under the LRP Program must submit performance and financial reports until funds provided by FAS and commodities purchased with such funds are utilized.

We are requesting emergency approval of the new information collection package by March 9, 2016, in order to start the program effective immediately upon publication of the final rule.

FAS published a Federal Register Notice (FRN) on February 16, 2016, seeking comments on the proposed information collection. The FRN has a 60 day comment period. If we continue under this path, it will delay our ability to publish the final rule and will make it difficult; if not impossible to deliver the \$5 million in assistance available under LRP during FY 2016. To avoid confusion by having the FRN and an emergency collection under this rule, FAS proposes to include the following statement in the final rule:

“On February 16, 2016, FAS published in the Federal Register a notice entitled “Notice of Request for Approval of a New Information Collection” at 81 FR 7742. This notice included a 60 day comment period for interested individuals to provide comments on the information collection burden of the USDA LRP Program. As such, the notice duplicates the request for comments above pertaining to the information collection burden of the USDA LRP Program. Interested parties may provide comments on the information collection burden either by providing comments on this rule or on the Federal Register notice that was published on February 16, 2016. It is not necessary to provide comments on both documents.”

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.

If there are any questions or concerns, please call Connie Ehrhart at 202-690-1578 or Ingrid Ardjosoediro at 202-720-2637.