

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A for**  
**OMB Control Number 0584-0541:**  
**Collection of Information Burden for the**  
**Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)**

Kurtria Watson  
Policy Branch Chief  
Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program  
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service  
3101 Park Center Drive  
Alexandria, Virginia 22302

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**A1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

**Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

This is a revision of a currently approved collection. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) was initially authorized by Section 4402 of Public Law (P.L.) 107-171, the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 3007). Section 4203 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-79) reauthorized the SFMNP through Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. The purposes of the SFMNP are to provide resources in the form of fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs from farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture (CSA) programs to low-income seniors; to increase the domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding or aiding in the expansion of domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSA programs; and to develop or aid in the development of new and additional farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSA programs.

P.L. 107-171 established the SFMNP as an independent program and authorized the Secretary to promulgate regulations as deemed necessary for the SFMNP. Final SFMNP regulations were published in the Federal Register on December 6, 2006, and the previous associated recordkeeping/reporting burden was approved in May 2013. As a permanent nutrition assistance program, the SFMNP entails an expanded and structured system for collecting and reporting program information on an ongoing basis. As a non-entitlement program, the SFMNP is subject to the government-wide grants management common rule entitled Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, 7 CFR

Part 3016. Part 3016 requires the annual closeout and reconciliation of grants under non-entitlement programs. Under 7 CFR 3016.23(b), a State agency must liquidate all obligations under a grant “... not later than 90 days after the end of the funding period (or as specified in a program regulation) to coincide with the submission of the annual Financial Report.”

The SFMNP is designed to be administered in a manner consistent with the administration of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) whenever possible. The SFMNP is intended to benefit not only its recipients, by enhancing their diets to include fresh fruits and vegetables, but also farmers who sell their produce at farmers' markets and roadside stands, and through CSA programs, by increasing their incomes.

## **A2. Purpose and Use of the Information.**

**Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate how the agency has actually used the information received from the current collection.**

SFMNP financial and program information is collected on the FNS Form 683a Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) Annual Financial and Program Data Report and is submitted annually to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) by participating SFMNP State agencies. This information is used to reconcile and close out grants in accordance with the requirements of §3016.23(b) and §3016.41(a)(1). Program information is also used by FNS for program planning purposes, and for reporting to Congress as needed.

SFMNP State agencies must maintain full and complete records concerning SFMNP operations and that adequately identify the source and use of funds expended for SFMNP activities. These

records must contain, but are not limited to, information pertaining to certification, financial operations, SFMNP coupon issuance and redemption, authorized outlet (farmers, farmers' markets, and CSA programs) agreements, authorized outlet monitoring, CSA program agreements, invoices, delivery receipts, equipment purchases and inventory, nutrition education, fair hearings, and civil rights procedures as specified in § 249.23(a)(1).

SFMNP State agencies must submit financial and SFMNP performance data on a yearly basis as specified by FNS. Financial and program data collected using the FNS 683a form may be accessible to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, or duly authorized State auditors shall have access to any books, documents, papers, and records of the State agency and their contractors for the purpose of making surveys, audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.

FNS will use State agency reports to measure progress in achieving objectives set forth in the State Plan or other State agency performance plans. SFMNP State Plans are used by FNS as the principal source of information on how each SFMNP State agency operates. Local agency and authorized outlet (farmer, farmers' market, roadside stand, and/or CSA program) applications and agreements are necessary to delineate responsibility, and to ensure the accountability of State agencies, local agencies, and authorized outlets.

Reports from monitoring activity for authorized outlets enable FNS to evaluate trends and to assess State agency efforts to control fraud and abuse in such outlets. Minimum documentation for routine monitoring promotes effective monitoring by mandating a consistent level and quality

of State agency monitoring nationwide. Documentation of recipient and farmer complaints enables FNS and the State agency to identify problems at the local agency/market/roadside stand/CSA program level. The requirements for the State agency to document eligibility for all SFMNP recipients; identify the disposition of food coupons; request approval for specified costs; submit final closeout and recipient reports to FNS; and report the status of recipient claims ensure the accountability of Federal funds, and promote efficient program management. The requirement for State agency corrective action plans ensures that problem areas of program management are rectified. The requirements for oversight and monitoring farmers/farmers' markets/roadside stands/CSA programs assist in controlling fraud and abuse, and in protecting the integrity of the SFMNP.

FNS will use this information to assess how each State agency operates and to ensure the accountability of State agencies, local agencies, and authorized farmers/farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSA programs in administering the SFMNP. The information collected under this information collection is required to obtain or retain benefits. Refer to the narrative statement for additional details concerning the information requirements (Appendix 1).

FNS continually seeks feedback regarding the efficiency and format of the information requested using the FNS-683a form. Rules and guidance that have been published in subsequent years maintain the regulatory requirements for submitting and necessitating the receipt of this information.

Since the previous renewal of this information collection in May 2013, FNS-683a was one of the

forms that was submitted as part of a new collection for the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS), which was approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on June 9, 2014 under OMB Control # 0584-0594 (expiration date June 30, 2017). Since the reporting burden associated with FNS-683a is now approved under 0584-0594, it is being deleted from this collection to avoid duplicating burden. However, only the reporting burden is being removed; the recordkeeping burden associated with FNS-683a is still maintained in this information collection. Screenshots of FNS-683a and the FPRS home screen containing the OMB information are provided in Appendix 4.

### **A3. Use of information technology and burden reduction.**

**Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques 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.**

FNS makes every effort to comply with the E-Government Act, 2002 (E-GOV) to promote the use of the Internet and other information technologies to provide increased opportunities for citizen access to Government information and services, and for other purposes. Almost all State agencies prepare and transmit their State Plans using simplified electronic formats developed by FNS. Out of 804,777 responses submitted by state and local agencies, FNS estimates that approximately 6% (52 responses) are submitted electronically. Out of the entire collection, FNS estimates that the electronic submission of the State Plans is approximately 2% of the total responses. The SFMNP is an approximately 20 million dollar program with grants allocated across 52 State agencies in FY 2015, many of which did not operate statewide. Limited administrative funds and budget constraints are often the biggest proponent as to why local

agencies may be unable to collect information electronically. SFMNP grant funds are prioritized for basic and fundamental operations of the program.

**A4. Efforts to identify duplication.**

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

FNS makes every effort to identify duplication; however, because the SFMNP and FMNP are similar programs, FNS has consolidated many aspects of SFMNP and FMNP operations (e.g. State Plans, review tool instruments, and monitoring responsibilities, such as allowing one visit to authorize a farmers' market for both programs).

**A5. Impacts on small businesses or other small entities.**

**If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

Information on State agencies' use of Federal funds for SFMNP costs is program-specific. Similarly, program information about the SFMNP is also program-specific. Both types of information are generated only by the State agencies administering the SFMNP, and/or by their local agencies. Approximately ten State agencies may be considered small organizations which currently administer the SFMNP: eight Indian tribal governments, one U.S. Territory, and the District of Columbia. They are responsible for following the same regulatory requirements as all other State agencies, and their grants must be similarly closed out. Accordingly, FNS needs the same information from them as for large State agencies in order to complete the closeout process. FNS Regional Offices generally give such State agencies supplementary technical

assistance in completing program reports and assist them in processing their reports through the Food Program Reporting System (FPRS).

The Federal regulatory burden for small entities i.e., farmers, farmers' markets, roadside stands, and CSAs participating in the SFMNP is minimal. The State agency has the discretion to collect additional information for general SFMNP management.

Design and operation of food coupon payment systems is also a management function of the State agency. In order to make it easier for participating farmers and farmers' markets, most State agencies use a retail banking system already in place for the FMNP (or other State-administered program) to ensure prompt processing and payment of SFMNP coupons. State agencies continue to provide training programs to familiarize farmers/farmers' market managers/CSA operators with SFMNP rules, thus minimizing the time that must be spent transacting and processing each SFMNP coupon.

#### **A6. Consequences of collecting the information less frequently.**

**Describe the consequence 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.**

Grant closeout and recipient reporting occur annually. The information needed would not be meaningful if it were collected less frequently. If the information were collected less frequently, the effectiveness of the program would be jeopardized; program funds could be improperly used by State and local agencies; and the incidence of fraud and abuse could increase. This could result in fewer recipients being served with available SFMNP funds.

#### **A7. Special circumstances relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5.**

**Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

- **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. The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

#### **A8. Comments to the Federal Register Notice and efforts for consultation.**

**If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

**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 format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

**Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years even if the**

**collection of information activity is the same as in prior years. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

A 60-day notice was published in the Federal Register on March 1, 2016, 81 FR pages 10571 – 10573. The public comment period ended on May 2, 2016. One comment was received; the commenter did not respond directly to the notice with a specific comment. The commenter linked several social media ‘handles’ or screen names to various organizations and individuals. It appeared that the commenter was attempting to promote the notice to these entities. The comment was posted publicly via regulations.gov but did not warrant a response as the commenter did not ask a question or remark on the notice (Appendix 3).

FNS consulted with the National Association of Farmers’ Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP), which represents SFMNP State agencies, on such topics as reporting and the required collection of information. The NAFMNP’s views and suggestions were taken into consideration as the information collection requirements of the SFMNP were designed.

FNS consults regularly with members of the NAFMNP on all aspects of SFMNP operation and administration, including such topics as reporting, recordkeeping, and the required collection of information.

**A9. Explain any decisions to provide any payment or gift to respondents.**

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

No payment or gift is provided to respondents.

**A10. Assurances of confidentiality provided to respondents.**

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

The Department will comply with the Privacy Act of 1974. No confidential information is associated with this collection of information.

**A11. Justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.**

**Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly 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.**

Questions of a sensitive nature are limited to an applicant's annual earnings and household status. These questions are required to determine an applicant's eligibility for SFMNP certification. FNS complies with the Privacy Act of 1974.

**A12. Estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.**

**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.**

**A. 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.**

The burden narrative and table that accompany this justification explain the estimated burden associated with the individual reporting and recordkeeping requirements covered in this submission (Appendices 1 and 2). A summary of the burden appears below. Please refer to the

narrative that accompanies this justification for the aggregate burden hours.

	Estimated # Respondents	Responses Per Respondent	Total Annual Responses (Col. BxC)	Estimated Avg. # of Hours Per Response	Estimated Total Hours (Col. DxE)
<b>Total Reporting Burden</b>	804,714	1.999	1,608,399	0.140	<b>227,476</b>
<b>Total Recordkeeping Burden</b>	52	15,389.615	800,260	0.253	<b>202,444</b>
<b>TOTAL BURDEN FOR #0584-0541</b>	<b>804,714</b>	2.993	<b>2,408,659</b>	0.177	<b>427,280</b>

	Responses	Hours
<b>Currently approved burden</b>	<b>2,710,756</b>	<b>474,273</b>
<b>Burden Requested with this ICR</b>	<b>2,408,659</b>	<b>427,280</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>(302,097)</b>	<b>(46,993)</b>

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

Respondent Burden Hours and Costs

State and Local Agencies 413,630  
 (including Indian Tribal Organization and U.S. Territories)

413,630 x \$28.63 = \$11,842,226.9

\* Calculated based on a rate of \$28.63 per burden hour. This rate was obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Economic News Release—Economic News Release - State and local government, by major occupational and industry group \(released March 10, 2016\)](#)

Authorized Outlets 290

290 x \$23.06 = \$6,687.4

\*Calculated based on a rate of \$23.06 per burden hour. This rate was obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Employer Costs for Employee Compensation \(March 10, 2016\)](#)

Individuals/Households 13,360

13,360,000 x \$7.25 = \$96,860

\*Calculated based on a rate of \$7.25 per burden hour. This rate was obtained from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Characteristics of Minimum Wage](#)

Workers, 2015 (April 2016)

Total respondent burden hours:	427,280
Total respondent costs:	\$11,945,774.3

**A13. Estimates of other total annual cost burden.**

**Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in questions 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 are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

**A14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

**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.**

**(a) Federal cost of program maintenance (reporting and recordkeeping, monitoring, technical assistance, review and analysis):**

(1) FNS Headquarters Staff, GS 13 Step 11.5 full time equivalents (FTEs)@ \$73,846  
\$110,769

FNS Regional Staff, GS 12 Step 1 7 (FTEs)@ \$62,101	<u>\$434,707</u>
Sub-Total:	\$545,476

(2) Overhead costs, travel, office supplies, etc. 0

Mailing and phone 0

Sub-Total: 0

Federal Program Maintenance Costs: \$545,476

TOTAL FEDERAL COSTS: \$ 545,476

**\*Calculations based on the 2016 General Schedule (Base) and Annual Rate for Federal Employees**

**A15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments.**

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

This is a revision of a currently approved collection. This information collection is currently approved with 474,273 burden hours and 2,710,756 responses. Based on adjustments, FNS estimates that the burden for this information collection will decrease by 46,993 burden hours and 302,097 responses. The number of respondents decreased from 905,669 to 804,714, a difference of 100,955, which is due to a decrease in recipients. While the number of State agencies increased from 51 to 52, several SFMNP State agencies reported a decrease in the number of participants served and the number of authorized outlets/farmers. This decrease was due in part to fluctuations in participation over time. This estimate represents current participation trends. FNS-683a and its associated reporting burden is now approved under OMB Control #0584-0594 Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). Therefore, the reporting burden of 102 burden hours associated with this form is being removed from this collection. Based on these changes and those detailed in the narrative statement (Appendix 1), FNS estimates that this collection will now have 427,280 burden hours and 2,408,659 responses.

**A16. Plans for tabulation, and publication and project time schedule.**

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

There are no plans to publish the results of this information collection burden for statistical use.

The results will only be used to assess SFMNP compliance by each State agency.

**A17. Displaying the OMB Approval Expiration Date.**

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

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

**A18. Exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19.**

**Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I" Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.