

**August 2016**

**Supporting Statement  
Importation of Fresh Persimmon Fruit from  
New Zealand Into the United States  
APHIS-2015-0052  
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 (USDA), 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, 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 regulations concerning the importation of fruits and vegetables to allow the importation of fresh persimmons from New Zealand into the United States. As a condition of entry, the persimmons would have to be produced in accordance with a systems approach that would include a variety of requirements and safeguards, and treatment with either hot water or modified atmosphere treatment. The persimmons would also have to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate with an additional declaration stating that they were produced under, and meet all the components of, a systems approach and were inspected and found to be free of quarantine pests in accordance with the proposed requirements. This action would allow the importation of fresh persimmons from New Zealand while continuing to protect against the introduction of plant pests into the United States.

APHIS is asking 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.**

APHIS uses the following information activities to verify that fresh persimmons from New Zealand are grown in accordance with an operational workplan and monitored by the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) to verify consignments are declared free of pests.

**319.56.75(a) Operational Workplan (foreign government)** - The NPPO of New Zealand must provide an operational workplan to APHIS that details the activities that the NPPO of New Zealand will, subject to APHIS' approval of the workplan, carry out to meet all requirements. The operational workplan must include and describe the quarantine pest survey intervals and other specific requirements as set forth.

**319.56.75(c)(1) Production Site Registration (business and foreign government)** - All production sites that participate in the export program must be approved by and registered with the New Zealand NPPO.

**319.56.75 (c)(1) Container Markings (business)** - Containers would also have to be marked to identify the production site from which the consignment of fruit originated. Such registration and container markings would facilitate traceback of a consignment of persimmons to the production site in the event that quarantine pests were discovered in the consignment at the packinghouse, or at the first port of arrival into the United States.

**319.56.75 (c)(2) Inspections (foreign government and business)** - The NPPO of New Zealand must visit and inspect the production sites monthly beginning at blossom drop and continuing until the end of the shipping season for quarantine pests. Appropriate pest controls must be applied in accordance with the operational workplan.

**319.56.75 (c)(2) and (d)(4) Investigations and Remedial Action (foreign government and business)** - If the NPPO of New Zealand finds that a place of production or the packinghouse is not complying with the requirements of this section, no fruit from the place of production or the packinghouse will be eligible for export to the United States until APHIS and the NPPO of New Zealand conduct an investigation and appropriate remedial actions have been implemented.

**319.56.75 (d)(1) Packinghouse Registration (business and foreign government)** - All packinghouses that participate in the export program must be approved by, and registered with, the New Zealand NPPO.

**319.56.75 (d)(4) Monitoring (foreign government and business)** - The NPPO of New Zealand must monitor packinghouse operations to verify that the packinghouses are complying with the requirements of the systems approach.

**319.56.75(e) Sampling Inspection (foreign government and business)** - Inspectors from the NPPO of New Zealand must inspect a biometric sample of the fruit from each consignment at a

rate to be determined by APHIS. The inspectors must visually inspect for quarantine pests listed in the operational workplan and must cut fruit to inspect for quarantine pests that are internal feeders. If quarantine pests are detected in this inspection, the consignment will be prohibited entry into the United States.

**319.56.75(f) Treatment Records (business)** - Each consignment of persimmons must be subjected to a post-harvest treatment by either hot water treatment with the persimmons being held for 20 minutes in hot water at 50 °C (122 °F); or the modified atmosphere treatment where the persimmons are packed in semi-permeable polymeric bags and stored at 0 °C for a minimum of 28 days.

**319.56.75(g) Phytosanitary Certificates (business and foreign government)** - Each consignment of persimmons must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate of inspection issued by the New Zealand NPPO with an additional declaration stating that the fruit in the consignment were grown, packed, and inspected and found to be free of pests in accordance with the requirements of 7 CFR 319.56-75.

**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 their phytosanitary certificate. However, APHIS is involved with the Government-wide utilization of the International Trade Data System (ITDS) via the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) to improve business operations and further Agency missions. This will allow respondents to submit the data required by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and its Partner Government Agencies (PGAs), such as APHIS to import and export cargo through a Single Window concept. APHIS is also establishing a system known as e-File for CARPOL (Certification, Accreditation, Registration, Permitting, and Other Licensing) activities. This new system will strive to automate some of these information collection activities. The system is still being developed and business processes continue to be identified and mapped.

**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.**

APHIS estimates that 50 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.**

APHIS is the only Federal agency responsible for preventing the incursion or interstate spread of plant pests, diseases, and noxious weeds. Failing to collect this information would cripple APHIS' ability to ensure that persimmons from New Zealand are not carrying plant pests, diseases or noxious weeds. If plant pests or noxious weeds were introduced into the United States, growers would suffer hundreds of millions of dollars in losses.

The information APHIS is collecting is its only source for the information and is not being collected through other forms or reports.

**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, governmental 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.

No special circumstances exist that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

**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.**

APHIS held productive consultations with the following individuals concerning the information collection activities associated with this program:

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APHIS' proposed rule (Docket No. APHIS-2015-0052) 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.**

APHIS implements the Confidential Business Information (CBI) policy and procedures to ensure claims are reviewed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), exemption 4 (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4)). CBI is protected from mandatory public disclosure under this Act. Any

and all information obtained in this collection shall not be disclosed except in accordance with 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 foreign businesses and the NPPO of New Zealand. The estimated annualized cost to respondents is \$9,295.38.

APHIS arrived at this figure by multiplying the total hours by the estimated average hourly wage of the above respondents. This hourly wage was provided by the International Services attaché in New Zealand. 339 hours X \$27.42 estimated hourly wage = \$9,295.38.

**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 \$ 6,032. (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 program.

**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 included in 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