

demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices.” AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities and makes copies of official standards available upon request. Some of these United States Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations but are maintained by USDA/AMS/Fruit and Vegetable Programs. AMS is requesting comments on revising the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Blueberries using the procedures that appear in Part 36 of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR Part 36).

Background

AMS received a petition from the North American Blueberry Council, an association of blueberry producers, requesting the revision of the United States Standards for Grades of Frozen Blueberries. These standards are issued under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627).

The petitioners are requesting the USDA to revise the terminology employed in connection with the product description of frozen blueberries. The current grade standards, effective since May 22, 1957, state that frozen blueberries are prepared from sound, properly ripened fresh fruit of the blueberry bush (*Genus Vaccinium*), including species or varieties often called huckleberries, but not of the *Genus Gaylussacia*. To more narrowly define the term blueberry, the petitioners are requesting that the new proposed standard employ the following terms:

“Frozen blueberries are prepared from the sound, properly ripened fresh fruit of the species *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *V. virgatum* (syn. *V. ashei*), *V. angustifolium*, and *V. myrtilloides* (some common names: highbush, cultivated, wild, lowbush, southern highbush, rabbiteye), including species and cultivars often called huckleberries, but not of the genus *Gaylussacia*.” A copy of the petitioners’ request is located at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Prior to undertaking research and other work associated with revising the grade standards, AMS is soliciting comments on the petition requesting the revision of the U.S. Standards for Grades of Frozen Blueberries. In particular, AMS would welcome comments and information regarding the likely utility of revised terminology to include *Vaccinium corymbosum*, *V. virgatum* (syn. *V. ashei*), *V. angustifolium*, and *V. myrtilloides*. Some common names: Highbush,

cultivated, wild, lowbush, southern highbush, and rabbiteye, and the probable impact on processors and growers. This notice provides for a 60-day comment period for interested parties to comment on the petition to develop a proposed revision of the standard. Should AMS conclude that there is a need for changes to the standard, detailed work would be undertaken as soon as possible and the eventual proposed grade standards would be published in the **Federal Register** with a request for comments in accordance with 7 CFR Part 36.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1621–1627.

Dated: December 16, 2008.

James E. Link,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

[Docket #AMS–FV–08–0078]

United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice; request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), prior to undertaking research and other work associated with revising official grade standards, is soliciting comments on the possible revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots. AMS has been reviewing the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grade standards for usefulness in fostering commerce. As a result, AMS has identified the United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots for possible revisions. AMS is proposing to revise the color requirement to allow topped carrots of any color characteristic of the variety to be graded using the standards. In addition, the similar varietal characteristic requirement would be amended to allow mixed colors and/or types of carrots when designated as a mixed or specialty pack. Also, AMS is considering removing the “Unclassified” category from the standards. AMS is seeking comments regarding these changes as well as any other possible revisions that may be necessary to better serve the industry.

DATES: Comments must be received by February 20, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on the Internet at: <http://www.regulations.gov> or to the Standardization and Training Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Training and Development Center, Riverside Business Park, 100 Riverside Parkway, Suite 101, Fredericksburg, VA 22406; Fax (540) 361–1184. Comments should make reference to the dates and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register** and will be made available for public inspection in the above office during regular business hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Carl Newell, Standardization and Training Section, Fresh Products Branch, (540) 361–1120. The United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots are available by accessing the Fresh Products Branch Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/freshinspection>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 203(c) of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621–1627), as amended, directs and authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture “to develop and improve standards of quality, condition, quantity, grade and packaging and recommend and demonstrate such standards in order to encourage uniformity and consistency in commercial practices.” AMS is committed to carrying out this authority in a manner that facilitates the marketing of agricultural commodities. AMS makes copies of official standards available upon request. The United States Standards for Grades of Fruits and Vegetables not connected with Federal Marketing Orders or U.S. Import Requirements no longer appear in the Code of Federal Regulations, but are maintained by USDA, AMS, Fruit and Vegetable Programs.

AMS is considering revisions to the voluntary United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots using procedures that appear in Part 36, Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (7 CFR part 36). These standards were last revised on December 20, 1965.

Background

AMS has been reviewing the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grade standards for usefulness in serving the industry. AMS has identified the United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots for possible revision. Prior to undertaking detailed work developing the proposed revisions in the standards, AMS is soliciting comments on the

proposed revision and any other comments regarding revisions to the United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots to better serve the industry.

The current standard only applies to topped carrots of orange, orange red or orange scarlet color. AMS would revise the color requirement to allow topped carrots of any color characteristic of the variety to be graded using the standard. In addition, AMS would amend the similar varietal characteristic requirement to allow mixed colors and/or types of carrots when designated as a mixed or specialty pack.

AMS would also eliminate the "Unclassified" category. AMS is removing this section in all standards as they are revised. This category is not a grade and only serves to show that no grade has been applied to the lot. It is no longer considered necessary due to current marketing practices.

This notice provides for a 60-day comment period for interested parties to comment on the revision to the United States Standards for Grades of Topped Carrots. Should AMS proceed with the revisions, it will develop the proposed revised standards that will be published in the **Federal Register** with a request for comments in accordance with 7 CFR part 36.

Dated: December 16, 2008.

James E. Link,

Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection

Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request—School Food Purchase Study—III

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on the proposed collection of data for the School Food Purchase Study-III. This is a request for reinstatement with changes of a previously approved OMB package (OMB #0584-0471, expiration date 6/30/98). It is the third in a series of studies designed to provide statistically valid national estimates of the types, amounts, and costs of food acquisitions (both purchased foods and USDA

donated commodities) made by public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (OMB #0584-006, expiration date 3/31/2009). This proposed collection is in response to a Congressional mandate in the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before February 20, 2009.

ADDRESSES: Comments are invited on (a) Whether the proposed data collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments may be sent to: Steven Carlson, Director, Office of Research and Analysis, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302. Comments may also be submitted via fax to the attention of Steven Carlson at 703-305-2576 or via e-mail to Steve.Carlson@fns.usda.gov.

Comments will also be accepted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.

All written comments will be open for public inspection at the office of the Food and Nutrition Service during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday) at Room 1014, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will also be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection forms and instructions should be directed to Steven Carlson on 703-305-2017.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: The School Food Purchase Study—III.

OMB Number: OMB #0584-0471.

Expiration Date: 6/30/98.

Type of Request: Reinstatement with changes of a previously approved OMB package.

Abstract: In response to the Congressional mandate in Section 4307 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Pub. L. 110-246, (Farm Bill), this study will provide statistically valid national estimates of the types, amounts, and costs of food acquired by local public school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (OMB # 0584-0012, expiration date 3/31/2009). The study is restricted to public school districts to allow for direct comparisons of results to the previous school food purchase study (School Year 1996-97). For example, the study will examine the changes in the mix of foods acquired by public schools since the School Year 1996-97. In addition, the study will furnish the opportunity for schools to describe their food purchase practices so that information associated with food buying efficiency can be provided to other schools.

A nationally representative sample of approximately 400 School Food Authorities (SFAs) will be scientifically selected and divided into four subsamples of about 100 SFAs each. Each subgroup of 100 SFAs will provide source documents (vendor summaries, invoices, etc.) containing complete food purchase information for all food acquisitions made during a three-month period representing a specific quarter of the school year. The quarterly sample design insures that data is collected across the entire school year and restricts the burden on any one school district to only three months of data collection. SFA food service directors will be asked to describe school food purchase practices and school food service operations. This allows for the examination of relationships between food purchasing practices and costs of foods to schools.

This study will be augmented by the collection of food purchase data and food purchase practice information from a purposive sample of approximately 18 SFAs in areas outside the contiguous United States (Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico) to examine food costs and procurement procedures in these areas compared to those found in the contiguous United States.

Affected Public: School Food Authorities.

Estimated Number of Respondents: Approximately 418 SFA directors, 400 SFA directors within the contiguous United States and 18 SFA directors from areas outside the contiguous United States.