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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2014-0056]

Availability of an Environmental Assessment for the Field Release of Genetically Engineered Diamondback Moths

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is making available for public comment an environmental assessment prepared in connection with a permit application for the field release of diamondback moths that have been genetically engineered for repressible female lethality and to express red fluorescence as a marker. The purpose of the proposed field release is to assess the feasibility and efficacy of these moths in reducing populations of diamondback moths that are known plant pests and a serious threat to agriculture.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before May 19, 2017.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/>

Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2014-0056, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/> [#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2014-0056](http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2014-0056) or in our reading room, which is located in

room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Chessa Huff-Woodard, Esq., Policy, Program and International Collaboration Chief, Biotechnology Regulatory Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737-1236; (301) 851-3943, email: chessa.d.huff-woodard@aphis.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 7 CFR part 340, "Introduction of Organisms and Products Altered or Produced Through Genetic Engineering Which Are Plant Pests or Which There Is Reason to Believe Are Plant Pests," regulate, among other things, the introduction (importation, interstate movement, or release into the environment) of organisms and products altered or produced through genetic engineering that are plant pests or that there is reason to believe are plant pests. Such genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products are considered "regulated articles." A permit must be obtained or a notification acknowledged before a regulated article may be released into the environment. The regulations set forth the permit application requirements and the notification procedures for the importation, interstate movement, or release into the environment of a regulated article.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has previously issued Cornell University a permit (APHIS Permit Number 12-227-102m) authorizing the importation of GE diamondback moths (DBM, *Plutella xylostella*) strains OX4319L-Pxy, OX4319N-Pxy, and OX4767A-Pxy from the United Kingdom to the university's New York State Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES) in Geneva, NY. The GE DBM were genetically engineered to exhibit red fluorescence (DsRed2) as a marker and repressible female lethality, also known as female autocide. The GE DBMs are considered a regulated article under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because the recipient organism is a plant pest.

On October 24, 2013, APHIS received a permit application from Cornell

University (APHIS Permit Number 13-297-102r) seeking the permitted field release of the three imported strains of GE DBM. Permits were issued and caged releases occurred in 2015. However, all permits relative to the October 2013 application have since been withdrawn.

On March 16, 2016, APHIS received a permit application from Cornell University (APHIS Permit Number 16-076-101r) seeking the permitted field release of a single strain of GE DBM, designated as OX4319L-Pxy, in both open and caged releases.

The purpose of the requested field release is to assess the feasibility and efficacy of GE DBM strain OX4319L-Pxy in reducing pest populations of DBM. According to the applicant, these GE DBM may serve as an insecticide-free means of controlling field populations of DBM in a species-specific manner.

The proposed release would be at the NYSAES and would not exceed 2 years in length. The release would be limited to an experimental field, up to 10 acres in size, within which there would be a single point at which the open air release would occur. The release site is surrounded by other agricultural fields within NYSAES' 870 total acres where DBMs occur naturally. The applicant would release up to 10,000 male GE DBMs per release (up to 30,000 males per week). Post-experiment monitoring of DBM with traps would continue until no GE DBMs are captured for 2 consecutive months.

To provide the public with documentation of APHIS' review and analysis of any potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed release of the GE DBM, an environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared. The EA was prepared in accordance with: (1) The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), (2) regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500-1508), (3) USDA regulations implementing NEPA (7 CFR part 1b), and (4) APHIS' NEPA Implementing Procedures (7 CFR part 372). APHIS will accept written comments on our EA regarding the proposed release of the GE DBM from interested or affected persons for a period of 30 days from the date of this notice. Copies of the EA are available as indicated in the **ADDRESSES** and **FOR**

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT sections of this notice.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 7701–7772 and 7781–7786; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.3.

Done in Washington, DC, this 12th day of April 2017.

Michael C. Gregoire,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2017–07840 Filed 4–18–17; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food Safety and Inspection Service

[Docket No. FSIS–2017–0014]

Notice of Request for Renewal of an Approved Information Collection (Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection)

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is announcing its intention to request a renewal of the approved information collection regarding poultry slaughter inspection. The approval for this information collection will expire on September 30, 2017. There are no changes to the existing information collection.

DATES: Submit comments on or before June 19, 2017.

ADDRESSES: FSIS invites interested persons to submit comments on this information collection. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* This Web site provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this Web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.

- *Mail, including CD-ROMs, etc.:* Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Docket Clerk, Patriots Plaza 3, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Mailstop 3782, Room 8–163A, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

- *Hand- or courier-delivered submittals:* Deliver to Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 8–163A, Washington, DC 20250–3700.

Instructions: All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the

Agency name and docket number FSIS–2016–0028. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Docket: For access to background documents or comments received, go to the FSIS Docket Room at Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E Street SW., Room 8–164, Washington, DC 20250–3700 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gina Kouba, Office of Policy and Program Development, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Room 6065, South Building, Washington, DC 20250; (202) 720–5627.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection.

OMB Number: 0583–0156.

Expiration Date of Approval: 9/30/2017.

Type of Request: Renewal of an approved information collection.

Abstract: FSIS has been delegated the authority to exercise the functions of the Secretary as specified in the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA) (21 U.S.C. 451, *et seq.*). This statute provides that FSIS is to protect the public by verifying that poultry products are safe, wholesome, not adulterated, and properly labeled and packaged.

FSIS is requesting a renewal of the approved information collection regarding poultry slaughter inspection. The approval for this information collection will expire on September 30, 2017. There are no changes to the existing information collection.

FSIS requires that all official poultry slaughter establishments, other than establishments that slaughter ratites, maintain as part of their HACCP plan, sanitation SOP, or other prerequisite program, written procedures addressing (1) the prevention throughout the entire slaughter and dressing operation, of contamination of carcasses and parts by enteric pathogens (*e.g.*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*) and by fecal material, including microbial test results, and (2) the prevention of carcasses and parts contaminated by visible fecal material from entering the chiller. This information was previously collected under the FSIS information collection for Sanitation SOPs and Pathogen Reduction/HACCP (0583–0103). Each establishment operating under the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS) is required to collect and maintain

additional information concerning poultry slaughter:

- As part of the HACCP system, written procedures to prevent carcasses afflicted with septicemia and toxemia from entering the chiller; and
- records that document that the products resulting from slaughter operations meet the definition of ready-to-cook poultry.

Additionally, each establishment operating under the NPIS also needs to submit on an annual basis an attestation to the management member of the local FSIS circuit safety committee stating that it maintains a program to monitor and document any work-related conditions of establishment workers.

FSIS has made the following estimates based upon an information collection assessment:

Estimate of Burden: FSIS estimates that it will take respondents an average of .125 hours to record results and maintain necessary documentation.

Respondents: Official poultry establishments.

Estimated No. of Respondents: 289.

Estimated No. of Annual Responses per Respondent: 5,291.3.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 19,204 hours.

Copies of this information collection assessment can be obtained from Gina Kouba, Office of Policy and Program Development, Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA, 1400 Independence SW., 6065, South Building, Washington, DC 20250; (202)720–5627.

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of FSIS's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of FSIS's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions 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, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques, or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to both FSIS, at the addresses provided above, and the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20253.

Responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will also become a matter of public record.