attending veterinarian. Proposed § 3.111(f)(6) would require that injuries sustained by dolphins or participants be reported to APHIS within 24 hours, with a written report required within 7 days.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. We need this outside input to help us:

(1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic, mechanical, and other collection technologies, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average .17666 hours per response.

Respondents: USDA licensed/registered marine mammal facility representatives.

Estimated number of respondents: 810.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 48.94.

Estimated annual number of responses: 39,641.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 7,003 hours. (Due to rounding, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the average reporting burden per response.)

All 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.

Done in Washington, DC, this 2nd day of February 1998.

Craig A. Reed,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 98–3046 Filed 2–5–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 97–129–1]

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension of approval of an information collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's intention to request an extension of approval of an information collection in support of the Environmental Monitoring Form.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by April 7, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Send comments regarding the accuracy of burden estimate, ways to minimize the burden (such as through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology), or any other aspect of this collection of information to: Docket No. 97–129–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, suite 3C03, 4700 River Road, Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please send an original and three copies, and state that your comments refer to Docket 97–129–1. Comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to inspect comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690–2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: For information regarding the Environmental Monitoring Form, contact Mr. Ron Berger, Acting Deputy Director of Technical and Scientific Services, Biotechnology and Scientific Services, PPQ, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 150, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236, (301) 734–5105. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Ms. Celeste Sickles, Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 734–7477.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Environmental Monitoring Form.

OMB Number: 0579–0117.

Expiration Date of Approval: July 31, 1998.

Type of Request: Extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provides leadership in ensuring the health and welfare of animals and plants. The Agency attempts to carry out this mission in a manner that promotes and protects the environment.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321) and the regulations that implement this act (contained in 40 CFR 1500–1508), APHIS engages in environmental monitoring for certain activities that we conduct to control or eradicate certain pests and diseases. Activities with the greatest potential for harm to the human environment and for which mitigation measures have been developed are monitored to ensure that the mitigation measures are enforced and effective. In many cases monitoring is required where APHIS programs are conducted close to habitats of endangered and threatened species. This monitoring is developed in coordination with the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, in compliance with the Endangered Species Act, 50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12.

APHIS Form 2060, Environmental Monitoring Form, is used by APHIS field personnel and State cooperators jointly, to collect information concerning the effects of pesticide use in the sensitive habitats. The goal of environmental monitoring is to track the potential impact that APHIS activities may have on the environment, and to use this knowledge in making any necessary adjustments in future program actions.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve the continued use of this information collection activity.

The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public (as well as affected agencies) concerning our information collection. We need this outside input to help us:

(1) Evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility;

(2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used;

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) Minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through use, as appropriate, of automated, electronic,

mechanical, and other collection technologies, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Estimate of burden: The public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 0.5 hours per response.

Respondents: Growers/appliers of pesticides, State Department of Agriculture personnel.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 15.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 20.

Estimated annual number of responses: 300.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 150 hours. (Due to rounding, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the average reporting burden per response.)

All 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.

Done in Washington, DC, this 2nd day of February 1998.

Craig A. Reed,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 98–3047 Filed 2–5–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. 97–130–1]

AgrEvo USA Co.; Receipt of Petition for Determination of Nonregulated Status for Sugar Beet Genetically Engineered for Glufosinate Herbicide Tolerance

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has received a petition from AgrEvo USA Company seeking a determination of nonregulated status for sugar beet designated as Transformation Event T120–7, which has been genetically engineered for tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate. The petition has been submitted in accordance with our regulations concerning the introduction of certain genetically engineered organisms and products. In accordance with those regulations, we are soliciting public comments on whether this sugar beet presents a plant pest risk.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before April 7, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Please send an original and three copies of your comments to Docket No. 97–130–1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Suite 3C03, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737–1238. Please state that your comments refer to Docket No. 97–130–1. A copy of the petition and any comments received may be inspected at USDA, room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing access to that room to inspect the petition or comments are asked to call in advance of visiting at (202) 690–2817 to facilitate entry into the reading room.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Ved Malik, Biotechnology and Biological Analysis, PPQ, APHIS, Suite 5B05, 4700 River Road Unit 147, Riverdale, MD 20737–1236; (301) 734–7612. To obtain a copy of the petition, contact Ms. Kay Peterson at (301) 734–4885; e-mail: mkpeterson@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 organisms and products are considered ''regulated articles.''

The regulations in § 340.6(a) provide that any person may submit a petition to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) seeking a determination that an article should not be regulated under 7 CFR part 340. Paragraphs (b) and (c) of § 340.6 describe the form that a petition for determination of nonregulated status must take and the information that must be included in the petition.

On December 2, 1997, APHIS received a petition (APHIS Petition No. 97–336–01p) from AgrEvo USA Company (AgrEvo) of Wilmington, DE, requesting a determination of nonregulated status under 7 CFR part 340 for sugar beet (*Beta vulgaris* L.) designated as Transformation Event T120–7 (event T120–7), which has been genetically engineered for tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate. The AgrEvo petition states that the subject sugar beet should not be regulated by APHIS because it does not present a plant pest risk.

As described in the petition, event T120–7 sugar beet has been genetically engineered to contain a synthetic version of the *pat* gene derived from *Streptomyces viridochromogenes.* The *pat* gene encodes the enzyme phosphinothricin acetyltransferase (PAT), which confers tolerance to the herbicide glufosinate. Expression of the *pat* gene is controlled by 35S promoter and terminator sequences derived from the plant pathogen cauliflower mosaic virus. Event T120–7 sugar beet also contains the *aph(3')II* or *nptII* marker gene used in plant transformation. Expression of the *nptII* gene is controlled by gene sequences derived from the plant pathogen *Agrobacterium tumefaciens,* and analysis indicates that the NPTII protein is expressed in certain parts of the subject plants. The *A. tumefaciens* method was used to transfer the added genes into the parental sugar beet line.

Event T120–7 sugar beet has been considered a regulated article under the regulations in 7 CFR part 340 because it contains gene sequences from plant pathogens. The subject sugar beet has been field tested in the U.S. since 1994 under APHIS permits. In the process of reviewing the permit applications for field trials of this sugar beet, APHIS determined that the vectors and other elements were disarmed and that the trials, which were conducted under conditions of reproductive and physical containment or isolation, would not present a risk of plant pest introduction or dissemination.

In the Federal Plant Pest Act, as amended (7 U.S.C. 150aa *et seq.*), ''plant pest'' is defined as ''any living stage of: Any insects, mites, nematodes, slugs, snails, protozoa, or other invertebrate animals, bacteria, fungi, other parasitic plants or reproductive parts thereof, viruses, or any organisms similar to or allied with any of the foregoing, or any infectious substances, which can directly or indirectly injure or cause disease or damage in any plants or parts thereof, or any processed, manufactured or other products of plants.'' APHIS views this definition very broadly. The definition covers direct or indirect injury, disease, or damage not just to agricultural crops, but also to plants in general, for example, native species, as well as to organisms that may be beneficial to plants, for example, honeybees, rhizobia, etc.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for the regulation of pesticides under the