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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 1220

[No. LS-99-12]

Notice of Opportunity to Request a Soybean Referendum

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of opportunity to request referendum.

SUMMARY: The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is announcing that soybean producers may request a referendum to determine if producers want a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order (Order) as authorized under the Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act (Act).

If at least 10 percent (not in excess of one-fifth of which may be producers in any one State) of the 600,813 eligible producers as determined by the Department of Agriculture (Department) nationwide participate in the Request for Referendum, a referendum will be held within 1 year from that determination. If results of the Request for Referendum indicate that a referendum is not supported, a referendum would not be conducted.

DATES: Soybean producers may request a referendum during a 4-week period beginning on October 20, 1999, and ending on November 16, 1999. Producers who certify that they were engaged in the production of soybeans anytime between January 1, 1997, and November 16, 1999, and who own or share the ownership and risk of loss of those soybeans are eligible to participate in the Request for Referendum.

Forms may be obtained by mail, fax, or in person from the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices from October 20, 1999, through November 16,

1999. Completed forms must be returned to FSA offices by fax or in person no later than November 16, 1999, or if returned by mail must be post marked by November 16, 1999.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ralph L. Tapp, Chief; Marketing Programs Branch, Room 2627-S; Livestock and Seed Program, AMS, USDA; STOP 0251; 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, DC 20250-0251. Telephone number 202/720-1115.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In accordance with the Act (7 U.S.C. 6301 *et. seq.*), this Notice announces the dates when the Request for Referendum will be conducted and the place where soybean producers may request a referendum on the Order. The Order appears in the Code of Federal Regulations at 7 CFR Part 1220. The Act provides that the Secretary, 5 years after the conduct of the initial referendum, shall give soybean producers the opportunity to request an additional referendum on the Order. Individual producers and other producer entities will be provided the opportunity to request a referendum, at the county FSA office where FSA maintains and processes the producer's administrative farm records. For the producer not participating in FSA programs, the opportunity to request a referendum will be provided at the county FSA office serving the county where the producer owns or rents land. Participation in the Request for Referendum is not mandatory.

On August 20, 1999, the Department published in the **Federal Register** (64 FR 45413) a final rule that sets forth procedures the Department will use in conducting the Request for Referendum. The final rule includes definitions, provisions for supervising the process for requesting a referendum, eligibility, certification procedures for requesting the required forms, where the Request for Referendum will be conducted, counting forms, reporting results, and disposition of the forms and records. Since the Request for Referendum will be conducted at the county FSA offices, FSA employees will assist AMS by determining eligibility, counting ballots, and reporting results.

Pursuant to the Act the Department is conducting the required Request for Referendum from October 20, 1999, through November 16, 1999.

Producers who certify that they were engaged in the production of soybeans anytime between January 1, 1997, and November 16, 1999, and who own or share the ownership and risk of loss of those soybeans are eligible to participate in the Request for Referendum. Only those producers who are in favor of a referendum on the Order would participate.

Forms may be requested in person, by mail, or by facsimile from October 20, 1999, through November 16, 1999. Individual producers and other producer entities would request a referendum at the county FSA office where FSA maintains and processes the producer's administrative farm records. For the producer not participating in FSA programs, the opportunity to request a referendum would be provided at the county FSA office serving the county where the producer owns or rents land. Completed forms must be postmarked, faxed, or returned in person no later than November 16, 1999.

The purpose of the Request for Referendum is to determine whether eligible producers favor the conduct of a referendum on the Order.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 [44 U.S.C. 3501 *et. seq.*], the information collection requirements made in connection with the Request for Referendum have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and assigned OMB control number 0581-0093.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 6301-6311.

Dated: September 8, 1999.

Barry L. Carpenter,
Deputy Administrator, Livestock and Seed Program.

[FR Doc. 99-23727 Filed 9-8-99; 4:04 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 923

[Docket No. FV99-923-1 FIR]

Sweet Cherries Grown in Designated Counties in Washington; Change in Pack Requirements

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.