Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0512, Washington, DC 20250–0512; Telephone (202) 720–7935; Electronic mail: *chris—kyer@wdc.usda.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Representations for Commodity Credit Corporation or Farm Service Agency Loans and Authorization to File a Financing Statement and Related Documents.

OMB Control Number: 0560–0215.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 2002.

Type of Request: Extension of a Currently Approved Information Collection.

Abstract: CCC–10 is necessary to: (a) gather or verify basic data regarding the CCC or FSA loan applicant required on a financing statement that is filed to perfect a security interest in collateral used to secure a loan; and (b) obtain their permission to file a financing statement prior to the execution of a security agreement.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response.

Respondents: Individual farmers, farm or other business entities.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 207,500.

Estimated Number of Responses Per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden On Respondents: 120,350 hours.

Comments are invited on the following: (a) Whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; or (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. These comments should be sent to the Desk Officer for Agriculture, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503 and to Chris Kyer, Program Specialist, USDA, Farm Service Agency, Price Support Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., STOP 0512, Washington, DC 20250–0512.

Comments will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval of the information collection. All comments will also become a matter of public record.

Signed in Washington, DC, on March 8, 2002.

James R. Little,

Executive Vice President, CCC and Administrator, Farm Service Agency.

[FR Doc. 02–7630 Filed 3–28–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–05–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Economic Research Service

Notice of Intent To Seek Approval To Collect Information

AGENCY: Economic Research Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104–13) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations at 5 CFR part 1320 (60 FR 44978, August 29, 1995), this notice announces the Economic Research Service's (ERS) intention to request approval for a new information collection from the U.S. population. The study will collect data from two panels of consumers on their willingness to pay for reductions in the risk of foodborne illness using alternative risk reduction technologies.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by June 3, 2002, to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: Address all comments concerning this notice to Katherine Ralston, Diet, Safety, and Health Economics Branch, Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1800 M St. NW., Washington, DC 20036–5831. Submit electronic comments to *kralston@ers.usda.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Katherine Ralston, 202–694–5463.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Estimating Consumer Benefits of Improving Food Safety.

OMB Number: Not yet assigned.

Expiration Date: N/A.

Type of Request: Approval for the collection of survey data from two panels of food product consumers.

Abstract: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has responsibility to ensure that meat and poultry products are safe for human consumption. The Economic Research Service (ERS), as the lead economic research arm of the Department, has responsibility to conduct economic research on the social benefits of policies and programs designed to reduce and prevent illnesses caused by microbial pathogens.

ERS has estimated the costs of medical treatment and lost productivity, and premature death from diseases caused by five microbial pathogens at $6.9 billion annually. These costs almost certainly understate the true social costs of these illnesses since they do not measure the consumer's willingness to pay to prevent foodborne disease. Research is needed to (1) determine the extent to which a willingness to pay approach would boost assessments of the economic value of reductions in foodborne illnesses, and (2) to identify factors that influence consumers' valuation of these reductions, including personal and household characteristics, and information the consumer receives about foodborne illness.

To date, most food-related risk valuation studies indicated that consumers would pay modest amounts in excess of the products' purchase price to decrease low-level food risks. These food safety studies observed that, contrary to theoretical expectation, the average value of risk reduction did not vary with the magnitude of risk reduction, regardless of elicitation method and type of risk. Several reasons could have caused this phenomenon. People have difficulties handling risk decisions, and some do not or cannot tell one magnitude of risk reduction from another. People also may hold a subjective threshold level of the baseline risk below which the different magnitudes of risk reduction are irrelevant. People also tend to focus their generic concern for safer food on safety levels rather than differences in the level of risk, and therefore any improvement toward complete safety is acceptable and the level of improvement does not matter. Some subjects place more weight on their risk perception than on the risk information provided during the experiment, and others simply do not pay close attention to the evaluation task when asked to reveal their willingness to pay for risk reduction.

There are two reasons why the current studies offer limited information. First, the range of alternative risk reduction strategies has been rather restrictive, limited either to a private action or a collective investment, not both. Second, with the exception of Fox et al. (JA Fox, JF Shogren, DJ Hayes, JB Kliebenstein 1998. ''CVM–X: Calibrating Contingent Values with Experimental Auction Markets,'' *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 80(3):455–465) there has not been a direct comparison

of the elicitation methods for food safety values. Fox et al. explored hypothetical-survey and actual-experimental-auction preferences for irradiated pork. Incorporating a broader set of risk reduction strategies and a direct comparison of elicitation devices will provide more understanding about the nature of expressed values, and will strengthen the validity and usefulness of evaluation results. In addition to providing refinements in valuation techniques so that empirical results are consistent with economic theory, better understanding of what the expressed values mean is an important step toward incorporating subjective value measures into policy decisions.

This pilot study will estimate consumers' willingness to pay to reduce the risk of foodborne illness using two different methods, namely contingent valuation methods and recently developed market-based methods. Two surveys will be administered to panels of consumers through the Internet. One survey (Part A) is a contingent valuation survey focusing on responses to different information about foodborne illness risk levels, severity, duration, and mortality rates. The second survey (Part B) uses a market-based method, measuring how consumers change food intake in response to risk information. The changes in consumption patterns and food expenditures of consumers receiving risk information will be used to derive the willingness to pay for reductions in foodborne illness risk.

The contingent valuation survey will be administered to a panel of food product consumers who have already been recruited to participate in multiple surveys by a private computer research firm. The survey for Part B will be administered similarly, but the computer research firm administering the survey is developing panels and will advertise over the Internet for additional participants. The panel members recruited to complete the Part A survey will receive free Internet service and monetary compensation for their efforts. The panel members recruited to complete the Part B survey will receive monetary compensation.

Administering the surveys through the Internet will reduce the burden on respondents because the survey questions can be answered more quickly by computer than over the phone or in person, and because respondents can complete the surveys at a time convenient to them. For Part A, household and personal characteristics of the participants are already available and will not have to be obtained from the survey. For Part B, the panels will be chosen to match the U.S. Census totals for cells stratified by age, gender, ethnicity, region, education, and income.

Part A: The contingent valuation survey will present a panel of consumers with information about the risk of foodborne illness associated with chicken, ground beef, and lettuce. Respondents will be asked how much they would be willing to pay for a food guaranteed to have a lower risk of contamination, where the reduction in risk is specified numerically and graphically. The panel will also receive information about the potential severity and duration of an illness if it were to occur. The results will provide estimates of the value of reductions in selected foodborne risks, spanning a range of symptom severity (including mortality) and symptom duration.

Part B: The general survey design will consist of three sections. Section 1 will elicit a person's knowledge of food safety, risk perceptions of the food-borne pathogens, awareness of alternative risk reduction technologies (*e.g.*, HACCP, irradiation, safe food handling labels, home preparation practices), and socio-demographics. The survey will ask subjects to reveal their ordinal preferences for food safety and risk reduction technologies. Section 2 will ask consumers to report all foods eaten in the past 24 hours. Section 3 will provide the individual with a scientifically neutral description of the food-borne pathogens and the alternative risk reduction technologies. Then the individual will be asked to reveal his or her updated risk perceptions and his or her ordinal preferences for the alternative risk reduction technologies. Respondents will complete sections 2 and 3 once a week over a period of four weeks. During each round, they will be presented with information about the risks of infection from a different pathogen from a different food, which may then influence changes in food intake during the following round. The observed changes will be used to derive the ex ante willingness to pay for food safety improvements.

The results of both surveys will provide information on the sensitivity of willingness to pay to alternative information about risk levels, severity of illness, and duration as well as alternative risk reduction technologies. Those estimates can be used in comparing the benefits and costs of specific policies and regulations to improve food safety. In addition, the study will provide improved methods for estimating values of reductions in risk, which can be used to estimate the values of other reductions in risk.

Estimate of Burden: The reporting burden on each respondent completing the Part A survey is estimated to be 30 minutes, based on a trial administered to several test subjects. The burden to each respondent completing Part B is estimated to be 30 minutes per week for four weeks, or 2 hours total per respondent.

Respondents: The panel completing Part A is composed of consumers who have already been recruited by a private market research firm to participate in several surveys through the Internet. Household members primarily responsible for food shopping and preparation compose the panel for Part B.

Estimated Number of Respondents: The study design for Part A calls for each respondent to be presented with information about each food, including one of two possible risk of illness levels, and one of three possible levels of illness duration, severity, and mortality risk. A total of 800 respondents are needed for each level; the total number of respondents is then 800 times the largest number of levels for any variable, namely three. Thus, the total number of respondents needed is 2400.

The sample size for Part B is 500. The ability to investigate the heterogeneity of consumer risk preferences is greatly enhanced the more the sampling is repeated (repeating parts 2 and 3 with additional information about pathogens and risk reduction technologies), thus reducing pooling made necessary by the sample size. Initial exploration of the survey design suggested that four was about as many repeat samplings that most potential respondents would view as reasonable.

Estimated Total Burden on Respondents: 2200 hours [Part A—1200 hours (30 minutes per survey × 2400 respondents) plus Part B—1000 hours (500 respondents × 2 hours burden per respondent).

Comments: Comments are invited on (a) 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; (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 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 technology. Comments should be sent to the address

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

Dated: March 4, 2002.

Susan Offutt,

Administrator, Economic Research Service.

[FR Doc. 02–7631 Filed 3–28–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–18–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Long Damon Plantation Release and Site Preparation Project, Modoc County, CA

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: The Forest Service, Modoc National Forest, Devil's Garden and Big Valley Ranger Districts will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to disclose the environmental consequences of the proposed Long Damon Plantation Release and Site Preparation Project, and alternatives to the proposal. The decision to be made, is whether to select this proposed action or one of the alternatives to this proposal. The Long Damon Plantation Release and Site Preparation Project area is located approximately 18 miles northwest of Canby, CA, in Modoc County, CA, within the 23,400 acre Damon Wildfire that burned in 1996.

The Forest Service proposes to treat competing vegetation on up to 4,700 acres that have been, or will be, planted with native conifer seedlings. The proposal protects a large public investment in post-fire reforestation, accelerates development of the desired resource conditions described for this area in the Modoc National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (MLRMP), as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision—Jan 2001 (SNROD), and implements Standards and Guidelines described by MLRMP as amended by SNROD. The areas where actions are proposed are identified as General Forest, Inventoried Roadless and Wildland Urban Interface areas in the SNROD. Vegetation treatments proposed in plantations within these land allocations are designed to accelerate development of old forest characteristics, increase the distribution and connectivity of forests across the landscape, increase stand heterogeneity, and reduce the risk of wildfire loss. Projects within Inventoried Roadless and Wildland Urban Interface land allocations are designed to move areas towards conditions that allow for efficient and safe suppression of wildland fire. The proposed action is also consistent with the objectives of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976: It is the policy of the Congress that all forested lands in the National Forests shall be maintained in appropriate forest cover with species of trees, degrees of stocking, rate of growth and conditions of stand, designed to secure maximum benefits of multiple use sustained yield management in accordance with land management plans.

The Forest Service proposes to aerially apply Pronone 10G, a granular formulation of the herbicide hexazinone to control competing vegetation in post-fire plantations where successful seedling establishment is threatened. Aerial application by helicopter is the preferred method of treatment due to cost efficiency, speed and accuracy of application, and low worker exposure. The objective of this treatment is to reduce competing vegetation levels below twenty percent total ground cover for a period of two to three years after planting. Reforestation success is more readily achieved when competing vegetation is managed to produce a favorable environment for survival and growth of conifer seedlings. Control of the environment in these plantations is critical to ensure survival and growth of native conifer seedlings in sufficient quantity and quality to meet the long-term objective of increased distribution and connectivity of large trees across the landscape. Without adequate stocking of vigorously growing, well-distributed seedlings, these plantations will lack the resiliency over time to meet these long-term objectives.

Important preliminary considerations identified to date are: (1) Worker safety/public safety, including Native American plant uses and collections; (2) Direct and indirect effects to wildlife and (3) Effects to a Forest Service listed sensitive plant, Iliamna bakeri.

In addition to the proposed action and the no action alternative, other possible alternatives include no treatment in specific plantations or portions of plantations with high densities if Iliamna bakeri where these sub-populations could serve as a seed source for the surrounding area. The alternatives to this proposal will include a no-action alternative.

DATES: Comments identifying issues concerning the effects of the proposal should be postmarked on or before April 29, 2002 to receive timely consideration in the draft EIS.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to: Anne Mileck, Team Leader, USDA Forest Service, 800 West 12th St. Alturas, CA 96101. Send electronic comments to: *amileck@fs.fed.us.* Please reference the Long Damon Plantation Release and Site Preparation Project on the subject line. Also, include your name and mailing address with your comments so documents pertaining to this project may be mailed to you. Comments received, including names and addresses of those who comment, will become part of the public record and may be subject to public disclosure. Any person may request the Agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act permits such confidentiality.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Anne Mileck, Team Leader, at 530–233–8803 or Bernie Weisgerber, District Ranger, Doublehead Ranger District, at 530–667–2246.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The information presented in this notice is included to help the reviewer determine if they are interested in or potentially affected by the proposed land management activities. The information presented in this notice is summarized. Those who wish to provide comments, or are otherwise interested in the project, are encouraged to obtain additional information from the contact identified in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

Public Involvement

Additional information concerning the proposal can be accessed on the Internet at *http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/modoc/management/nepa/nepa.html.*

Process Procedures and Timelines

The Long Damon Plantation Release and Site Preparation Project has been listed in the Modoc National Forest's Calendar of Proposed Environmental Actions since January 1999. Public scoping for an Environmental Assessment began in the fall of 1999. In January 2000 the Forest sent a scoping letter describing the proposed action to 39 government agencies, public individuals and groups, including private landowners adjacent to the proposed treatment areas and to others who had been identified as potentially interested in the proposed vegetation management program. Consultation with local Native American tribal