

§ 1208.24 Election to terminate MSPB proceeding.

(a) *Election to terminate.* At any time beginning on the 121st day after an appellant files a VEOA appeal with the Board, if a judicially reviewable Board decision on the appeal has not been issued, the appellant may elect to terminate the Board proceeding as provided under 5 U.S.C. 3330b and file a civil action with an appropriate United States district court. Such election must be in writing, filed with the Board office where the appeal is being processed, and served on the parties. The election is effective immediately on the date of receipt by the Board office where the appeal is being processed.

(b) *Termination order.* Following receipt by the Board of an appellant's written election to terminate the Board proceeding, a termination order will be issued to document the termination of the proceeding. The termination order will state that the proceeding was terminated as of the date of receipt of the appellant's written election. Such an order is neither an initial decision under 5 CFR 1201.111 nor a final Board decision and is not subject to a petition for review in accordance with subpart C of part 1201, a petition for enforcement in accordance with subpart F of part 1201, or a petition for judicial review.

§ 1208.25 Remedies.

(a) *Order for compliance.* If the Board determines that a Federal agency has violated the appellant's VEOA rights, the decision of the Board (either an initial decision of a judge under 5 CFR 1201.111 or a final Board decision under 5 CFR 1201.117) will order the agency to comply with the statute or regulation violated and to compensate the appellant for any loss of wages or benefits suffered by the appellant because of the violation. If the Board determines that the violation was willful, it will order the agency to pay the appellant an amount equal to back pay as liquidated damages.

(b) *Attorney fees and expenses.* If the Board issues a decision ordering compliance under paragraph (a) of this section, the Board will order payment of reasonable attorney fees, expert witness fees, and other litigation expenses. The provisions of subpart H of part 1201 shall govern any proceeding for attorney fees and expenses.

§ 1208.26 Appeals under another law, rule, or regulation.

(a) The VEOA provides that 5 U.S.C. 3330a shall not be construed to prohibit a preference eligible from appealing directly to the Board from any action

that is appealable under any other law, rule, or regulation, in lieu of administrative redress under VEOA (5 U.S.C. 3330a(e)(1)). An appellant may not pursue redress for an alleged violation of veterans' preference under VEOA at the same time he pursues redress for such violation under any other law, rule, or regulation (5 U.S.C. 3330a(e)(2)).

(b) An appellant who elects to appeal to the Board under another law, rule, or regulation must comply with the provisions of subparts B and C of 5 CFR part 1201, including the time of filing requirement of 5 CFR 1201.22(b)(1).

Dated: January 24, 2000.

Robert E. Taylor,

Clerk of the Board.

[FR Doc. 00-2339 Filed 2-3-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7400-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Office of the Secretary****7 CFR Part 2****Revision of Delegations of Authority**

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary, USDA.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: This document revises the delegations of authority from the Secretary of Agriculture and general officers of the Department due to passage of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Effective February 4, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Philip Schwab, Science Advisor and Legislative Affairs, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, USDA, Room 305-A, Jamie L. Whitten Federal Bldg., Washington, DC 20250, telephone 202-720-4423.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On June 23, 1998, the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998, Pub. L. 105-185, was signed into law. With the enactment of this new law many existing authorities were either modified or extended and some new ones added. It is necessary for these authorities to be delegated to Agency Administrators. This document also delegates authority for the Census of Agriculture as provided for in the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Pub. L. 105-113 (7 U.S.C. 2204g). This document lays out these delegations of authority as they have been modified and expanded. This rule relates to internal agency management. Therefore,

pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553, notice of proposed rulemaking and opportunity for comment are not required, and this rule may be made effective less than 30 days after publication in the **Federal Register**.

Further, since this rule relates to internal agency management, it is exempt from the provisions of Executive Orders 12866 and 12988. Finally, this action is not a rule as defined by Pub. L. 96-354, the Regulatory Flexibility Act, and the Small Business Regulatory Fairness Enforcement Act, 5 U.S.C. 801 *et seq.*, and, thus, is exempt from their provisions.

List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 2

Authority Delegations (Government agencies).

Accordingly, 7 CFR Part 2 is amended as set forth below.

PART 2—DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY BY THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE AND GENERAL OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT

1. The authority for Part 2 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Sec. 212(a), Pub. L. 103-354, 108 Stat. 3210, 7 U.S.C. 6912(a)(1); 5 U.S.C. 301; Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953; 3 CFR 1949-1953 Comp., p. 1024.

Subpart C—Delegations of Authority to the Deputy Secretary, the Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries

2. Amend § 2.21 as follows:
 - a. Redesignate paragraphs (a)(1)(cxl) through (a)(1)(cxlii) as paragraphs (a)(1)(cxli) through (a)(1)(cli);
 - b. Add new paragraphs (a)(1)(cxl), and (a)(1)(cli) through (a)(1)(clxxi);
 - c. Remove and reserve paragraphs (a)(1)(lxxviii), (a)(1)(lxxxiii), (a)(1)(lxxxiv), (a)(1)(lxxxv), (a)(1)(lxxxvi), and (a)(1)(xc); and
 - d. Revise paragraphs (a)(1)(x), (a)(1)(xli), (a)(1)(li), (a)(1)(liii), (a)(1)(lvii), (a)(1)(lix), (a)(1)(lxxix), and (b)(1)(i) and to add paragraphs (a)(1)(1iv), (a)(1)(lxxx), (a)(1)(lxxxi), and (a)(1)(lxxxvii) to read as follows:

§ 2.21 Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics.

(a) * * *

(1) * * *

(x) Evaluate, assess, and report to congressional agriculture committees on the merits of proposals for agricultural research facilities in the States; establish a task force on a 10-year strategic plan for agricultural research facilities; ensure that each research activity conducted by an Agricultural Research Service facility serves a national or multistate need; and review periodically

each operating agricultural research facility constructed in whole or in part with Federal funds, pursuant to criteria established, to ensure that a comprehensive research capacity is maintained (7 U.S.C. 390 *et seq.*).

(xx) Administer and direct a program of competitive grants for research, and special grants for research, education, or extension, to State agricultural experiment stations, colleges and universities, other research institutions and organizations, Federal agencies, national laboratories (competitive grants only), private organizations or corporations, and individuals, and of facilities grants to State agricultural experiment stations and other designated colleges and universities, to promote research, extension, or education, in food, agriculture and related areas (7 U.S.C. 450i).

(xlv) Formulate and administer programs to strengthen secondary education and two-year post secondary teaching programs; promote linkages between secondary, two-year post secondary, and higher education programs in the food and agricultural sciences; administer grants to secondary education and two-year post secondary teaching programs, and to colleges and universities; maintain a national food and agricultural education information system (7 U.S.C. 3152).

(l) Support continuing agricultural and forestry extension and research, at 1890 land-grant colleges, including Tuskegee University, and administer a grant program for five National Research and Training Centers (7 U.S.C. 3221, 3222, 3222c, 3222d).

(liii) Provide policy direction and coordinate the Department's work with national and international institutions and other persons throughout the world in the performance of agricultural research, extension, teaching, and development activities; administer a program of competitive grants for collaborative projects involving Federal scientists or scientists from colleges and universities working with scientists at international agricultural research centers in other nations focusing either on new technologies and programs for increasing the production of food and fiber or training scientists and a program of competitive grants to colleges and universities to strengthen United States economic competitiveness and to promote international market development; and provide a biennial report to the Committee on Agriculture

of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate on efforts of the Federal Government to coordinate international agricultural research within the Federal Government, and to more effectively link the activities of domestic and international agricultural researchers, particularly researchers of the Agricultural Research Service (7 U.S.C. 3291, 3292b).

(liv) Provide for an agricultural research and development program with the United States/Mexico Foundation for Science (7 U.S.C. 3292a).

(lvii) Enter into cost-reimbursable agreements with State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities for the acquisition of goods or services in support of research, extension, or teaching activities in the food and agricultural sciences, including the furtherance of library and related information programs (7 U.S.C. 3319a).

(lix) Administer an Aquaculture Assistance Program, involving centers, by making grants to eligible institutions for research and extension to facilitate or expand production and marketing of aquacultural food species and products; making grants to States to formulate Aquaculture development plans for the production and marketing of aquacultural species and products; and conducting a program of research, extension and demonstration at aquacultural demonstration centers (7 U.S.C. 3321–22).

(lxxviii) [Removed and reserved]

(lxxix) Conduct a research initiative known as the Agricultural Genome Initiative, and make grants or enter into cooperative agreements on a competitive basis to carry out the Initiative (7 U.S.C. 5924).

(lxxx) Administer a competitive high priority research and extension grants program in specified subject areas (7 U.S.C. 5925).

(lxxxi) Administer a program of competitive grants to support research and extension activities in Nutrient Management Research and Extension (7 U.S.C. 5925a).

(lxxxiii)–(lxxxvi) [Removed and reserved]

(lxxxvii) Administer competitive grants to support research and extension activities regarding organically grown

and processed agricultural commodities (7 U.S.C. 5925b).

(xc) [Removed and reserved]

(cxl) Make competitive grants to 1994 Land-Grant Institutions to conduct agricultural research that addresses high priority concerns of tribal, national, or multistate significance (Section 536 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994, 7 U.S.C. 301 note).

(cli) Ensure that agricultural research conducted by the Agricultural Research Service, and agricultural research, extension, or education activities administered by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service on a competitive basis address a concern that is a priority and has national, multistate, or regional significance (7 U.S.C. 7611).

(clii) Solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education and, after consultation with appropriate subcommittee officials, establish priorities for agricultural research, extension, and education activities conducted or funded by the Department; promulgate regulations concerning implementation of a process for obtaining stakeholder input at 1862, 1890, and 1994 Institutions; and ensure that federally supported and conducted agricultural research, extension, and education activities are accomplished in accord with identified management principles (7 U.S.C. 7612).

(cliii) Establish procedures that provide for scientific peer review of each agricultural research grant administered on a competitive basis, and for merit review of each agricultural extension or education grant administered, on a competitive basis, by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (7 U.S.C. 7613(a)).

(cliv) Consider the results of the annual review performed by the Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board regarding the relevance to priorities of the funding of all agricultural research, extension, or education activities conducted or funded by the Department and the adequacy of funding, when formulating each request for proposals, and evaluating proposals, involving an agricultural research, extension, or education activity funded, on a competitive basis, by the Department; and solicit and consider input from persons who conduct or use agricultural

research, extension, or education regarding the prior year's request for proposals for each activity funded on a competitive basis (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)).

(clv) Establish, in consultation with appropriate subcabinet officials, procedures to ensure scientific peer review of all research activities conducted by the Department (7 U.S.C. 7613(d)).

(clvi) Require a procedure to be established by each 1862, 1890, and 1994 Institution, for merit review of each agricultural research and extension activity funded and review of the activity in accordance with the procedure (7 U.S.C. 7613(e)).

(clvii) Administer an Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (except with respect to funds provided by the Secretary to the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Corporation) (7 U.S.C. 7621).

(clviii) Administer a program of competitive grants to eligible partnerships to coordinate and manage research and extension activities to enhance the quality of high-value agricultural products (7 U.S.C. 7622).

(clix) Administer a program of competitive grants to eligible entities to conduct research, education, or information dissemination projects for the development and advancement of precision agriculture (7 U.S.C. 7623).

(clx) Coordinate the resources of the Department to develop, commercialize, and promote the use of biobased products, and enter into cooperative agreements with private entities to operate pilot plants and other large-scale preparation facilities under which the facilities and technical expertise of the Agricultural Research Service may be made available (7 U.S.C. 7624).

(clxi) Administer the Thomas Jefferson Initiative for Crop Diversification program of competitive grants and contracts for the purpose of conducting research and development, in cooperation with other public and private entities, on the production and marketing of new and nontraditional crops needed to strengthen and diversify the agricultural production base of the United States (7 U.S.C. 7625).

(clxii) Administer competitive grants for integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, education, and extension activities (7 U.S.C. 7626).

(clxiii) Administer a coordinated program of research, extension, and education to improve the competitiveness, viability, and sustainability of small and medium size dairy, livestock, and poultry operations (7 U.S.C. 7627).

(clxiv) Administer a grant to a consortium of land-grant colleges and universities to enhance the ability of the consortium to carry out a multi-State research project aimed at understanding and combating diseases of wheat and barley caused by *Fusarium graminearum* and related fungi (7 U.S.C. 7628).

(clxv) Operate and administer the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database through contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements with appropriate colleges or universities (7 U.S.C. 7642).

(clxvi) Update on a periodic basis, nutrient composition data and report to Congress the method that will be used to update the data and the timing of the update (7 U.S.C. 7651).

(clxvii) Establish and maintain a Food Safety Research Information Office at the National Agricultural Library to provide to the research community and the general public information on publicly and privately funded food safety research initiatives (7 U.S.C. 7654(a)).

(clxviii) Develop a national program of safe food handling education for adults and young people to reduce the risk of food-borne illness (7 U.S.C. 7655).

(clxix) Conduct a performance evaluation to determine whether federally funded agricultural research, extension, and education programs result in public goods that have national or multistate significance, including through a contract with one or more entities to provide input and recommendations with respect to federally funded agricultural research, extension, and education programs (7 U.S.C. 7671).

(clxx) Request the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study of the role and mission of federally funded agricultural research, extension, and education (7 U.S.C. 7672).

(clxxi) Take a census of agriculture in 1998 and every fifth year thereafter pursuant to the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Pub. L. No. 105-113 (7 U.S.C. 2204g).

(b) * * *

(1) * * *

(i) Withhold funds from States in accordance with section 1436 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended (7 U.S.C. 3198).

* * * * *

Subpart K—Delegations of Authority by the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics

3. Amend § 2.65 to add new paragraphs (a)(28), (a)(99) through (a)(107), to remove and reserve paragraphs (a)(41), (a)(42), and (a)(43), and to revise paragraphs (a)(23), (a)(39), and (a)(71), to read as follows:

§ 2.65 Administrator, Agricultural Research Service.

(a) * * *

(23) Enter into cost-reimbursable agreements with State cooperative institutions or other colleges and universities for the acquisition of goods or services in support of research, extension, or teaching activities in the food and agricultural sciences, including the furtherance of library and related information programs (7 U.S.C. 3319a).

* * * * *

(28) Provide a biennial report to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate on efforts of the Federal Government to coordinate international agricultural research within the Federal Government, and to more effectively link the activities of domestic and international agricultural researchers, particularly researchers of the Agricultural Research Service (7 U.S.C. 3291(d)(2)).

* * * * *

(39) Conduct a research initiative known as the Agricultural Genome Initiative, and make grants or enter into cooperative agreements on a competitive basis to carry out the Initiative (7 U.S.C. 5924).

* * * * *

(41)—(43) [Removed and reserved]

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(71) Establish and maintain a Food Safety Research Information Office at the National Agricultural Library to provide to the research community and the general public information on publicly and privately funded food safety research initiatives (7 U.S.C. 7654(a)).

* * * * *

(99) Ensure that agricultural research conducted by the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) addresses a concern that is a priority and has national, multistate, or regional significance (7 U.S.C. 7611).

(100) Solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education (7 U.S.C. 7612(b)).

(101) Consider the results of the annual review performed by the

Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board regarding the relevance to priorities of the funding of all agricultural research, extension, or education activities conducted or funded by the Department and the adequacy of funding when formulating each request for proposals, and evaluating proposals, involving an agricultural research, extension, or education activity funded, on a competitive basis, by the Department; and solicit and consider input from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education regarding the prior year's request for proposals for each activity funded on a competitive basis (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)).

(102) Establish procedures that ensure scientific peer review of all research activities conducted by the Agricultural Research Service (7 U.S.C. 7613(d)).

(103) Coordinate the resources of the Department to develop, commercialize, and promote the use of biobased products, and enter into cooperative agreements with private entities to operate pilot plants and other large-scale preparation facilities under which the facilities and technical expertise of the Agricultural Research Service may be made available (7 U.S.C. 7624).

(104) Administer a grant to a consortium of land-grant colleges and universities to enhance the ability of the consortium to carry out a multi-State research project aimed at understanding and combating diseases of wheat and barley caused by *Fusarium graminearum* and related fungi (7 U.S.C. 7628).

(105) Administer a program of fees to support the Patent Culture Collection maintained and operated by the Agricultural Research Service (7 U.S.C. 7641).

(106) Update on a periodic basis, nutrient composition data, and report to Congress the method that will be used to update the data and the timing of the update (7 U.S.C. 7651).

(107) Ensure that each research activity conducted by an Agricultural Research Service facility serves a national or multistate need (7 U.S.C. 390a(e)).

4. Amend § 2.66 to remove and reserve paragraphs (a)(27), (a)(38), (a)(41), (a)(47), and (a)(107), to revise paragraphs (a)(5), (a)(8), (a)(13), (a)(18), (a)(20), (a)(24), (a)(26), (a)(39), (a)(42), (a)(43), to redesignate paragraphs (a)(101) through (a)(117) as (a)(102) through (a)(118), and to add new paragraphs (a)(44), (a)(101) and (a)(119) through (a)(130), to read as follows:

§ 2.66 Administrator, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

(a) * * *

(5) Administer an agricultural research facilities proposal review process for submission to Congress (7 U.S.C. 390, 390a(a)–(d)).

(8) Administer a program of special grants to carry out research, extension, or education activities to facilitate or expand promising breakthroughs in areas of food and agricultural sciences and to facilitate or expand ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research, extension, or education programs; and administer a program of facilities grants to renovate and refurbish research spaces (7 U.S.C. 450i (c) and (d)).

(13) Formulate and administer programs to strengthen secondary education and two-year post secondary teaching programs; promote linkages between secondary, two-year post-secondary, and higher education programs in the food and agricultural sciences; administer grants to secondary education and two-year post secondary teaching programs, and to colleges and universities; and maintain a national food and agricultural education information system (7 U.S.C. 3152).

(18) Support continuing agricultural and forestry extension and research, at 1890 land-grant colleges, including Tuskegee University, and administer a grant program for five National Research and Training Centennial Centers (7 U.S.C. 3221, 3222, 3222c, 3222d).

(20) Provide policy direction and coordinate the Department's work with national and international institutions and other persons throughout the world in the performance of agricultural research, extension, and teaching, and development activities; administer a program of competitive grants for collaborative projects involving Federal scientists or scientists from colleges and universities working with scientists at international agricultural research centers in other nations focusing on new technologies and programs for increasing the production of food and fiber or training scientists and a program of competitive grants to colleges and universities to strengthen United States economic competitiveness and to promote international market development (7 U.S.C. 3291, 3292b).

(24) Enter into cost-reimbursable agreements with State cooperative

institutions or other colleges and universities for the acquisition of goods or services in support of research, extension, or teaching activities in the food and agricultural sciences, including the furtherance of library and related information programs (7 U.S.C. 3319a).

(26) Administer an Aquaculture Assistance Program, involving centers, by making grants to eligible institutions for research and extension to facilitate or expand production and marketing of aquacultural food species and products; making grants to States to formulate aquaculture development plans for the production and marketing of aquacultural species and products; conducting a program of research, extension and demonstration at aquacultural demonstration centers (7 U.S.C. 3321–3322).

(27) [Removed and reserved]

(38) [Removed and reserved]

(39) Conduct a research initiative known as the Agricultural Genome Initiative; and make grants or enter into cooperative agreements on a competitive basis with individuals and organizations to carry out the Initiative (7 U.S.C. 5924).

(41) [Removed and reserved]

(42) Administer a competitive high priority research and extension grants program in specified subject areas (7 U.S.C. 5925).

(43) Administer a program of competitive grants to support research and extension activities in Nutrient Management Research and Extension (7 U.S.C. 5925a).

(44) Administer competitive grants to support research and extension activities regarding organically grown and processed agricultural commodities (7 U.S.C. 5925b).

(47) [Removed and reserved]

(101) Make competitive grants to 1994 Land-Grant Institutions to conduct agricultural research that addresses high priority concerns of tribal, national, or multistate significance (Section 536 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994, 7 U.S.C. 301 note).

(108) [Removed and reserved]

(119) Ensure that agricultural research, extension, or education activities administered, on a competitive basis, by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and

Extension Service address a concern that is a priority and has national, multistate, or regional significance (7 U.S.C. 7611).

(120) Solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education; ensure that Federally supported and conducted agricultural research, extension, and education activities are accomplished in accord with identified management principles; and promulgate regulations concerning implementation of a process for obtaining stakeholder input at 1862, 1890, and 1994 Institutions (7 U.S.C. 7612 (b), (c) and (d)).

(121) Establish procedures that provide for scientific peer review of each agricultural research grant administered, on a competitive basis, and for merit review of each agricultural extension or education grant administered, on a competitive basis, by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (7 U.S.C. 7613(a)).

(122) Consider the results of the annual review performed by the Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board regarding the relevance to priorities of the funding of all agricultural research, extension, or education activities conducted or funded by the Department and the adequacy of funding, when formulating each request for proposals, and evaluating proposals, involving an agricultural research, extension, or education activity funded, on a competitive basis, by the Department; and solicit and consider input from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education regarding the prior year's request for proposals for each activity funded on a competitive basis (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)).

(123) Require a procedure to be established by each 1862, 1890, and 1994 Institution, for merit review of each agricultural research and extension activity funded and review of the activity in accordance with the procedure (7 U.S.C. 7613(e)).

(124) Administer an Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (except with respect to funds provided by the Secretary to the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Corporation) (7 U.S.C. 7621).

(125) Administer a program of competitive grants to eligible partnerships to coordinate and manage research and extension activities to enhance the quality of high-value agricultural products (7 U.S.C. 7622).

(126) Administer a program of competitive grants to eligible entities to conduct research, education, or information dissemination projects for the development and advancement of precision agriculture (7 U.S.C. 7623).

(127) Administer the Thomas Jefferson Initiative for Crop Diversification program of competitive grants and contracts for the purpose of conducting research and development, in cooperation with other public and private entities, on the production and marketing of new and nontraditional crops needed to strengthen and diversify the agricultural production base of the United States (7 U.S.C. 7625).

(128) Administer competitive grants for integrated, multifunctional agricultural research, education, and extension activities (7 U.S.C. 7626).

(129) Operate and administer the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Database through contracts, grants, or cooperative agreements with appropriate colleges or universities (7 U.S.C. 7642).

(130) Develop a national program of safe food handling education for adults and young people to reduce the risk of food-borne illness (7 U.S.C. 7655).

* * * * *

5. Amend § 2.67 to add new paragraphs (a)(15), (a)(16), and (a)(17), to read as follows:

§ 2.67 Administrator, Economic Research Service.

(a) * * *

(15) Solicit and consider input and recommendations from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education (7 U.S.C. 7612(b)).

(16) Consider the results of the annual review performed by the Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board regarding the relevance to priorities of the funding of all agricultural research, extension, or education activities conducted or funded by the Department and the adequacy of funding, when formulating each request for proposals, and evaluating proposals, involving an agricultural research, extension, or education activity funded, on a competitive basis, by the Department; and solicit and consider input from persons who conduct or use agricultural research, extension, or education regarding the prior year's request for proposals for each activity funded on a competitive basis (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)).

(17) Establish procedures that ensure scientific peer review of all research

activities conducted by the Economic Research Service (7 U.S.C. 7613(d)).

* * * * *

6. Amend § 2.68 to add a new paragraph (a)(9), to read as follows:

§ 2.68 Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

(a) * * *

(9) Take a census of agriculture in 1998 and every fifth year thereafter pursuant to the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Pub. L. 105-113 (7 U.S.C. 2204g).

* * * * *

Done at Washington, DC.

For subpart C:

Dated: January 20, 2000.

Dan Glickman,

Secretary of Agriculture.

For Subpart K:

Dated: January 21, 2000.

Eileen Kennedy,

Acting Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics.

[FR Doc. 00-2396 Filed 2-3-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-01-P

FEDERAL HOUSING FINANCE BOARD

12 CFR Part 960

[No. 2000-05]

RIN 3069-AA93

Information Collection Approval; Technical Amendment to the Affordable Housing Program Rule

AGENCY: Federal Housing Finance Board.

ACTION: Final Rule.

SUMMARY: Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Act), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved a three-year extension of the information collection contained in the Federal Housing Finance Board (Finance Board) rule governing the Affordable Housing Program (AHP). The OMB control number approving the information collection now expires on January 31, 2003. In accordance with the requirements of the Act, the Finance Board is amending the AHP rule to reflect this new expiration date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The final rule will become effective on February 4, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Janet M. Fronckowiak, Acting Deputy Director, Program Assistance Division, Office of Policy, Research and Analysis, by telephone at 202/408-2575 or by electronic mail at fronckowiakj@fhfb.gov, or Melissa L.