

December 2016

Supporting Statement
Importation of Fresh Pomegranate Fruit from Turkey
Into the Continental United States
Docket No. APHIS-2013-0091
OMB No. 0579-XXXX

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), is responsible for preventing plant diseases or insect pests from entering the United States, preventing the spread of pests and noxious weeds not widely distributed in the United States, and eradicating those imported pests when eradication is feasible. The Plant Protection Act authorizes USDA to carry out this mission.

Under the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701, *et seq.*) the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to prohibit or restrict the importation, entry, or movement of plants and plant pests to prevent the introduction of plant pests into the United States or their dissemination within the United States.

The regulations in “Subpart-Fruits and Vegetables” (7 CFR 319.56, referred to below as the regulations) prohibit or restrict the importation of fruits and vegetables into the United States from certain parts of the world to prevent the introduction and dissemination of plant pests that are new to or not widely distributed within the United States.

APHIS is proposing to amend the fruits and vegetables regulations to allow the importation of commercial consignments into the continental United States of fresh pomegranate fruit (*Punica granatum* L.) from Turkey. As a condition of entry, fresh pomegranate fruit from Turkey would have to be produced in accordance with a systems approach that would include, but not be limited to, grove registration, sanitation, and pest control measures; packinghouse registration and procedures designed to exclude quarantine pests; cold treatment, and procedures for packing, storing, and shipping the pomegranate fruit. Each consignment of fruit would have to be identified throughout its movement from place of production to port of entry in the United States. Consignments would have to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) of Turkey declaring that the fruit has begun or has undergone cold treatment and that it was inspected and found free of quarantine pests.

This action would allow for the importation of fresh pomegranate fruit from Turkey into the continental United States while continuing to provide protection against the introduction of quarantine plant pests.

APHIS is asking OMB to approve its use of these information collection activities, for 3 years, associated with its efforts to prevent the spread of fruit flies and other plant pests from entering into the United States.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.

The following information collection activity will allow for the importation of fresh pomegranate fruit from Turkey into the continental United States while continuing to provide protection against the introduction of quarantine plant pests.

319.56-77(a) Bilateral Workplan (foreign govt) – The NPPO of Turkey would be required to provide a bilateral workplan to APHIS that details the operational activities of the systems approach, including specific inspection, monitoring, and other tasks that the NPPO of Turkey will carry out to meet the proposed requirements.

319.56-77(a) Trust Fund Agreement (foreign govt) - In addition, the NPPO of Turkey would be required to enter into a trust fund agreement with APHIS in accordance with § 319.56-6 to cover monitoring and auditing costs.

319.56-77(a)(2) Production and Packinghouse Registration (business) (foreign govt) – All places of production and packinghouses in Turkey that participate in the program to export fresh pomegranate fruit to the continental United States would have to be registered with and approved by the NPPO of Turkey and meet the requirements.

319.56-77(c)(2) Trained Personnel (business) (foreign government) - Any personnel hired to conduct inspections would have to be accredited and supervised by the NPPO of Turkey.

319.56-77(c)(3) Recordkeeping (foreign govt) - Proposed regulations require that the NPPO of Turkey retain all forms and documents related to export program activities in places of production and packinghouses for at least 1 year and, upon request, provide them to APHIS for review.

319.56-77(g)(3) Box Markings (business) - Boxes containing the packed pomegranate fruit would have to be marked with the identity of the packing facility and origin of the fruit, as well as clearly marked as destined for import to the continental United States.

319.56-77(j) Phytosanitary Certificate (foreign govt)(business) – Each consignment of pomegranate fruit would have to be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate issued by the NPPO of Turkey stating that the consignment has begun or undergone cold treatment in accordance with 7 CFR Part 305, and that the fruit in the consignment was inspected and found free from quarantine pests.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any considerations of using information technology to reduce burden.

APHIS has no control or influence over when foreign countries will automate their phytosanitary certificates. However, APHIS is involved with the Government-wide utilization of the International Trade Data System (ITDS) via the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) to improve business operations and further Agency missions. This will allow respondents to submit the data required by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and its Partner Government Agencies (PGAs), such as APHIS to import and export cargo through a Single Window concept. APHIS is also establishing a system known as e-File for CARPOL (Certification, Accreditation, Registration, Permitting, and Other Licensing) activities. This new system will strive to automate some of these information collection activities. The system is still being developed and business processes continue to be identified and mapped.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use of the purpose described in item 2 above.

The information APHIS collects is exclusive to its mission of preventing the spread of plant pests and is not available from any other source.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The information APHIS collects is the minimum needed to protect the United States from destructive plant pests while increasing the number and variety of fruits and vegetables that can be imported from other countries. APHIS has determined 100 percent of the business respondents are small entities.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Failing to collect this information would cripple APHIS' ability to ensure that pomegranates from Turkey are not carrying plant pests. If plant pests were introduced into the United States, growers in would suffer hundreds of millions of dollars in losses .

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

- **requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**

- **requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

No special circumstances exist that would require this collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information collection guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

8. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting form, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB.

The following individuals were consulted regarding this program:

Simonian Fruit Company
Jim Simonian
Farm Operations Director
P.O. Box 340
511 N. Seventh Street,
Fowler, CA 93625
559-834-5921

Stephanie Johnson
POM Wonderful, LLC
11444 West Olympic Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90064
310-966-5800

Cindy Weinstein, President
Florida Pomegranate Association
6360 Johnston Road
Zolfo Springs, FL 33890
863-604-3778

APHIS' proposed rule (APHIS-2013-0091) will describe its information gathering requirements, and also provide a 60-day comment period. During that time, interested members of the public will have the opportunity to provide APHIS with their input concerning the usefulness, legitimacy, and merit of the information collection activities APHIS is proposing.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than reenumeration of contractors or grantees.

This information collection activity involves no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

No additional assurance of confidentiality is provided with this information collection. Any and all information obtained in this collection shall not be disclosed except in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and others that are considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This information collection activity asks no questions of a personal or sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.

See APHIS Form 71 for hour burden estimates.

. Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.

APHIS estimates the total annualized cost to the respondents to be \$123,616.00. APHIS arrives at this figure by multiplying the total burden hours (7,726) by the estimated average hourly wage of the above respondents (\$16.00). This information was derived from the APHIS International Services attaché in country. (7,726 hours X \$16 estimated hourly wage = \$123,616)

13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information (do not include the cost of any hour burden in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There is zero annual cost burden associated with the capital and start-up cost, maintenance costs, and purchase of services in connection with this program.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The estimated cost for the Federal Government is \$47,667 (see APHIS Form 79).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB 83-1.

This is a new program.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

APHIS has no plans to tabulate or publish the information collected.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

There are no USDA forms included in this information collection.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in the “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act.”

APHIS is able to certify compliance with all the provisions under the Act.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods.

Statistical methods are not used in this information collection.