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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2012-0096]

Notice of Request for Approval of an Information Collection; National Veterinary Services Laboratories; Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Surveillance Program Documents

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: New 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 approval of a new information collection associated with National Veterinary Services Laboratories diagnostic support for the bovine spongiform encephalopathy surveillance program.

DATES: We will consider all comments that we receive on or before [Insert date 60 days after date of publication in the Federal Register].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by either of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!documentDetail;D=APHIS-2012-0096-0001>.
- Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery: Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2012-0096, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3A-03.8, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1238.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2012-0096> or in our reading room, which

is located in room 1141 of the USDA South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. Normal reading room hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 799-7039 before coming.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on documents associated with the bovine spongiform encephalopathy surveillance program, contact Dr. Dean Goeldner, Senior Staff Veterinarian, Veterinary Services, APHIS, 4700 River Road Unit 43, Riverdale, MD 20737; (301) 851-3511. For copies of more detailed information on the information collection, contact Mrs. Celeste Sickles, APHIS' Information Collection Coordinator, at (301) 851-2908.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: National Veterinary Services Laboratories; Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Surveillance Program Documents.

OMB Number: 0579-XXXX.

Type of Request: Approval of a new information collection.

Abstract: Under the Animal Health Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 8301 et seq.), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is authorized, among other things, to carry out activities to detect, control, and eradicate pests and diseases of livestock within the United States. APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) safeguard U.S. animal health and contribute to public health by ensuring that timely and accurate laboratory support is provided by their nationwide animal health diagnostic system.

In 2006, APHIS' Veterinary Services (VS) implemented the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) Ongoing Surveillance Program. NVSL is instrumental to this program in

its efforts to monitor and assess changes to the BSE status of U.S. cattle and to provide mechanisms for early detection of BSE, which is a chronic degenerative disease that affects the central nervous system of cattle

As part of the surveillance program, NVSL tests and analyzes samples assembled from a variety of sites and from the cattle populations where BSE is most likely to be detected. These diagnostic services involve information collection activities, such as the USDA BSE Surveillance Submission Form/Continuation Sheet (VS Forms 17-146/17-146a) and the USDA BSE Surveillance Data Collection Form (VS Form 17-131).

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of these information collection activities for 3 years.

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

- (1) Evaluate 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;
- (2) Evaluate the accuracy of our estimate of the burden of the 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 0.1000068 hours per response.

Respondents: Slaughter establishments, offsite collection facilities for condemned slaughter cattle, rendering 3D/4D facilities, veterinary diagnostic laboratories, State animal health personnel, and accredited veterinarians.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 60.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 732.95.

Estimated annual number of responses: 43,977.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 4,399 hours. (Due to averaging, the total annual burden hours may not equal the product of the annual number of responses multiplied by the 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 January, 2013 .

Kevin Shea

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

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