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**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Agricultural Marketing Service**

**7 CFR Part 946**

[Doc. No. AMS-SC-16-0110; SC17-946-1 CR]

**Irish Potatoes Grown in Washington; Continuance Referendum**

**AGENCY:** Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Referendum order.

**SUMMARY:** This document directs that a referendum be conducted among eligible Washington potato producers to determine whether they favor continuance of the marketing order regulating the handling of Irish potatoes grown in Washington.

**DATES:** The referendum will be conducted from June 9 through June 23, 2017. Only current producers that were engaged in the production of fresh potatoes in Washington during the period of July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, are eligible to vote in this referendum.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the marketing order may be obtained from the Northwest Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1220 SW 3rd Avenue, Suite 305, Portland, OR 97204; Telephone: (503) 326-2724; from the Office of the Docket Clerk, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, STOP

0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; or on the Internet:

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Teresa Hutchinson or Gary D. Olson, Northwest Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA; Telephone: (503) 326-2724, Fax: (503) 326-7440, or E-mail: [Teresa.Hutchinson@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Teresa.Hutchinson@ams.usda.gov) or [GaryD.Olson@ams.usda.gov](mailto:GaryD.Olson@ams.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Pursuant to Marketing Order No. 946 (7 CFR part 946), hereinafter referred to as the "order," and the applicable provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674), hereinafter referred to as the "Act," it is hereby directed that a referendum be conducted to ascertain whether continuance of the order is favored by producers. The referendum shall be conducted from June 9 through June 23, 2017, among eligible Washington potato producers. Only current producers that were also engaged in the production of fresh potatoes in Washington during the period of July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016, may participate in the continuance referendum.

USDA has determined that continuance referenda are an effective means for determining whether producers favor the continuation of marketing order programs. USDA would

consider termination of the order if less than two-thirds of the producers voting in the referendum and producers of less than two-thirds of the volume of Washington potatoes represented in the referendum favor continuance of their program. In evaluating the merits of continuance versus termination, USDA will not exclusively consider the results of the continuance referendum. USDA will also consider all other relevant information regarding operation of the order and relative benefits and disadvantages to producers, handlers, and consumers to determine whether continuing the order would tend to effectuate the declared policy of the Act.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the ballot materials used in the referendum herein ordered have been submitted to and approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and have been assigned OMB No. 0581-0178, Vegetable and Specialty Crops. It has been estimated that it will take an average of 20 minutes for each of the approximately 270 Washington potato producers to cast a ballot. Participation is voluntary. Ballots postmarked after June 23, 2017, will not be included in the vote tabulation.

Teresa Hutchinson and Gary D. Olson of the Northwest Marketing Field Office, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, are hereby designated as the referendum agents of the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct this referendum. The procedure applicable to the referendum shall be the "Procedure for the Conduct of Referenda in Connection With Marketing Orders for Fruits, Vegetables, and Nuts Pursuant to the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as Amended" (7 CFR Part 900.400 et seq.).

Ballots will be mailed to all producers of record and may also be obtained from the referendum agents or from their appointees.

**List of Subjects in 7 CFR Part 946**

Marketing agreements, Potatoes, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

**Authority:** 7 U.S.C. 601-674.

Dated: January 12, 2017

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Administrator  
Agricultural Marketing Service

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