



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

7 CFR Part 955

[Doc. No. AMS-SC-19-0065; SC19-955-1 CR]

Vidalia Onions Grown in Georgia; Continuance Referendum

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Referendum order.

SUMMARY: This document directs that a referendum be conducted among eligible producers of Vidalia onions to determine whether they favor continuance of the marketing order regulating the handling of Vidalia onions produced in Georgia.

DATES: The referendum will be conducted from October 7 through October 28, 2019. Only current producers of Vidalia onions within the production area that produced onions during the period January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018, are eligible to vote in this referendum.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the marketing order may be obtained from the Southeast Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1124 First Street South, Winter Haven, FL 33880; Telephone: (863) 324-3375; from the Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400

Independence Avenue SW, STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; Telephone: (202) 720-2491; or on the Internet: <http://www.regulations.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven W. Kauffman, Marketing Specialist, or Christian D. Nissen, Regional Director, Southeast Marketing Field Office, Marketing Order and Agreement Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1124 First Street South, Winter Haven, FL 33880; Telephone: (863) 324-3375, Fax: (863) 291-8614, or Email: Steven.Kauffman@usda.gov or Christian.Nissen@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to Marketing Agreement and Order No. 955, as amended (7 CFR part 955), 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 will be conducted from October 7 through October 28, 2019, among Vidalia onion producers in the production area. Only current Vidalia onion producers who were also engaged in the production of Vidalia onions

during the period of January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018, 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 in the referendum, and producers of less than two-thirds of the volume of Vidalia onions voting in the referendum favor continuance of the 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 ballots used in the referendum have been 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 it will take an average of 20 minutes for each of the approximately 65

Vidalia onion producers to cast a ballot. Participation is voluntary. Ballots postmarked after October 28, 2019, will not be included in the vote tabulation.

Steven W. Kauffman and Christian D. Nissen of the Southeast 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 900.400 through 900.407).

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 955

Marketing agreements, Onions, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements.

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

Dated: September 18, 2019.

Bruce Summers,

Administrator,

Agricultural Marketing Service.

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