



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS-2025-0835]

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Export Certification: Accreditation of Nongovernment Facilities

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Extension of approval of an 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 an extension of approval of an information collection associated with accrediting nongovernment facilities to perform services related to the export of plants or plant products.

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>. Enter APHIS-2025-0835 in the Search field. Select the Documents tab, then select the Comment button in the list of documents.
- Postal Mail/Commercial Delivery: Send your comment to Docket No. APHIS-2025-0835, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, 5601 Sunnyside Ave., #AP760, Beltsville, MD 20705.

Supporting documents and any comments we receive on this docket may be viewed at <http://www.regulations.gov> or in our reading room in Room 1620 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 accrediting nongovernment facilities to perform plant related export services, contact Ms. Sarika Negi, Accreditation and Certification Policy Manager, International Phytosanitary Management and Standards Programs, PPQ, APHIS, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250; (301) 851-2349; sarika.s.negi@usda.gov. For information on the information collection process, contact Ms. Sheniqua Harris, APHIS' Paperwork Reduction Act Coordinator, at (301) 851-2528; APHIS.PRA@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Export Certification: Accreditation of Nongovernment Facilities.

OMB Control Number: 0579–0130.

Type of Request: Extension of approval of an information collection.

Abstract: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), among other things, provides export certification services to assure other countries that the plants and plant products they are receiving from the United States are free of plant pests specified by the receiving country. This activity is authorized by the Plant Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 7701 et seq.).

The export certification regulations, which are contained in 7 CFR part 353, describe the procedures for obtaining certification for plants and plant products offered for export or reexport. Our regulations do not require that we engage in export certification activities; however, we perform this work as a service to exporters who are shipping plants or plant products to countries that require phytosanitary certification as a condition of entry.

After assessing the condition of the plants or plant products intended for export (i.e., after conducting a phytosanitary inspection), an inspector will issue an internationally recognized phytosanitary certificate, a phytosanitary certificate for reexport, or an export certificate for processed plant products. An important component of the certification process, when required, is laboratory testing of plant or plant product samples.

The regulations allow nongovernment facilities (such as commercial laboratories and private inspection services) to be accredited by APHIS to perform specific laboratory testing or phytosanitary inspections that could serve as the basis for issuing Federal phytosanitary certificates, phytosanitary certificates for reexport, or export certificates for processed plant products. The accreditation process requires the use of several information collection activities to ensure that nongovernment facilities applying for accreditation possess the necessary qualifications. These activities include the application for accreditation; agreement for fulfilling accreditation procedures; documentation of equipment; quality manual or equivalent documentation; identity of personnel and subcontractor's qualifications; notification of changes in personnel; report changes in location, ownership, physical plant equipment or other conditions; denial-written appeal and request for hearing; withdrawal-appeal and request for hearing; written request to eliminate accreditation status; and documentation of the corrective action.

We are asking the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to approve our use of these information collection activities for an additional 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 3.8 hours per response.

Respondents: U.S. growers, shippers, exporters, and State and local plant health regulatory authorities.

Estimated annual number of respondents: 10.

Estimated annual number of responses per respondent: 6.

Estimated annual number of responses: 56.

Estimated total annual burden on respondents: 215 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 26th day of January 2026.

_____ **Michael Watson,**

Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.