



Agricultural Marketing Service

[Doc. No. AMS-SC-25-0465]

Almonds Grown in California; Notice of Request for Extension and Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection

AGENCY: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) intention to request an extension for, and revision to, a currently approved information collection for Almonds Grown in California, Marketing Order No. 981.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*].

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this notice. Comments can be sent to the Docket Clerk, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, STOP 0237, Washington, DC 20250–0237. Comments can also be submitted to the Docket Clerk electronically by email: MarketingOrderComment@usda.gov or via the internet at: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Comments should reference the document number and the date and page number of this issue of the *Federal Register*. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be included in the record, will be made available to the public, and may be viewed at: <https://www.regulations.gov>. Please be advised that comments are posted to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) without change.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Taylor Johnson, Marketing Specialist, or Matthew Pavone, Chief, Rulemaking Services Branch, Market Development Division, Specialty Crops Program, AMS, USDA, 1400 Independence

Avenue SW, Stop 0237, Washington, DC 20250-0237; telephone: (202) 720-8085, or email: *Taylor.Johnson3@usda.gov* or *Matthew.Pavone@usda.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Almonds Grown in California, Marketing Order No. 981.

OMB Number: 0581-0242.

Expiration Date of Approval: August 31, 2026.

Type of Request: Extension and revision of a currently approved information collection.

Abstract: The information collection requirements in this request are essential to carry out the intent of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended (7 U.S.C. 601-674) (the Act), to provide respondents the type of service they request and to administer Marketing Order No. 981 (7 CFR part 981, the Order), which regulates the handling of almonds grown in California.

The Order and its rules and regulations authorize the Almond Board of California (Board), the organization responsible for local administration of the marketing order, to require handlers and other certain entities to submit information.

Since September 2007, the Board has been operating a mandatory program under the marketing order to help reduce the potential for Salmonella in almonds. The Board developed forms as a means for handlers to file required information with the Board relating to the treatment of almonds. Almond handlers are required to submit annual treatment plans to the Board and inspection agency regarding how they plan to treat their almonds in compliance with the program.

Entities interested in being almond process authorities that validate technologies are required to submit an application to the Board on ABC Form No. 51, "Application for Process Authority for Almonds." Manufacturers in the United States, Canada, and Mexico interested in being approved to accept untreated almonds, provided they agree to

treat the almonds themselves under the Board’s Direct Verifiable (DV) program, are required to submit an application to the Board on ABC Form No. 52, “Application for Direct Verifiable (DV) Program for Further Processing of Untreated Almonds.” Entities interested in being approved DV Program user auditors are required to apply to the Board on ABC Form No. 53, “Application for Direct Verifiable (DV) Program Auditors.” To ensure compliance with the mandatory program, entities are required to use either an on-site or audit-based verification program and annually submit a treatment plan to the Board on ABC Form No. 54, “Handler Treatment Plan.” An individual desiring approval as a custom processor must demonstrate that their facility meets the Order's treatment process requirements and must submit an application to the Board on ABC Form No. 55, “Custom Processor Application.”

The information collected is used only by authorized representatives of USDA, including the AMS Specialty Crops Program’s regional and headquarters’ staff, and authorized employees and agents of the Board. Authorized Board employees, agents, and the industry are the primary users of the information, and AMS is the secondary user.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1.1 hours per response.

Respondents: Almond handlers; persons or organizations that would like to qualify to be Board-approved process authorities that validate treatments and technologies; manufacturers who would like to qualify to participate in the Board’s DV program; and entities that would like to qualify as auditors under the DV program.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 225.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.00.

Estimated Number of Recordkeeping hours: 3,900 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 4,210 hours.

Comments are invited on: (1) Whether this collection of information is necessary

for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information has practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record.

Erin Morris,
Administrator,
Agricultural Marketing Service.

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