

# Proposed Rules

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains notices to the public of the proposed issuance of rules and regulations. The purpose of these notices is to give interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rule making prior to the adoption of the final rules.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Agricultural Marketing Service

#### 7 CFR Part 1205

[CN-95-002]

#### 1995 Proposed Amendment to Cotton Board Rules and Regulations Adjusting Supplemental Assessment on Imports

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

**ACTION:** Proposed rule.

**SUMMARY:** The Agricultural Marketing Service proposes to amend the Cotton Board Rules and Regulations by raising the value assigned to imported cotton for the purpose of calculating supplemental assessments collected for use by the Cotton Research and Promotion Program. The proposed value reflects the 12-month average price received by U.S. farmers for Upland cotton for calendar year 1994.

**DATES:** Comments must be received by June 5, 1995.

**ADDRESSES:** Interested persons are invited to submit written comments concerning this proposed rule to Craig Shackelford, Chief, Research and Promotion Staff, Cotton Division, AMS, USDA, P.O. Box 96456, Room 2641-S, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456, or by facsimile (202) 690-1718. Three copies of all written materials shall be submitted, and they will be made available for public inspection in the office of the Cotton Division, Washington, D.C. during regular business hours. All comments should reference docket number, date, and page number of this issue of the **Federal Register**.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Craig Shackelford, (202) 720-2259.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This rule has been determined to be "not significant" for purposes of Executive Order 12866, and therefore has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

This rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12778, Civil Justice Reform. It is not intended to have retroactive effect. This rule would not preempt any state or local laws, regulations, or policies, unless they present an irreconcilable conflict with this rule.

The Act provides that administrative proceedings must be exhausted before parties may file suit in court. Under Section 12 of the Act, any person subject to an order may file with the Secretary a petition stating that the order, any provision of the plan, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order is not in accordance with law and requesting a modification of the order or to be exempted therefrom. Such person is afforded the opportunity for a hearing on the petition. After the hearing, the Secretary would rule on the petition. The Act provides that the District Court of the United States in any district in which the person is an inhabitant, or has his principal place of business, has jurisdiction to review the Secretary's ruling, provided a complaint is filed within 20 days from the date of the entry of the ruling.

The Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has considered the economic impact of this action on small entities pursuant to the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*).

There are an estimated 10,000 importers who are presently subject to rules and regulations issued pursuant to the Cotton Research and Promotion Order. This rule would affect importers of cotton and cotton-containing products. The majority of these importers are small businesses under the criteria established by the Small Business Administration. This rule would raise the assessments paid by the importers under the Cotton Research and Promotion Order. Even though the assessment would be raised, the increase is small and would not significantly affect small businesses. The AMS Administrator therefore has certified that this rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

In compliance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations (5 CFR Part 1320) which implement the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1980 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) the information collection

requirements contained in the regulation to be amended have been previously approved by OMB and were assigned control number 0581-0093.

The Cotton Research and Promotion Act Amendments of 1990 enacted by Congress under Subtitle G of Title XIX of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 on November 28, 1990, contained two provisions that authorized changes in the funding procedures for the Cotton Research and Promotion Program. These provisions are: (1) The assessment of imported cotton and cotton products; and (2) termination of the right of cotton producers to demand a refund of assessments.

An amended Cotton Research and Promotion Order was approved by producers and importers voting in a referendum held July 17-26, 1991. Proposed rules implementing the amended Order were published in the **Federal Register** on December 17, 1991, (56 FR 65450). The final implementing rules were published on July 1 and 2, 1992, (57 FR 29181) and (57 FR 29431), respectively.

This proposed rule would increase the value assigned to imported cotton in the Cotton Board Rules and Regulations 7 CFR 1205.510 (b)(2). This value is used to calculate supplemental assessments on imported cotton and the cotton content of imported products. Supplemental assessments are the second part of a two-part assessment. The first part of the assessment is levied on the weight of cotton produced or imported at a rate of \$1 per bale of cotton which is equivalent to 500 pounds or \$1 per 226.8 kilograms.

Supplemental assessments are levied at a rate of five tenths of one percent of the value of domestically produced cotton, imported cotton, and the cotton content of imported products. The agency adopted the use of the calendar year average price received by U.S. farmers for Upland cotton as a benchmark for the value of domestically produced cotton. The source for this statistic is "Agricultural Prices", a publication of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) of the Department of Agriculture. Use of the average price figure in the calculation of supplemental assessments on imported cotton and the cotton content of imported products yields an assessment