

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** R. Renee Picanso, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-2707. Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from David Hancock, NASS—OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 690-2388 or at [ombofficer@nass.usda.gov](mailto:ombofficer@nass.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title:* The 2017 Census of Agriculture.

*OMB Control Number:* 0535-0226.

*Expiration Date of Previous Approval:* October 31, 2014.

*Type of Request:* Intent to Seek Reinstatement of an Information Collection.

*Abstract:* The census of agriculture is the primary source of statistics concerning the nation's agricultural industry. It provides the only basis of consistent, comparable data for each county, county equivalent, and state in the United States and its outlying insular areas. The census is conducted every 5 years, the last one being for the reference year of 2012. The 2017 Census of Agriculture will again cover all agricultural operations in the 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and American Samoa which meet the census definition for a farm. For the 50 states, Guam, and CNMI, a farm is any place that produced and sold, or normally would produce and sell, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during the census reference year. For Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands it is any place with \$500 in production and sales. American Samoa is not limited by a threshold for production or sales and includes items grown for home consumption.

Data collection for the censuses of agriculture for the 50 states and Puerto Rico will be conducted primarily by mail-out/mail-back procedures (US Postal Service), internet, and with phone and field enumeration for targeted non-respondents. Data collection for Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, CNMI, and American Samoa will be conducted using direct enumeration methods only. For the 50 states, respondents will be contacted up to 5 times by mail (postcard announcement, 3 mailings of the questionnaire and internet access instruction, and a postcard reminder) and additional telephone or personal interview follow-up for mail and internet non-respondents. Questionnaires returned by the Post Office as non-deliverable will be removed from the target population and subsequent mailings. Respondents who

contact one of our phone centers to notify NASS of their farming status or to complete a questionnaire will also be removed from any subsequent mailings. In the summer of 2015, NASS conducted cognitive interviews of proposed changes to the 2017 Census of Agriculture using the Generic Testing docket (0535-0248). In December 2015 NASS began testing the 2017 Census of Agriculture and will continue testing through September 2017, using the Census Content Testing docket (0535-0243).

Two census of agriculture questionnaire versions will be used for the 50 states. One version will be shorter and will be sent to farm operations known to not have certain commodities or farming practices. A longer form will be used for the remaining farming operations. NASS is working to increase the speed and ease at which any respondent may fill out the form by incorporating improved screening questions in the internet version of the questionnaire that automatically skips questions that do not apply to a particular respondent. This reduces overall respondent burden, particularly for small operations and operations specializing in only a few commodities. A screening survey, conducted prior to the census, will enable NASS to eliminate non-farm operations from the census mail list and determine respondent eligibility for receiving the appropriate census mail package.

The census of agriculture is required by law under the "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997," Public Law 105-113, 7 U.S.C. 2204(g). Response to the screening form, the census of agriculture and the census special study surveys are mandatory. The census special study surveys will be included under different OMB approvals. Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by Section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985 as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents. This Notice is submitted in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3501, *et seq.*) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320. NASS also complies with OMB Implementation Guidance, "Implementation Guidance for Title V of the E-Government Act, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA)," **Federal Register**, Vol. 72, No. 115, June 15, 2007, p. 33362. The law guarantees farm operators that their individual information will be kept confidential.

NASS uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes only tabulated total data. These data are used by Congress when developing or changing farm programs. Many national and state programs are designed or allocated based on census data, *i.e.*, soil conservation projects, funds for cooperative extension programs, and research funding. Private industry uses the data to provide more effective production and distribution systems for the agricultural community.

*Estimate of Burden:* Public reporting burden for this collection of information will average about 50 minutes per census long form, 45 minutes per census short form, 15 minutes per screening form, and 2 minutes per refusal from all sources.

*Respondents:* Farm and ranch operators.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 3,950,000.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:* 2,900,000 hours.

*Comments:* Comments are invited on:

(a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, technological or other forms of information technology collection methods.

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

Signed at Washington, DC, April 6, 2016.

**R. Renee Picanso,**

*Associate Administrator.*

[FR Doc. 2016-08950 Filed 4-18-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410-20-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Institute of Standards and Technology

#### Manufacturing Extension Partnership Advisory Board

**AGENCY:** National Institute of Standards and Technology, Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of open meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) announces that the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Advisory Board will hold an open meeting on Thursday May 19, 2016, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held Thursday, May 19, 2016, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Charleston Marriott Hotel, 170 Lockwood Blvd. Charleston, SC 29403. Please note admittance instructions in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Zara Brunner, Manufacturing Extension Partnership, National Institute of Standards and Technology, 100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 4800, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899-4800, telephone number (301) 975-2001, email: [zara.brunner@nist.gov](mailto:zara.brunner@nist.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The MEP Advisory Board (Board) is authorized under Section 3003(d) of the America COMPETES Act (Pub. L. 110-69); codified at 15 U.S.C. 278k(e), as amended, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. The Board is composed of 10 members, appointed by the Director of NIST. Hollings MEP is a unique program, consisting of centers across the United States and Puerto Rico with partnerships at the state, federal, and local levels. The Board provides a forum for input and guidance from Hollings MEP program stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of tools and services focused on supporting and growing the U.S. manufacturing industry, provides advice on MEP programs, plans, and policies, assesses the soundness of MEP plans and strategies, and assesses current performance against MEP program plans. Background information on the Board is available at <http://www.nist.gov/mep/about/advisory-board.cfm>.

Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App., notice is hereby given that the MEP Advisory Board will hold an open meeting on Thursday, May 19, 2016, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. This meeting will focus on several topics. The Board will receive an update on NIST MEP programmatic operations, as well as provide guidance and advice to MEP senior management for the drafting of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. The Board will also provide input on developing protocols to connect user facilities,

research, and technologies at NIST and other federal laboratories with small and mid-size manufacturers, and make recommendations on the establishment of an MEP Learning Organization, an effort to strengthen connections by sharing best practices and building Working Groups and Communities of Practice for furtherance of the MEP Program's mission. The final agenda will be posted on the MEP Advisory Board Web site at <http://www.nist.gov/mep/about/advisory-board.cfm>. This is meeting is being held in conjunction with the MEP Update Meeting that will be held May 17-18, 2016 also at the Charleston Marriott.

*Admittance Instructions:* Anyone wishing to attend the MEP Advisory Board meeting should submit their name, email address and phone number to Monica Claussen ([monica.claussen@nist.gov](mailto:monica.claussen@nist.gov) or 301-975-4852) no later than Monday, May 9, 2016, 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Individuals and representatives of organizations who would like to offer comments and suggestions related to the MEP Advisory Board's business are invited to request a place on the agenda. Approximately 15 minutes will be reserved for public comments at the end of the meeting. Speaking times will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. The amount of time per speaker will be determined by the number of requests received but is likely to be no more than three to five minutes each. The exact time for public comments will be included in the final agenda that will be posted on the MEP Advisory Board Web site as <http://www.nist.gov/mep/about/advisory-board.cfm>. Questions from the public will not be considered during this period. Speakers who wish to expand upon their oral statements, those who had wished to speak but could not be accommodated on the agenda, and those who were unable to attend in person are invited to submit written statements to the MEP Advisory Board, National Institute of Standards and Technology, National Institute of Standards and Technology, 100 Bureau Drive, Mail Stop 4800, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20899-4800, or via fax at (301) 963-6556, or electronically by email to [zara.brunner@nist.gov](mailto:zara.brunner@nist.gov).

**Phillip Singerman,**

*Associate Director for Innovations and Industry Services.*

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**BILLING CODE 3510-13-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE572

#### Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Meeting

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of a public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (MAFMC) Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Advisory Panel (AP) will hold a public meeting.

**DATES:** The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 11, 2016, from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For agenda details, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, 7491-A New Ridge Road, Hanover, MD, (410) 878-7200.

*Council address:* Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674-2331 or on their Web site at [www.mafmc.org](http://www.mafmc.org).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526-5255.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

##### **Agenda**

The MAFMC's Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Advisory Panel (AP) will meet to provide input to the Council on the development of written Council policy on fishing activities that may impact fish habitat. The development of written policy on these activities are intended to enable the Council to work more effectively to address fish habitat and ecosystem issues in our region.

##### **Special Accommodations**

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526-5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: April 14, 2016.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2016-08971 Filed 4-18-16; 8:45 am]

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