

§81.9

shall specify the reason(s) for disapproval. AMS shall be the final arbiter of which applications may be approved or rejected, and the final arbiter of any appeal.

§81.9 Inspection and certification of diversion.

When the removal of the prune-plum trees is complete, the producer(s) will notify the Committee on a form provided by the Committee. The Committee will certify that the trees approved for removal from the block or orchard, as the case may be, have been removed, and notify AMS.

§81.10 Claim for payment.

(a) To obtain payment for the trees removed, the producer must submit to the Committee by June 30, 2002, a completed form provided by the Committee. Such form shall include the Committee's certification that the qualifying trees from the blocks or orchards have been removed. If all other conditions for payment are met, AMS will then issue a check to the producer in the amount of \$8.50 per eligible tree removed.

(b) [Reserved]

§81.11 Compliance with program provisions.

If USDA on its own, or on the advice of the Committee, determines that any provision of this part have not been complied with by the producer, the producer will not be entitled to diversion payments in connection with tree removal. If a producer does not comply with the terms of this part, including the requirement specified in §81.5(b), the producer must refund, with interest, any USDA payment made in connection with such tree removal, and will also be liable to USDA for any other damages incurred as a result of such failure. The Committee or USDA may deny any producer the right to participate in this program or the right to receive or retain payments in connection with any diversion previously made under this program, or both, if the Committee or USDA determines that:

(a) The producer has failed to properly remove the prune/plum trees from the applicable block or the whole or-

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chard regardless of whether such failure was caused directly by the producer or by any other person or persons;

(b) The producer has not acted in good faith in connection with any activity under this program; or

(c) The producer has failed to discharge fully any obligation assumed by, or charged to, him or her under this program.

§81.12 Inspection of premises.

The producer must permit authorized representatives of USDA or the Committee, at any reasonable time, to have access to their premises to inspect and examine the orchard block where trees were removed and records pertaining to the orchard to determine compliance with the provisions of this part.

§81.13 Records and accounts.

(a) The producers participating in this program must keep accurate records and accounts showing the details relative to the prune/plum tree removal, including the contract entered into with the firm or person removing the trees, as well as the invoices.

(b) The producers must permit authorized representatives of USDA, the Committee, and the General Accounting Office, or their delegates, at any reasonable time to inspect, examine, and make copies of such records and accounts to determine compliance with provisions of this part. Such records and accounts must be retained for two years after the date of payment to the producer under the program, or for two years after the date of any audit of records by USDA, whichever is later. Any destruction of records by the producer at any time will be at the risk of the producer when there is reason to know, believe, or suspect that matters may be or could be in dispute or remain in dispute.

§81.14 Offset, assignment, and prompt payment.

(a) Any payment or portion thereof due any person under this part shall be allowed without regard to questions of title under State law, and without regard to any claim or lien against the crop proceeds thereof in favor of the