

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**Rural Housing Service****Notice of Request for Approval of New Information Collection**

AGENCY: Rural Housing Service, USDA.
ACTION: Proposed collection; comments requested.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces Rural Housing Service's (RHS) intention to request approval of additional information collection in support of the Survey of Housing Conditions for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers expanded from just the East Coast to include Midwestern and West Coast migrant streams.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by August 3, 1998 to be assured of consideration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Fox, Senior Loan Specialist, Multi-Family Housing Processing Division, Rural Housing Service, USDA, Stop 0781, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC. 20250, telephone (202) 720-1604 (this is not a toll free number); or you may contact Leslie R. Strauss, Director of Research and Information, Housing Assistance Council, 1025 Vermont Ave. NW., Suite 606, Washington, DC. 20005, telephone 202-842-8600 (this is not a toll free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Survey of Housing Conditions for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers.

Type of Request: New information collection.

Abstract: Migrant and seasonal farmworkers are among the poorest and worst-housed groups in the United States. Only limited information has been collected on farmworker demographics and working conditions, and even less on the housing which they live. The objective of this survey is to collect data on the housing conditions of farmworkers in the midwestern and western migrant streams including types of structures occupied, proportion of households crowded, proportion of households cost burdened, proportion lacking full appliances and sanitary facilities, proportion residing in grower-provided housing, and other characteristics.

Only a few national studies have addressed the needs of the farmworkers, and most have not collected information pertaining to housing conditions. The only major study focusing on farmworker housing conditions was the National Farmworker Housing Study

prepared in 1980. This study was never published. Housing developers and others who provide housing to this population are hampered in serving them by this lack of information.

This study has three sets of research goals. The first goal of the study is to refine a survey instrument that may be used by case workers in the field who may not have a strong background in housing assessment. Additionally, the survey instrument must pose a minimal burden upon respondents' time. The study's second goal is to develop new partnerships with organizations that work extensively with the farmworker population, so that the widest range of farmworker housing conditions may be surveyed in a cost-effective manner. The partnership developed for data collection on the East Coast should provide a model for replication in the Midwest and West Coast migrant streams. The third goal of the study is to collect a representative sample of farmworker housing data that illustrates the predominant housing structure types occupied by migrant and seasonal farmworkers, the physical quality of farmworker housing, overcrowding, and housing cost burden. These data items are the primary indicators of housing need and health risk. Gathering this data will help federal agencies and local farmworker service organizations coordinate limited resources and address the most pressing housing needs of farmworkers.

This survey is being expanded from a current HUD-sponsored survey in the Eastern migrant stream. In combination with the study for the East Coast, a national perspective on housing conditions for migrant and seasonal farmworkers will be gained. More detailed information concerning farmworker housing conditions is necessary in order to determine the significant health risks associated with farmworker housing and effectively focus housing resources on the areas of greatest need. The collection of housing data will greatly benefit farmworkers by improving the information available to organizations and federal agencies that address farmworker health and housing needs.

The Housing Assistant Council (HAC) is slated to perform a collection of farmworker housing data in the East Coast migrant stream under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and this research plan will outline the expansion of the data collection to the Midwest and West Coast migrant streams. This will also result in creating a database for the consolidation and retrieval of this data,

and provision of stipends for outreach workers performing the survey.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for listening to instructions, gathering data needed, and responding to questionnaire items.

Respondents: Migrant farmworkers, rural housing developers, and government agencies.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 6,000.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent: 1.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 1500 hours.

Copies of this information collection can be obtained from Jean Mosely, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, at (202) 692-0041.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of RHS, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of RHS' 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, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments may be sent to Jean Mosely, Regulations and Paperwork Management Branch, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, STOP 0742, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250. 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.

Dated: May 22, 1998.

Jan E. Shadburn,

Administrator, Rural Housing Service.

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COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**Agenda and Notice of Public Meeting of the South Carolina Advisory Committee**

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the rules and regulations of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, that a meeting of the South