

## Guidelines for After a Proposal is Submitted

1. After receiving a proposal, USDA will review and publish it in the *Federal Register* for public comment.
2. USDA may also hold public meetings on the proposal.
3. If, after reviewing the comments, USDA concludes that the program has merit and meets legislative intent: *For programs where an up-front referendum has been requested*, a final proposal will be issued, and a referendum will be announced and conducted. If the program is approved by the industry voters in the referendum, a final rule will be issued to implement the program. *For programs where a delayed referendum has been requested*, the program will be implemented by a final rule.
4. USDA will then seek nominations for members and, if appropriate, alternates for a board, with two nominees being submitted for each position.
5. The Secretary will appoint the board members and alternates, if any, and in collaboration with industry, set a date for the board's organizational meeting.
6. At its organizational meeting, the board will address such matters as bylaws, staff, office location, assessment collection and reporting forms and procedures, and a recommended assessment rate (if the rate is not specified in the order), budget, and marketing plan. The assessment rate, budget, and marketing plan must be submitted to USDA for review and approval. If the assessment rate is not set in the order, rulemaking is necessary before assessment collections may begin.
7. Once USDA approves the assessment rate, budget, and marketing plan, the program may become operational, and assessment collections may begin.