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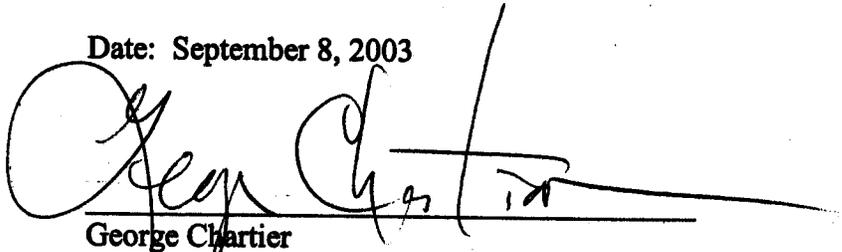
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**MAKING NEWS RELEASE AVAILABLE
TO LOCAL NEWSPAPERS, TELEVISION,
AND RADIO STATIONS**

Docket No. AO-F&V-991-A3; FV03-991-01

I, George Chartier, hereby certify that on the 5th day of September 2003, by authority vested in me by the Associate Administrator and in accordance with 900.4(b)(1)(iii) (23 F.R. 4027), of the applicable rules of practice and procedure (7 CFR Part 900), as amended, I made available a press release, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof, to such newspapers and television and radio stations in the area subject to regulation or proposed to be regulated as reasonably will tend to bring to the attention of interested persons the notice of hearing with respect to USDA setting a hearing on a proposed marketing agreement and order for hops produced in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California.

Date: September 8, 2003



George Chartier
Public Affairs Specialist
Information Staff

Attachment



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT



AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture • 1400 Independence Ave., SW • Room 3510-S
Washington, DC 20250 • (202) 720-8998 • World Wide Web: <http://www.ams.usda.gov>

AMS No. 210-03

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USDA SCHEDULES HEARING ON MARKETING ORDER PROPOSAL FOR HOPS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 5, 2003 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold a public hearing on the promulgation of a proposed federal marketing order for hops grown in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California.

The hearing will be held in Portland, Ore., on Oct. 15 and 16, and continue on Oct. 17 if necessary. The hearing will reconvene in Yakima, Wash., on Oct. 20 and 21, and continue on Oct. 22, 23 and 24 if necessary. The first day of the hearing in Portland and Yakima will begin at 8:30 a.m. The Portland session will be held at the Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel, 8235 NE Airport Way, in Portland, Ore. The Yakima session will be held at the Doubletree Hotel Yakima Valley, 1507 N. First St., Yakima, Wash.

The proposed order would establish volume regulation through producer allotments and reserve pooling of excess production. The proposal would also authorize production research, market research and development projects.

If implemented, an 8-member administrative committee, with an alternate for each member, would administer the order. USDA would appoint administrative committee members from a list of industry-elected nominees. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service would monitor the order.

Assessments levied on hop handlers would finance the program and, as practiced in similar orders, the assessment rate would be established by USDA upon recommendation by the order's administrative committee.

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USDA will evaluate the hearing record and prepare a recommendation for public comment. After reviewing any comments submitted, USDA will decide whether or not to proceed to the next stage – a producer referendum to determine support for the proposed order. The order would become effective only if approved either by two-thirds of the producers voting in the referendum, or by those representing at least two-thirds of the hops grown by those voting in the referendum. Authority for such order rests in the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937.

Notice of the hearing will be published in the Sept. 8 *Federal Register*. Copies of the hearing notice and proposal may be obtained from Barry Broadbent, AMS Fruit and Vegetable Programs, USDA Northwest Marketing Field Office, 1220 SW Third Ave., suite 385, Portland, OR 97204; phone (503) 326-2724; fax (503) 326-7440. Copies may also be obtained from Kathleen Finn, AMS Fruit and Vegetable Programs, USDA Stop 0237, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC 20250-0237; phone: (202) 720-2491; fax (202) 720-8938.

The official Notice of Hearing may also be viewed at: <http://www.archives.gov>.

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*An electronic version of this news release can be obtained via the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/news/newsrel.htm>*