

Testimony of Marc McFetridge, Agricultural Economist from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Specialty Crops Program, Market Development Division

Prepared for the Hearing on Proposed Amendment of Marketing Agreement and Order
No. 959

My name is Marc McFetridge. I have worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) since 2006. From December 2009 to the present, I have worked as an agricultural economist where my duties include preparing economic and statistical analyses, which are used by government officials to help administer Federal programs for specialty crops programs.

I received a Bachelor's degree in agricultural business management in 2001 from Oregon State University and a Master's degree in agricultural and resource economics in 2004 from Oregon State University.

For this hearing on Texas onions, I have prepared a report titled "Texas Onions Crop Years: 2014 through 2024." The data source is the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), USDA. The purpose of this report is to introduce U.S. government data and other relevant information into the hearing record. The data and graphs included in the prepared report, are intended to be used by all parties involved in the hearing, in discussing and analyzing the merits of the various proposed amendments. Data for the 2025 crop year will not be available until February 12, 2026, when NASS will release the

Vegetables 2025 Summary. NASS reports the crop year as the year the onions were harvested, the Federal Marketing order defines the fiscal period as a 12-month period beginning with August 1 of any year and ending with July 31 of the following year. To avoid confusion, I will be presenting the data from NASS reports so interested parties can easily reference NASS publications to verify the information I am presenting.

Besides Texas, NASS reports that onions are also produced in the following states: California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, and Washington.

Harvested Acres:

The graph on page four shows the total harvested acres. Harvested acres reached a ten-year high during 2017 at 11,500 (eleven thousand five hundred) acres. Since 2017, acres harvested have fluctuated between 11,000 acres to 9,000 acres. Harvested acreage in 2024, was reported at 9,500 (nine thousand five hundred), up 5.6 percent compared to 2023, and down 4 percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Yield:

The graph on page five shows the average yield for Texas onions. The average yield over the past 10 crop years was 27,663 pounds per acre. Yields reached a high of 33,800 pounds per acre during 2020. The lowest yield occurred during 2015 at 20,000 pounds per acre. Yield for 2024 was reported at 23,500 (twenty-three thousand five hundred)

pounds per acre, down 16 percent compared to 2023, and down 21 percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Utilized Production:

The graph on page six shows the utilized production of Texas onions. Utilized production has fluctuated between 200 to 400 million pounds the previous ten years. With one exception, in 2015 when utilized production only totaled 80 million pounds, significantly lower than any other utilized production values the past ten years. Utilized production reached a high during 2020 at 368,080,000 (three hundred sixty-eight million, eighty thousand) pounds. For 2024, the utilized production of Texas onions was reported at 223,030,000 (two hundred twenty-three million, thirty thousand) pounds, down 11 percent compared to 2023 and down 24 percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Prices Received by Producers:

The graph on page seven shows the average prices received by producers. Prices have trended upward since 2019. The prices received for Texas onions for 2024 were reported at \$0.38 (thirty-eight cents) per pound, up 11 percent compared to 2023 and up 25 percent compared to the previous five-year average.

Total Value of Utilized Production:

The graph on page eight shows the total value of utilized production. Over the past 10 years, the total value of utilized production was the lowest during 2015 at \$19,680,000 (Nineteen million, six hundred eighty thousand dollars). For 2024, the total value of utilized production was \$84,751,000 (eighty-four million, seven hundred fifty-one thousand) dollars, down 1 percent compared to 2023 and down less than 1 percent compared to the previous five-year average.