

# USDA wants to change packer, stockyard rules

NEW YORK, N.Y. — Members of the livestock and meat industry and the public are invited to comment until March 2 on changes in packers and stockyards' program regulations proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The first phase of an ongoing general review of regulations issued under the Packers and Stockyards' Act has produced several

proposed revisions," James L. Smith, a packers and stockyards official with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, said.

Smith said the significant changes include a proposed substantial reduction in the information required to be included in annual reports submitted by livestock dealers and market agencies, a change which would greatly reduce the time spent in filling out reports

We are also proposing that the custodial accounts for shippers' proceeds could be maintained in interest-bearing savings accounts, Smith said. These accounts are required to ensure prompt payment to consignors of livestock, but there is no reason that the money involved should not be put to work, provided it is properly designated as part of the custodial account. Smith said the revisions

would also include an increase in the amount of the bonds required of dealers to secure more amply the performance of obligations entailed in buying and selling livestock.

Another proposal, Smith said, would clarify our policy on sales promotion programs, making it clear that the policy against the point-promotions used by some packers to attract customers

just retail food stores. We want all firms subject to the act to compete on an equal basis.

Smith said copies of the proposed rulemaking will be mailed to organizations or businesses which might be affected.

The proposed revisions were published in the December 31 Federal Register, available at many public libraries.

Comments may be sent, until March 2, to deputy

administrator, P&S, AMS, USDA, room 3039-S, Washington, D.C., 20250. Copies of the proposals are available from the same address. All comments will be available for public inspection.

The P&S Act is a fair trade practices law administered by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. It promotes fair and open competition in the marketing of livestock, meat and poultry.

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## Green Thumb group receives rural grant

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania Green Thumb, Inc., a rural-based senior employment program, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, was recently awarded a grant by the Atlantic Richfield Foundation to nationally disseminate results of the White House Rural Mini Conferences on Aging held nationwide during 1980.

Green Thumb was designated the official covenor of the rural conferences by Jerome Waldie, Executive Director of the 1981 White House Conference on Aging.

The conferences were held in an attempt to define aging issues and concerns unique to rural areas, and to determine the impact and direction of federal, state, and community aging programs so that the needs of the rural elderly can be

met more effectively and with greater cost efficiency.

The grant proposal, Rural American. Coming of Age, was designed by Peggy Bailey, Director of the Green Thumb at Bloomsburg State College.

Mrs. Bailey participated in the northeastern session in East Hartford, Connecticut, and observed that the valuable resource of information being collected at the conferences should be effectively channeled nationwide to all interested persons and organizations involved in helping to understand and solve the problems of the rural elderly.

She stated, The grant will be used to educate the public to the needs addressed by the conference delegates on issues of housing, employment, health, energy, and transportation in rural

areas, and will better prepare delegates selected to attend the 1981 White House Conference on Aging to be held November 30-December 3, 1981 in Washington, D.C."

Carl Larson, President of National Green Thumb, Inc., said "As a result of the rural mini conferences, it became clear that the rural perspective was vastly different from the urban and there was an urgent need to communicate this fact to all prospective delegates and observers to the White House Conference on Aging. The Arco grant, being coordinated by Orville Carver, Pennsylvania State Director of Green Thumb, will make it possible to share nationwide the resolutions adopted at the conferences and will have a lifelong impact on the entire rural population of this country."

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