

104-127 - Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996

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【Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of Public Law 104-127. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/>】

【Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).】

TABLE OF CONTENTS¹

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—AGRICULTURAL MARKET TRANSITION ACT

Subtitle A—Short Title, Purpose, and Definitions

Sec. 101. Short title and purpose.

Sec. 102. Definitions.

Subtitle B—Production Flexibility Contracts

Sec. 111. Authorization for use of production flexibility contracts.

Sec. 112. Elements of contracts.

Sec. 113. Amounts available for contract payments.

Sec. 114. Determination of contract payments under contracts.

Sec. 115. Payment limitations.

Sec. 116. Violations of contract.

Sec. 117. Transfer or change of interest in lands subject to contract.

Sec. 118. Planting flexibility.

Subtitle C—Nonrecourse Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments

Sec. 131. Availability of nonrecourse marketing assistance loans.

Sec. 132. Loan rates for marketing assistance loans.

Sec. 133. Term of loans.

Sec. 134. Repayment of loans.

Sec. 135. Loan deficiency payments.

Sec. 136. Special marketing loan provisions for upland cotton.

Sec. 136A. Special competitive provisions for extra long staple cotton.

Sec. 137. Availability of recourse loans for high moisture feed grains and seed cotton and other fibers.

Subtitle D—Other Commodities

CHAPTER 1—DAIRY

Sec. 141. Milk price support program.

Sec. 143. Consolidation and reform of Federal milk marketing orders.

Sec. 144. Effect on fluid milk standards in State of California.

¹This table of contents is not part of the Act but is included for user convenience. However, there is a table of contents that was enacted in the original law.

- Sec. 144. Effect on fluid milk standards in State of California.
- Sec. 145. Milk manufacturing marketing adjustment.
- Sec. 146. Promotion.
- Sec. 147. Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact.
- Sec. 148. Dairy export incentive program.
- Sec. 149. Authority to assist in establishment and maintenance of one or more export trading companies.
- Sec. 150. Standby authority to indicate entity best suited to provide international market development and export services.
- Sec. 151. Study and report regarding potential impact of Uruguay Round on prices, income, and Government purchases.
- Sec. 152. Promotion of United States dairy products in international markets through dairy promotion program.

CHAPTER 2—SUGAR

- Sec. 156. Sugar program.

Subtitle E—Administration

- Sec. 161. Administration.
- Sec. 162. Adjustments of loans.
- Sec. 163. Commodity Credit Corporation interest rate.
- Sec. 164. Personal liability of producers for deficiencies.
- Sec. 165. Commodity Credit Corporation sales price restrictions.
- Sec. 166. Commodity certificates.
- Sec. 167. Commodity Credit Corporation storage payments.

Subtitle F—Permanent Price Support Authority

- Sec. 171. Suspension and repeal of permanent price support authority.
- Sec. 172. Effect of amendments.

Subtitle G—Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture

- Sec. 181. Establishment.
- Sec. 182. Composition.
- Sec. 183. Comprehensive review of past and future of production agriculture.
- Sec. 184. Reports.
- Sec. 185. Powers.
- Sec. 186. Commission procedures.
- Sec. 187. Personnel matters.
- Sec. 188. Termination of Commission.

Subtitle H—Miscellaneous Commodity Provisions

- Sec. 191. Options pilot program.
- Sec. 192. Risk management education.
- Sec. 193. Crop insurance.
- Sec. 194. Establishment of Office of Risk Management.
- Sec. 195. Revenue insurance.
- Sec. 196. Administration and operation of noninsured crop assistance program.

TITLE II—AGRICULTURAL TRADE

- Sec. 261. Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award.
- Sec. 282. Sense of Congress concerning multilateral disciplines on credit guarantees.

TITLE III—CONSERVATION

Subtitle B—Highly Erodible Land Conservation

- Sec. 317. Wind erosion estimation pilot project.

Subtitle C—Wetland Conservation

[Sec. 325. Repealed]

Subtitle E—Conservation Funding and Administration

- Sec. 343. Public notice and comment for revisions to certain State technical guides.

subtitle [Subtitle F—Repealed]

Subtitle H—Miscellaneous Conservation Provisions

[Sec. 385. Repealed]

Sec. 389. Interim moratorium on bypass flows.

Sec. 390. Everglades ecosystem restoration.

Sec. 391. Agricultural air quality research oversight.

TITLE V—AGRICULTURAL PROMOTION

Subtitle A—Commodity Promotion and Evaluation

Sec. 501. Commodity promotion and evaluation.

Subtitle B—Issuance of Orders for Promotion, Research, and Information Activities
Regarding Agricultural Commodities

Sec. 511. Short title.

Sec. 512. Findings and purpose.

Sec. 513. Definitions.

Sec. 514. Issuance of orders.

Sec. 515. Required terms in orders.

Sec. 516. Permissive terms in orders.

Sec. 517. Assessments.

Sec. 518. Referenda.

Sec. 519. Petition and review of orders.

Sec. 520. Enforcement.

Sec. 521. Investigations and power to subpoena.

Sec. 522. Suspension or termination.

Sec. 523. Amendments to orders.

Sec. 524. Effect on other laws.

Sec. 525. Regulations.

Sec. 526. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE VIII—RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION

SECTION 1. [7 U.S.C. 7201 note] SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996”.

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TITLE I—AGRICULTURAL MARKET TRANSITION ACT

Subtitle A—Short Title, Purpose, and Definitions

SEC. 101. [7 U.S.C. 7201] SHORT TITLE AND PURPOSE.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This title may be cited as the “Agricultural Market Transition Act”.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this title—

(1) to authorize the use of binding production flexibility contracts between the United States and agricultural producers to support farming certainty and flexibility while ensuring continued compliance with farm conservation and wetland protection requirements;

(2) to make nonrecourse marketing assistance loans and loan deficiency payments available for certain crops;

(3) to improve the operation of farm programs for milk, peanuts, and sugar; and

(4) to establish a commission to undertake a comprehensive review of past and future production agriculture in the United States.

SEC. 102. [7 U.S.C. 7202] DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) **AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 1949.**—Except in section 171, the term “Agricultural Act of 1949” means the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1421 et seq.), as in effect prior to the suspensions under section 171(b)(1).

(2) **CONSIDERED PLANTED.**—The term “considered planted” means acreage that is considered planted under title V of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.) and such other acreage as the Secretary considers fair and equitable.

(3) **CONTRACT.**—The terms “contract” and “production flexibility contract” mean a production flexibility contract entered into under section 111.

(4) **CONTRACT ACREAGE.**—The term “contract acreage” means 1 or more crop acreage bases established for contract commodities under title V of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1461 et seq.) that would have been in effect for the 1996 crop (but for suspension under section 171(b)(1)).

(5) **CONTRACT COMMODITY.**—The term “contract commodity” means wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, upland cotton, and rice.

(6) **CONTRACT PAYMENT.**—The term “contract payment” means a payment made under this subtitle pursuant to a contract.

(7) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of Agriculture.

(8) **EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.**—The term “extra long staple cotton” means cotton that—

(A) is produced from pure strain varieties of the *Barbadense* species or any hybrid thereof, or other similar types of extra long staple cotton, designated by the Secretary, having characteristics needed for various end uses for which United States upland cotton is not suitable and grown in irrigated cotton-growing regions of the United States designated by the Secretary or other areas designated by the Secretary as suitable for the production of the varieties or types; and

(B) is ginned on a roller-type gin or, if authorized by the Secretary, ginned on another type gin for experimental purposes.

(9) **FARM PROGRAM PAYMENT YIELD.**—The term “farm program payment yield” means the farm program payment yield established for the 1995 crop of a contract commodity under section 505 of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1465). The Secretary shall adjust the farm program payment yield for the 1995 crop of a contract commodity to account for any additional yield payments made with respect to that crop under subsection (b)(2) of the section.

(10) **LOAN COMMODITY.**—The term “loan commodity” means each contract commodity, extra long staple cotton, and oilseed.

(11) OILSEED.—The term “oilseed” means a crop of soybeans, sunflower seed, rapeseed, canola, safflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, or, if designated by the Secretary, other oilseeds.

(12) PRODUCER.—The term “producer” means an owner, operator, landlord, tenant, or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing a crop and who is entitled to share in the crop available for marketing from the farm, or would have shared had the crop been produced. In determining whether a grower of hybrid seed is a producer, the Secretary shall not take into consideration the existence of a hybrid seed contract.

(13) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(14) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(15) UNITED STATES.—The term “United States”, when used in a geographical sense, means all of the States.

Subtitle B—Production Flexibility Contracts

SEC. 111. [7 U.S.C. 7211] AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF PRODUCTION FLEXIBILITY CONTRACTS.

(a) OFFER AND TERMS.—The Secretary shall offer to enter into a production flexibility contract with an eligible owner or producer described in subsection (b) on a farm containing eligible cropland. Under the terms of a contract, the owner or producer shall agree, in exchange for annual contract payments, to—

(1) comply with applicable conservation requirements under subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.);

(2) comply with applicable wetland protection requirements under subtitle C of title XII of the Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.);

(3) comply with the planting flexibility requirements of section 118; and

(4) use the land subject to the contract for an agricultural or related activity, but not for a nonagricultural commercial or industrial use, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) ELIGIBLE OWNERS AND PRODUCERS DESCRIBED.—The following producers and owners shall be eligible to enter into a contract:

(1) An owner of eligible cropland who assumes all or a part of the risk of producing a crop.

(2) A producer (other than an owner) on eligible cropland with a share-rent lease of the eligible cropland, regardless of the length of the lease, if the owner enters into the same contract.

(3) A producer (other than an owner) on eligible cropland who cash rents the eligible cropland under a lease expiring on or after September 30, 2002, in which case the owner is not required to enter into the contract.

(4) A producer (other than an owner) on eligible cropland who cash rents the eligible cropland under a lease expiring before September 30, 2002. The owner of the eligible cropland may also enter into the same contract. If the producer elects to enroll less than 100 percent of the eligible cropland in the contract, the consent of the owner is required.

(5) An owner of eligible cropland who cash rents the eligible cropland and the lease term expires before September 30, 2002, if the tenant declines to enter into a contract. In the case of an owner covered by this paragraph, contract payments shall not begin under a contract until the lease held by the tenant ends.

(6) An owner or producer described in any preceding paragraph regardless of whether the owner or producer purchased catastrophic risk protection for a 1996 crop under section 508(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)).

(c) TENANTS AND SHARECROPPERS.—In carrying out this subtitle, the Secretary shall provide adequate safeguards to protect the interests of tenants and sharecroppers.

(d) ELIGIBLE CROPLAND DESCRIBED.—Land shall be considered to be cropland eligible for coverage under a contract only if the land has contract acreage attributable to the land and—

(1) for at least 1 of the 1991 through 1995 crops, at least a portion of the land was enrolled in the acreage reduction program authorized for a crop of a contract commodity under section 101B, 103B, 105B, or 107B of the Agricultural Act of 1949 or was considered planted;

(2) was subject to a conservation reserve contract under section 1231 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831) whose term expired, or was voluntarily terminated, on or after January 1, 1995; or

(3) is released from coverage under a conservation reserve contract by the Secretary during the period beginning on January 1, 1995, and ending on the date specified in section 112(a)(2).

(e) QUANTITY OF ELIGIBLE CROPLAND COVERED BY CONTRACT.—Subject to subsection (b)(4), an owner or producer may enroll as contract acreage all or a portion of the eligible cropland on the farm.

(f) VOLUNTARY REDUCTION IN CONTRACT ACREAGE.—Subject to subsection (b)(4), an owner or producer who enters into a contract may subsequently reduce the quantity of contract acreage covered by the contract.

SEC. 112. [7 U.S.C. 7212] ELEMENTS OF CONTRACTS.

(a) TIME FOR CONTRACTING.—

(1) COMMENCEMENT.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall commence entering into contracts not later than 45 days after the date of enactment of this title.

(2) DEADLINE.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), the Secretary may not enter into a contract after August 1, 1996.

(3) CONSERVATION RESERVE LANDS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Secretary shall allow an eligible owner or producer on

a farm covered by a conservation reserve contract entered into under section 1231 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3831) that terminates after the date specified in paragraph (2) to enter into or expand a production flexibility contract to cover the contract acreage of the farm that was subject to the former conservation reserve contract.

(B) AMOUNT.—Contract payments made for contract acreage under this paragraph shall be made at the rate and amount applicable to the annual contract payment level for the applicable crop. For the fiscal year in which the conservation reserve contract is terminated, the owner or producer subject to the production flexibility contract may elect to receive either contract payments or a prorated payment under the conservation reserve contract, but not both.

(b) DURATION OF CONTRACT.—

(1) BEGINNING DATE.—The term of a contract shall begin with—

(A) the 1996 crop of a contract commodity; or

(B) in the case of acreage that was subject to a conservation reserve contract described in subsection (a)(3), the date the production flexibility contract was entered into or expanded to cover the acreage.

(2) ENDING DATE.—The term of a contract shall extend through the 2002 crop, unless earlier terminated by the owner or producer.

(c) ESTIMATION OF CONTRACT PAYMENTS.—At the time the Secretary enters into a contract, the Secretary shall provide an estimate of the minimum contract payments anticipated to be made during at least the first fiscal year for which contract payments will be made.

(d) TIME FOR PAYMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An annual contract payment shall be made not later than September 30 of each of fiscal years 1996 through 2002.

(2) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

(A) FISCAL YEAR 1996.—At the option of the owner or producer, 50 percent of the contract payment for fiscal year 1996 shall be made not later than 30 days after the date on which the contract is entered into and approved by the Secretary and the owner or producer.

(B) SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEARS.—At the option of the owner or producer for fiscal year 1997 and each subsequent fiscal year, 50 percent of the annual contract payment shall be made on December 15 or January 15 of the fiscal year. The owner or producer may change the date selected under this subparagraph for a subsequent fiscal year by providing advance notice to the Secretary.

(3) SPECIAL RULE.—Notwithstanding the requirements for making an annual contract payment specified in paragraphs (1) and (2), at the option of the owner or producer, the Secretary shall pay the full amount (or such portion as the owner or producer may specify) of the contract payment required to

be paid for any of fiscal years 1999 through 2002 at such time or times during that fiscal year as the owner or producer may specify.

SEC. 113. [7 U.S.C. 7213] AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR CONTRACT PAYMENTS.

(a) **FISCAL YEAR AMOUNTS.**—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, expend the following amounts to satisfy the obligations of the Secretary under all contracts:

- (1) For fiscal year 1996, \$5,570,000,000.
- (2) For fiscal year 1997, \$5,385,000,000.
- (3) For fiscal year 1998, \$5,800,000,000.
- (4) For fiscal year 1999, \$5,603,000,000.
- (5) For fiscal year 2000, \$5,130,000,000.
- (6) For fiscal year 2001, \$4,130,000,000.
- (7) For fiscal year 2002, \$4,008,000,000.

(b) **ALLOCATION.**—The amount made available for a fiscal year under subsection (a) shall be allocated as follows:

- (1) For wheat, 26.26 percent.
- (2) For corn, 46.22 percent.
- (3) For grain sorghum, 5.11 percent.
- (4) For barley, 2.16 percent.
- (5) For oats, 0.15 percent.
- (6) For upland cotton, 11.63 percent.
- (7) For rice, 8.47 percent.

(c) **ADJUSTMENT.**—The Secretary shall adjust the amounts allocated for each contract commodity under subsection (b) for a particular fiscal year by—

(1) adding an amount equal to the sum of all repayments of deficiency payments required under section 114(a)(2) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1445j(a)(2)) for the commodity;

(2) adding an amount equal to the sum of all refunds of contract payments received during the preceding fiscal year under section 116 for the commodity; and

(3) subtracting an amount equal to the amount, if any, necessary during that fiscal year to satisfy payment requirements for the commodity under sections 103B, 105B, or 107B of the Agricultural Act of 1949 for the 1994 and 1995 crop years.

(d) **ADDITIONAL RICE ALLOCATION.**—In addition to the adjustments required under subsection (c), the amount allocated under subsection (b) for rice contract payments shall be increased by \$8,500,000 for each of fiscal years 1997 through 2002.

(e) **EXCLUSION OF CERTAIN AMOUNTS FROM CONTRACT PAYMENTS.**—Any amount added pursuant to paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c) to the amount available under subsection (a) for a fiscal year and paid to owners and producers under a contract shall not be treated as a contract payment for purposes of section 115(a) of this title or section 1001(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(1)). However, the amount of a payment covered by this subsection may not exceed \$50,000 per person.

(f) **EFFECT OF PAYMENT LIMITATION.**—The amount available under subsection (a) for a fiscal year shall be reduced by an amount equal to the total amount of contract payments for the fis-

cal year that owners and producers forgo as a result of operation of the payment limitation under section 1001(1) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(1)).

SEC. 114. [7 U.S.C. 7214] DETERMINATION OF CONTRACT PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS.

(a) **INDIVIDUAL PAYMENT QUANTITY OF CONTRACT COMMODITIES.**—For each contract, the payment quantity of a contract commodity for each fiscal year shall be equal to the product of—

- (1) 85 percent of the contract acreage; and
- (2) the farm program payment yield.

(b) **ANNUAL PAYMENT QUANTITY OF CONTRACT COMMODITIES.**—The payment quantity of each contract commodity covered by all contracts for each fiscal year shall be equal to the sum of the amounts calculated under subsection (a) for each individual contract.

(c) **ANNUAL PAYMENT RATE.**—The payment rate for a contract commodity for each fiscal year shall be equal to—

- (1) the amount made available under section 113 for the contract commodity for the fiscal year; divided by
- (2) the amount determined under subsection (b) for the fiscal year.

(d) **ANNUAL PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—The amount to be paid under a contract in effect for each fiscal year with respect to all contract commodities covered by the contract shall be equal to the sum of the products of—

- (1) the payment quantity determined under subsection (a) for each of the contract commodities covered by the contract; and
- (2) the corresponding payment rate for the contract commodity in effect under subsection (c).

(e) **REDUCTION IN PAYMENT AMOUNT.**—The contract payment determined under subsection (d) for an owner or producer for a fiscal year shall be immediately reduced by the amount of any repayment of deficiency payments that is required under section 114(a)(2) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1445j(a)(2)) and is not repaid as of the date the contract payment is determined. The Secretary shall be required to collect the required repayment, or any claim based on the required repayment, as soon as the contract payment is determined.

(f) **ASSIGNMENT OF CONTRACT PAYMENTS.**—The provisions of section 8(g) of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590h(g)) (relating to assignment of payments) shall apply to contract payments under this section. The owner or producer making the assignment, or the assignee, shall provide the Secretary with notice, in such manner as the Secretary may require in the contract, of any assignment made under this subsection.

(g) **SHARING OF CONTRACT PAYMENTS.**—The Secretary shall provide for the sharing of contract payments among the owners and producers subject to the contract on a fair and equitable basis.

SEC. 115. [7 U.S.C. 7215] PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.

(a) **APPLICABILITY OF PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.**—Sections 1001 through 1001C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308

through 1308–3), as amended by this section, shall be applicable to contract payments made under this subtitle.

(b) PAYMENT LIMITATIONS.—²

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—³

SEC. 116. [7 U.S.C. 7216] VIOLATIONS OF CONTRACT.

(a) TERMINATION OF CONTRACT FOR VIOLATION.—Except as provided in subsection (b), if an owner or producer subject to a contract violates a requirement of the contract specified in section 111(a), the Secretary shall terminate the contract with respect to the owner or producer on each farm in which the owner or producer has an interest. On the termination, the owner or producer shall forfeit all rights to receive future contract payments on each farm in which the owner or producer has an interest and shall refund to the Secretary all contract payments received by the owner or producer during the period of the violation, together with interest on the contract payments as determined by the Secretary.

(b) REFUND OR ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary determines that a violation does not warrant termination of the contract under subsection (a), the Secretary may require the owner or producer subject to the contract—

(1) to refund to the Secretary that part of the contract payments received by the owner or producer during the period of the violation, together with interest on the contract payments as determined by the Secretary; or

(2) to accept a reduction in the amount of future contract payments that is proportionate to the severity of the violation, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) FORECLOSURE.—

(1) EFFECT OF FORECLOSURE.—An owner or producer subject to a contract may not be required to make repayments to the Secretary of amounts received under the contract if the contract acreage has been foreclosed on and the Secretary determines that forgiving the repayments is appropriate to provide fair and equitable treatment.

(2) RESUMPTION OF OPERATION.—This subsection shall not void the responsibilities of the owner or producer under the contract if the owner or producer continues or resumes operation, or control, of the contract acreage. On the resumption of operation or control over the contract acreage by the owner or producer, the provisions of the contract in effect on the date of the foreclosure shall apply.

(d) REVIEW.—A determination of the Secretary under this section shall be considered to be an adverse decision for purposes of the availability of administrative review of the determination.

SEC. 117. [7 U.S.C. 7217] TRANSFER OR CHANGE OF INTEREST IN LANDS SUBJECT TO CONTRACT.

(a) TERMINATION.—Except as provided in subsection (c), a transfer of (or change in) the interest of an owner or producer subject to a contract in the contract acreage covered by the contract shall result in the termination of the contract with respect to the

²Sec. 115(b) amended sec. 1001 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308).

³Sec. 115(b) amended secs. 1001A and 1001C of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308–1 and 1308–3).

acreage, unless the transferee or owner of the acreage agrees to assume all obligations under the contract. The termination shall be effective on the date of the transfer or change.

(b) **MODIFICATION.**—At the request of the transferee or owner, the Secretary may modify the contract if the modifications are consistent with the objectives of this subtitle, as determined by the Secretary.

(c) **EXCEPTION.**—If an owner or producer who is entitled to a contract payment dies, becomes incompetent, or is otherwise unable to receive the contract payment, the Secretary shall make the payment, in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

SEC. 118. [7 U.S.C. 7218] PLANTING FLEXIBILITY.

(a) **PERMITTED CROPS.**—Subject to subsection (b), any commodity or crop may be planted on contract acreage on a farm.

(b) **LIMITATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS REGARDING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.**—

(1) **LIMITATIONS.**—The planting of fruits and vegetables (other than lentils, mung beans, and dry peas) shall be prohibited on contract acreage.

(2) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Paragraph (1) shall not limit the planting of a fruit or vegetable—

(A) in any region in which there is a history of double-cropping of contract commodities with fruits or vegetables, as determined by the Secretary, in which case the double-cropping shall be permitted;

(B) on a farm that the Secretary determines has a history of planting fruits or vegetables on contract acreage, except that a contract payment shall be reduced by an acre for each acre planted to the fruit or vegetable; or

(C) by a producer who the Secretary determines has an established planting history of a specific fruit or vegetable, except that—

(i) the quantity planted may not exceed the producer's average annual planting history of the fruit or vegetable in the 1991 through 1995 crop years (excluding any crop year in which no plantings were made), as determined by the Secretary; and

(ii) a contract payment shall be reduced by an acre for each acre planted to the fruit or vegetable.

Subtitle C—Nonrecourse Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments

SEC. 131. [7 U.S.C. 7231] AVAILABILITY OF NONRECOURSE MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.

(a) **NONRECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE.**—For each of the 1996 through 2002 crops of each loan commodity, the Secretary shall make available to producers on a farm nonrecourse marketing assistance loans for loan commodities produced on the farm. The loans shall be made under terms and conditions that are prescribed

by the Secretary and at the loan rate established under section 132 for the loan commodity.

(b) ELIGIBLE PRODUCTION.—The following production shall be eligible for a marketing assistance loan under subsection (a):

(1) In the case of a marketing assistance loan for a contract commodity, any production by a producer on a farm containing eligible cropland covered by a production flexibility contract.

(2) In the case of a marketing assistance loan for extra long staple cotton and oilseeds, any production.

(c) COMPLIANCE WITH CONSERVATION AND WETLANDS REQUIREMENTS.—As a condition of the receipt of a marketing assistance loan under subsection (a), the producer shall comply with applicable conservation requirements under subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.) and applicable wetland protection requirements under subtitle C of title XII of the Act (16 U.S.C. 3821 et seq.) during the term of the loan.

(d) ADDITIONAL OUTLAYS PROHIBITED.—The Secretary shall carry out this subtitle in such a manner that there are no additional outlays under this subtitle as a result of the reconstitution of a farm that occurs as a result of the combination of another farm that does not contain eligible cropland covered by a production flexibility contract.

SEC. 132. [7 U.S.C. 7232] LOAN RATES FOR MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS.

(a) WHEAT.—

(1) LOAN RATE.—Subject to paragraph (2), the loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for wheat shall be—

(A) not less than 85 percent of the simple average price received by producers of wheat, as determined by the Secretary, during the marketing years for the immediately preceding 5 crops of wheat, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; but

(B) not more than \$2.58 per bushel.

(2) STOCKS TO USE RATIO ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary estimates for any marketing year that the ratio of ending stocks of wheat to total use for the marketing year will be—

(A) equal to or greater than 30 percent, the Secretary may reduce the loan rate for wheat for the corresponding crop by an amount not to exceed 10 percent in any year;

(B) less than 30 percent but not less than 15 percent, the Secretary may reduce the loan rate for wheat for the corresponding crop by an amount not to exceed 5 percent in any year; or

(C) less than 15 percent, the Secretary may not reduce the loan rate for wheat for the corresponding crop.

(b) FEED GRAINS.—

(1) LOAN RATE FOR CORN.—Subject to paragraph (2), the loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for corn shall be—

(A) not less than 85 percent of the simple average price received by producers of corn, as determined by the

Secretary, during the marketing years for the immediately preceding 5 crops of corn, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; but

(B) not more than \$1.89 per bushel.

(2) STOCKS TO USE RATIO ADJUSTMENT.—If the Secretary estimates for any marketing year that the ratio of ending stocks of corn to total use for the marketing year will be—

(A) equal to or greater than 25 percent, the Secretary may reduce the loan rate for corn for the corresponding crop by an amount not to exceed 10 percent in any year;

(B) less than 25 percent but not less than 12.5 percent, the Secretary may reduce the loan rate for corn for the corresponding crop by an amount not to exceed 5 percent in any year; or

(C) less than 12.5 percent, the Secretary may not reduce the loan rate for corn for the corresponding crop.

(3) OTHER FEED GRAINS.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for grain sorghum, barley, and oats, respectively, shall be established at such level as the Secretary determines is fair and reasonable in relation to the rate that loans are made available for corn, taking into consideration the feeding value of the commodity in relation to corn.

(c) UPLAND COTTON.—

(1) LOAN RATE.—Subject to paragraph (2), the loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for upland cotton shall be established by the Secretary at such loan rate, per pound, as will reflect for the base quality of upland cotton, as determined by the Secretary, at average locations in the United States a rate that is not less than the smaller of—

(A) 85 percent of the average price (weighted by market and month) of the base quality of cotton as quoted in the designated United States spot markets during 3 years of the 5-year period ending July 31 of the year preceding the year in which the crop is planted, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; or

(B) 90 percent of the average, for the 15-week period beginning July 1 of the year preceding the year in which the crop is planted, of the 5 lowest-priced growths of the growths quoted for Middling $1\frac{3}{32}$ -inch cotton C.I.F. Northern Europe (adjusted downward by the average difference during the period April 15 through October 15 of the year preceding the year in which the crop is planted between the average Northern European price quotation of such quality of cotton and the market quotations in the designated United States spot markets for the base quality of upland cotton), as determined by the Secretary.

(2) LIMITATIONS.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for upland cotton shall not be less than \$0.50 per pound or more than \$0.5192 per pound.

(d) EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for extra long staple cotton shall be—

(1) not less than 85 percent of the simple average price received by producers of extra long staple cotton, as determined by the Secretary, during 3 years of the 5-year period ending July 31 of the year preceding the year in which the crop is planted, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; but

(2) not more than \$0.7965 per pound.

(e) RICE.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for rice shall be \$6.50 per hundredweight.

(f) OILSEEDS.—

(1) SOYBEANS.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for soybeans shall be—

(A) not less than 85 percent of the simple average price received by producers of soybeans, as determined by the Secretary, during the marketing years for the immediately preceding 5 crops of soybeans, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; but

(B) not less than \$4.92 or more than \$5.26 per bushel.

(2) SUNFLOWER SEED, CANOLA, RAPESEED, SAFFLOWER, MUSTARD SEED, AND FLAXSEED.—The loan rate for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for sunflower seed, canola, rapeseed, safflower, mustard seed, and flaxseed, individually, shall be—

(A) not less than 85 percent of the simple average price received by producers of sunflower seed, individually, as determined by the Secretary, during the marketing years for the immediately preceding 5 crops of sunflower seed, individually, excluding the year in which the average price was the highest and the year in which the average price was the lowest in the period; but

(B) not less than \$0.087 or more than \$0.093 per pound.

(3) OTHER OILSEEDS.—The loan rates for a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for other oilseeds shall be established at such level as the Secretary determines is fair and reasonable in relation to the loan rate available for soybeans, except in no event shall the rate for the oilseeds (other than cottonseed) be less than the rate established for soybeans on a per-pound basis for the same crop.

SEC. 133. [7 U.S.C. 7233] TERM OF LOANS.

(a) TERM OF LOAN.—In the case of each loan commodity (other than upland cotton or extra long staple cotton), a marketing assistance loan under section 131 shall have a term of 9 months beginning on the first day of the first month after the month in which the loan is made.

(b) SPECIAL RULE FOR COTTON.—A marketing assistance loan for upland cotton or extra long staple cotton shall have a term of

10 months beginning on the first day of the month in which the loan is made.

(c) EXTENSIONS PROHIBITED.—The Secretary may not extend the term of a marketing assistance loan for any loan commodity.

SEC. 134. [7 U.S.C. 7234] REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

(a) REPAYMENT RATES FOR WHEAT, FEED GRAINS, AND OILSEEDS.—The Secretary shall permit a producer to repay a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, and oilseeds at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for the commodity under section 132, plus interest (as determined by the Secretary); or

(2) a rate that the Secretary determines will—

(A) minimize potential loan forfeitures;

(B) minimize the accumulation of stocks of the commodity by the Federal Government;

(C) minimize the cost incurred by the Federal Government in storing the commodity; and

(D) allow the commodity produced in the United States to be marketed freely and competitively, both domestically and internationally.

(b) REPAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON AND RICE.—The Secretary shall permit producers to repay a marketing assistance loan under section 131 for upland cotton and rice at a rate that is the lesser of—

(1) the loan rate established for the commodity under section 132, plus interest (as determined by the Secretary); or

(2) the prevailing world market price for the commodity (adjusted to United States quality and location), as determined by the Secretary.

(c) REPAYMENT RATES FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—Repayment of a marketing assistance loan for extra long staple cotton shall be at the loan rate established for the commodity under section 132, plus interest (as determined by the Secretary).

(d) PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE.—For purposes of this section and section 136, the Secretary shall prescribe by regulation—

(1) a formula to determine the prevailing world market price for each loan commodity, adjusted to United States quality and location; and

(2) a mechanism by which the Secretary shall announce periodically the prevailing world market price for each loan commodity.

(e) ADJUSTMENT OF PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—During the period ending July 31, 2003, the prevailing world market price for upland cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location) established under subsection (d) shall be further adjusted if—

(A) the adjusted prevailing world market price is less than 115 percent of the loan rate for upland cotton established under section 132, as determined by the Secretary; and

(B) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced United States growth as quoted for Middling (M) $1\frac{3}{32}$ -inch cotton delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe is greater than the Friday through Thursday average price of the 5 lowest-priced growths of upland cotton, as quoted for Middling (M) $1\frac{3}{32}$ -inch cotton, delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe (referred to in this section as the "Northern Europe price").

(2) FURTHER ADJUSTMENT.—Except as provided in paragraph (3), the adjusted prevailing world market price for upland cotton shall be further adjusted on the basis of some or all of the following data, as available:

(A) The United States share of world exports.

(B) The current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments.

(C) Other data determined by the Secretary to be relevant in establishing an accurate prevailing world market price for upland cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location).

(3) LIMITATION ON FURTHER ADJUSTMENT.—The adjustment under paragraph (2) may not exceed the difference between—

(A) the Friday through Thursday average price for the lowest-priced United States growth as quoted for Middling $1\frac{3}{32}$ -inch cotton delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe; and

(B) the Northern Europe price.

SEC. 135. [7 U.S.C. 7235] LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS.

(a) AVAILABILITY OF LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS.—Except as provided in subsection (d), the Secretary may make loan deficiency payments available to—

(1) producers who, although eligible to obtain a marketing assistance loan under section 131 with respect to a loan commodity, agree to forgo obtaining the loan for the commodity in return for payments under this section; and

(2) effective only for the 2000 and 2001 crop years, producers that, although not eligible to obtain such a marketing assistance loan under section 131, produce a contract commodity.

(b) COMPUTATION.—A loan deficiency payment under this section shall be computed by multiplying—

(1) the loan payment rate determined under subsection (c) for the loan commodity; by

(2) the quantity of the loan commodity produced by the eligible producers, excluding any quantity for which the producers obtain a loan under section 131.

(c) LOAN PAYMENT RATE.—For purposes of this section, the loan payment rate shall be the amount by which—

(1) the loan rate established under section 132 for the loan commodity; exceeds

(2) the rate at which a loan for the commodity may be repaid under section 134.

(d) EXCEPTION FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—This section shall not apply with respect to extra long staple cotton.

(e) **TRANSITION.**—A payment to a producer eligible for a payment under subsection (a)(2) that harvested a commodity on or before the date that is 30 days after the promulgation of the regulations implementing subsection (a)(2) shall be determined as the date the producer lost beneficial interest in the commodity, as determined by the Secretary.

(f) **BENEFICIAL INTEREST.**—Subject to subsection (e), a producer shall be eligible for a payment under this section only if the producer has a beneficial interest in the commodity, as determined by the Secretary.

(g) **EFFECTIVE DATE FOR PAYMENT RATE DETERMINATION.**—For the 2001 crop year, the Secretary shall determine the amount of the loan deficiency payment to be made under this section to the producers on a farm with respect to a quantity of a loan commodity using the payment rate in effect under subsection (c) as of the earlier of the following:

(1) The date on which the producers marketed or otherwise lost beneficial interest in the crop of the loan commodity, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) The date the producers requested the payment.

SEC. 136. [7 U.S.C. 7236] SPECIAL MARKETING LOAN PROVISIONS FOR UPLAND COTTON.⁴

(a) **COTTON USER MARKETING CERTIFICATES.**—

(1) **ISSUANCE.**—During the period ending July 31, 2003, the Secretary shall issue marketing certificates or cash payments, at the option of the recipient, to domestic users and exporters for documented purchases by domestic users and sales for export by exporters made in the week following a consecutive 4-week period in which—

(A) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced United States growth, as quoted for Middling (M) 1 $\frac{3}{32}$ -inch cotton, delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe exceeds the Northern Europe price by more than 1.25 cents per pound; and

(B) the prevailing world market price for upland cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location) does not exceed 134 percent of the loan rate for upland cotton established under section 132.

(2) **VALUE OF CERTIFICATES OR PAYMENTS.**—The value of the marketing certificates or cash payments shall be based on the amount of the difference (reduced by 1.25 cents per pound) in the prices during the 4th week of the consecutive 4-week period multiplied by the quantity of upland cotton included in the documented sales.

(3) **ADMINISTRATION OF MARKETING CERTIFICATES.**—

(A) **REDEMPTION, MARKETING, OR EXCHANGE.**—The Secretary shall establish procedures for redeeming marketing certificates for cash or marketing or exchange of the certificates for agricultural commodities owned by the Com-

⁴Sec. 1207 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 7937; P.L. 107-171, 116 Stat. 161, May 13, 2002) contains provisions that are substantively similar to this section, other than later expiration dates in, and subsecs. (a)(4) and (b)(1)(E) of, sec. 1207 of that Act. Since sec. 1207 of that Act was enacted later in time than this sec., it is the probable intent of Congress that sec. 1207 of that Act supersedes this sec.

modity Credit Corporation or pledged to the Commodity Credit Corporation as collateral for a loan in such manner, and at such price levels, as the Secretary determines will best effectuate the purposes of cotton user marketing certificates, including enhancing the competitiveness and marketability of United States cotton. Any price restrictions that would otherwise apply to the disposition of agricultural commodities by the Commodity Credit Corporation shall not apply to the redemption of certificates under this subsection.

(B) DESIGNATION OF COMMODITIES AND PRODUCTS.—To the extent practicable, the Secretary shall permit owners of certificates to designate the commodities and products, including storage sites, the owners would prefer to receive in exchange for certificates.

(C) TRANSFERS.—Marketing certificates issued to domestic users and exporters of upland cotton may be transferred to other persons in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary.

(b) SPECIAL IMPORT QUOTA.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President shall carry out an import quota program during the period ending July 31, 2003, as provided in this subsection.

(B) PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—Except as provided in subparagraph (C), whenever the Secretary determines and announces that for any consecutive 4-week period, the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced United States growth, as quoted for Middling (M) 1³/₃₂-inch cotton, delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe, adjusted for the value of any certificate issued under subsection (a), exceeds the Northern Europe price by more than 1.25 cents per pound, there shall immediately be in effect a special import quota.

(C) TIGHT DOMESTIC SUPPLY.—During any month for which the Secretary estimates the season-ending United States upland cotton stocks-to-use ratio, as determined under subparagraph (D), to be below 16 percent, the Secretary, in making the determination under subparagraph (B), shall not adjust the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced United States growth, as quoted for Middling (M) 1³/₃₂-inch cotton, delivered C.I.F. Northern Europe, for the value of any certificates issued under subsection (a).

(D) SEASON-ENDING UNITED STATES STOCKS-TO-USE RATIO.—For the purposes of making estimates under subparagraph (C), the Secretary shall, on a monthly basis, estimate and report the season-ending United States upland cotton stocks-to-use ratio, excluding projected raw cotton imports but including the quantity of raw cotton that has been imported into the United States during the marketing year.

(2) QUANTITY.—The quota shall be equal to 1 week's consumption of upland cotton by domestic mills at the seasonally

adjusted average rate of the most recent 3 months for which data are available.

(3) APPLICATION.—The quota shall apply to upland cotton purchased not later than 90 days after the date of the Secretary's announcement under paragraph (1) and entered into the United States not later than 180 days after the date.

(4) OVERLAP.—A special quota period may be established that overlaps any existing quota period if required by paragraph (1), except that a special quota period may not be established under this subsection if a quota period has been established under subsection (c).

(5) PREFERENTIAL TARIFF TREATMENT.—The quantity under a special import quota shall be considered to be an in-quota quantity for purposes of—

(A) section 213(d) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(d));

(B) section 204 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203);

(C) section 503(d) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)); and

(D) General Note 3(a)(iv) to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule.

(6) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “special import quota” means a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota.

(7) LIMITATION.—The quantity of cotton entered into the United States during any marketing year under the special import quota established under this subsection may not exceed the equivalent of 5 week's consumption of upland cotton by domestic mills at the seasonally adjusted average rate of the 3 months immediately preceding the first special import quota established in any marketing year.

(c) LIMITED GLOBAL IMPORT QUOTA FOR UPLAND COTTON.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President shall carry out an import quota program that provides that whenever the Secretary determines and announces that the average price of the base quality of upland cotton, as determined by the Secretary, in the designated spot markets for a month exceeded 130 percent of the average price of such quality of cotton in the markets for the preceding 36 months, notwithstanding any other provision of law, there shall immediately be in effect a limited global import quota subject to the following conditions:

(A) QUANTITY.—The quantity of the quota shall be equal to 21 days of domestic mill consumption of upland cotton at the seasonally adjusted average rate of the most recent 3 months for which data are available.

(B) QUANTITY IF PRIOR QUOTA.—If a quota has been established under this subsection during the preceding 12 months, the quantity of the quota next established under this subsection shall be the smaller of 21 days of domestic mill consumption calculated under subparagraph (A) or the quantity required to increase the supply to 130 percent of the demand.

(C) PREFERENTIAL TARIFF TREATMENT.—The quantity under a limited global import quota shall be considered to be an in-quota quantity for purposes of—

- (i) section 213(d) of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (19 U.S.C. 2703(d));
- (ii) section 204 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (19 U.S.C. 3203);
- (iii) section 503(d) of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)); and
- (iv) General Note 3(a)(iv) to the Harmonized Tariff Schedule.

(D) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(i) SUPPLY.—The term “supply” means, using the latest official data of the Bureau of the Census, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Treasury—

(I) the carry-over of upland cotton at the beginning of the marketing year (adjusted to 480-pound bales) in which the quota is established;

(II) production of the current crop; and

(III) imports to the latest date available during the marketing year.

(ii) DEMAND.—The term “demand” means—

(I) the average seasonally adjusted annual rate of domestic mill consumption during the most recent 3 months for which data are available; and

(II) the larger of—

(aa) average exports of upland cotton during the preceding 6 marketing years; or

(bb) cumulative exports of upland cotton plus outstanding export sales for the marketing year in which the quota is established.

(iii) LIMITED GLOBAL IMPORT QUOTA.—The term “limited global import quota” means a quantity of imports that is not subject to the over-quota tariff rate of a tariff-rate quota.

(E) QUOTA ENTRY PERIOD.—When a quota is established under this subsection, cotton may be entered under the quota during the 90-day period beginning on the date the quota is established by the Secretary.

(2) NO OVERLAP.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1), a quota period may not be established that overlaps an existing quota period or a special quota period established under subsection (b).

SEC. 136A. [7 U.S.C. 7236a] SPECIAL COMPETITIVE PROVISIONS FOR EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.⁵

(a) COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during the period beginning on October 1, 1999,

⁵Sec. 136A added by sec. 104(c) of H.R. 3425 of the 106th Congress, as enacted by sec. 1000(a)(5) of div. B of P.L. 106–113 (113 Stat. 1536).

Sec. 1208 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 7938; P.L. 107–171, 116 Stat. 164, May 13, 2002) contains provisions that are substantively similar to this section, other than later expiration dates in sec. 1208 of that Act. Since sec. 1208 of that Act was

and ending on July 31, 2003, the Secretary shall carry out a program to maintain and expand the domestic use of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States, to increase exports of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States, and to ensure that extra long staple cotton produced in the United States remains competitive in world markets.

(b) PAYMENTS UNDER PROGRAM; TRIGGER.—Under the program, the Secretary shall make payments available under this section whenever—

(1) for a consecutive 4-week period, the world market price for the lowest priced competing growth of extra long staple cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location and for other factors affecting the competitiveness of such cotton), as determined by the Secretary, is below the prevailing United States price for a competing growth of extra long staple cotton; and

(2) the lowest priced competing growth of extra long staple cotton (adjusted to United States quality and location and for other factors affecting the competitiveness of such cotton), as determined by the Secretary, is less than 134 percent of the loan rate for extra long staple cotton.

(c) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary shall make payments available under this section to domestic users of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States and exporters of extra long staple cotton produced in the United States who enter into an agreement with the Commodity Credit Corporation to participate in the program under this section.

(d) PAYMENT AMOUNT.—Payments under this section shall be based on the amount of the difference in the prices referred to in subsection (b)(1) during the fourth week of the consecutive 4-week period multiplied by the amount of documented purchases by domestic users and sales for export by exporters made in the week following such a consecutive 4-week period.

(e) FORM OF PAYMENT.—Payments under this section shall be made through the issuance of cash or marketing certificates, at the option of eligible recipients of the payments.

SEC. 137. [7 U.S.C. 7237] AVAILABILITY OF RECOURSE LOANS FOR HIGH MOISTURE FEED GRAINS AND SEED COTTON AND OTHER FIBERS.

(a) HIGH MOISTURE FEED GRAINS.—

(1) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE.—For each of the 1996 through 2002 crops of corn and grain sorghum, the Secretary shall make available recourse loans, as determined by the Secretary, to producers on a farm containing eligible cropland covered by a production flexibility contract who—

(A) normally harvest all or a portion of their crop of corn or grain sorghum in a high moisture state;

(B) present—

(i) certified scale tickets from an inspected, certified commercial scale, including a licensed warehouse, feedlot, feed mill, distillery, or other similar en-

enacted later in time than this sec., it is the probable intent of Congress that sec. 1208 of that Act supersedes this sec.

tity approved by the Secretary, pursuant to regulations issued by the Secretary; or

(ii) field or other physical measurements of the standing or stored crop in regions of the United States, as determined by the Secretary, that do not have certified commercial scales from which certified scale tickets may be obtained within reasonable proximity of harvest operation;

(C) certify that they were the owners of the feed grain at the time of delivery to, and that the quantity to be placed under loan under this subsection was in fact harvested on the farm and delivered to, a feedlot, feed mill, or commercial or on-farm high-moisture storage facility, or to a facility maintained by the users of corn and grain sorghum in a high moisture state; and

(D) comply with deadlines established by the Secretary for harvesting the corn or grain sorghum and submit applications for loans under this subsection within deadlines established by the Secretary.

(2) ELIGIBILITY OF ACQUIRED FEED GRAINS.—A loan under this subsection shall be made on a quantity of corn or grain sorghum of the same crop acquired by the producer equivalent to a quantity determined by multiplying—

(A) the acreage of the corn or grain sorghum in a high moisture state harvested on the producer's farm; by

(B) the lower of the farm program payment yield or the actual yield on a field, as determined by the Secretary, that is similar to the field from which the corn or grain sorghum was obtained.

(3) HIGH MOISTURE STATE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “high moisture state” means corn or grain sorghum having a moisture content in excess of Commodity Credit Corporation standards for marketing assistance loans made by the Secretary under section 131.

(b) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE FOR SEED COTTON.—

(1) UPLAND COTTON.—For each of the 1996 through 2002 crops of upland cotton, the Secretary shall make available recourse seed cotton loans, as determined by the Secretary, to producers on a farm containing eligible cropland covered by a production flexibility contract.

(2) EXTRA LONG STAPLE COTTON.—For each of the 1996 through 2002 crops of extra long staple cotton, the Secretary shall make available recourse seed cotton loans, as determined by the Secretary, on any production.

(c) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE FOR MOHAIR.—

(1) RECOURSE LOANS AVAILABLE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, during fiscal year 1999, the Secretary shall make available recourse loans, as determined by the Secretary, to producers of mohair produced during or before that fiscal year.

(2) LOAN RATE.—The loan rate for a loan under paragraph (1) shall be equal to \$2.00 per pound.

(3) TERM OF LOAN.—A loan under paragraph (1) shall have a term of 1 year beginning on the first day of the first month after the month in which the loan is made.

(4) WAIVER OF INTEREST.—Notwithstanding subsection (d), the Secretary shall not charge interest on a loan made under paragraph (1).

(d) REPAYMENT RATES.—Repayment of a recourse loan made under this section shall be at the loan rate established for the commodity by the Secretary, plus interest (as determined by the Secretary).

Subtitle D—Other Commodities

CHAPTER 1—DAIRY

SEC. 141. [7 U.S.C. 7251] MILK PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAM.

(a) SUPPORT ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall support the price of milk produced in the 48 contiguous States through the purchase of cheese, butter, and nonfat dry milk produced from the milk.

(b) RATE.—The price of milk shall be supported at the following rates per hundredweight for milk containing 3.67 percent butterfat:

(1) During calendar year 1996, \$10.35.

(2) During calendar year 1997, \$10.20.

(3) During calendar year 1998, \$10.05.

(4) During each of calendar years 1999 through 2001, \$9.90.

(5) During the period beginning on January 1, 2002, and ending on May 31, 2002, \$9.90.

(c) PURCHASE PRICES.—The support purchase prices under this section for each of the products of milk (butter, cheese, and nonfat dry milk) announced by the Secretary shall be the same for all of that product sold by persons offering to sell the product to the Secretary. The purchase prices shall be sufficient to enable plants of average efficiency to pay producers, on average, a price that is not less than the rate of price support for milk in effect under subsection (b).

(d) SPECIAL RULE FOR BUTTER AND NONFAT DRY MILK PURCHASE PRICES.—

(1) ALLOCATION OF PURCHASE PRICES.—The Secretary may allocate the rate of price support between the purchase prices for nonfat dry milk and butter in a manner that will result in the lowest level of expenditures by the Commodity Credit Corporation or achieve such other objectives as the Secretary considers appropriate. Not later than 10 days after making or changing an allocation, the Secretary shall notify the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate of the allocation. Section 553 of title 5, United States Code, shall not apply with respect to the implementation of this section.

(2) TIMING OF PURCHASE PRICE ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary may make any such adjustments in the purchase prices

for nonfat dry milk and butter the Secretary considers to be necessary not more than twice in each calendar year.

(e) REFUNDS OF 1995 AND 1996 ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) REFUND REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall provide for a refund of the entire reduction required under section 204(h)(2) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1446e(h)(2)), as in effect on the day before the amendment made by subsection (g), in the price of milk received by a producer during calendar year 1995 or 1996, if the producer provides evidence that the producer did not increase marketings in calendar year 1995 or 1996 when compared to calendar year 1994 or 1995, respectively.

(2) EXCEPTION.—This subsection shall not apply with respect to a producer for a particular calendar year if the producer has already received a refund under section 204(h) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 for the same fiscal year before the effective date of this section.

(3) TREATMENT OF REFUND.—A refund under this subsection shall not be considered as any type of price support or payment for purposes of sections 1211 and 1221 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 and 3821).

(f) COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—The Secretary shall carry out the program authorized by this section through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

(g) CONFORMING REPEAL.—⁶

(h) PERIOD OF EFFECTIVENESS.—This section (other than subsection (g)) shall be effective only during the period beginning on the first day of the first month beginning after the date of enactment of this title and ending on May 31, 2002. The program authorized by this section shall terminate on May 31, 2002, and shall be considered to have expired notwithstanding section 257 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 907).

[SEC. 142. [7 U.S.C. 7252] RECOURSE LOAN PROGRAM FOR COMMERCIAL PROCESSORS OF DAIRY PRODUCTS. ⁷]

SEC. 143. [7 U.S.C. 7253] CONSOLIDATION AND REFORM OF FEDERAL MILK MARKETING ORDERS.

(a) AMENDMENT OF ORDERS.—

(1) REQUIRED CONSOLIDATION.—The Secretary shall amend Federal milk marketing orders issued under section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, to limit the number of Federal milk marketing orders to not less than 10 and not more than 14 orders.

(2) INCLUSION OF CALIFORNIA AS SEPARATE ORDER.—Upon the petition and approval of California dairy producers in the manner provided in section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, the Secretary shall designate the State of California as a separate Federal milk

⁶Sec. 141(g) repealed sec. 204 of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1446e).

⁷Sec. 142 was repealed by sec. 772(b) of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002 (P.L. 107-76; 115 Stat. 745; Nov. 28, 2001).

marketing order. The order covering California shall have the right to reblend and distribute order receipts to recognize quota value. Subsection (b) does not apply to the authority of the Secretary under this subsection.

(3) RELATED ISSUES ADDRESSED IN CONSOLIDATION.—Among the issues the Secretary is authorized to implement as part of the consolidation of Federal milk marketing orders are the following:

(A) The use of utilization rates and multiple basing points for the pricing of fluid milk.

(B) The use of uniform multiple component pricing when developing 1 or more basic formula prices for manufacturing milk.

(4) EFFECT OF EXISTING LAW.—In implementing the consolidation of Federal milk marketing orders and related reforms under this subsection, the Secretary may not consider, or base any decision on, the table contained in section 8c(5)(A) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c(5)(A)), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as added by section 131 of the Food Security Act of 1985.

(b) EXPEDITED PROCESS.—

(1) USE OF INFORMAL RULEMAKING.—To implement the consolidation of Federal milk marketing orders and related reforms under subsection (a), the Secretary shall use the notice and comment procedures provided in section 553 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) TIME LIMITATIONS.—

(A) PROPOSED AMENDMENTS.—The Secretary shall announce the proposed amendments to be made under subsection (a) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this title.

(B) FINAL AMENDMENTS.—The Secretary shall implement the amendments not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this title.

(3) EFFECT OF COURT ORDER.—The actions authorized by this subsection are intended to ensure the timely publication and implementation of new and amended Federal milk marketing orders. In the event that the Secretary is enjoined or otherwise restrained by a court order from publishing or implementing the consolidation and related reforms under subsection (a), the length of time for which that injunction or other restraining order is effective shall be added to the time limitations specified in paragraph (2) thereby extending those time limitations by a period of time equal to the period of time for which the injunction or other restraining order is effective.

(c) FAILURE TO TIMELY CONSOLIDATE ORDERS.—If the Secretary fails to implement the consolidation required under subsection (a)(1) within the time period required under subsection (b)(2)(B) (plus any additional period provided under subsection (b)(3)), the Secretary may not assess or collect assessments from milk producers or handlers under such section 8c for marketing order administration and services provided under such section after the end of that period until the consolidation is completed. The Sec-

retary may not reduce the level of services provided under the section on account of the prohibition against assessments, but shall rather cover the cost of marketing order administration and services through funds available for the Agricultural Marketing Service of the Department.

(d) REPORT REGARDING FURTHER REFORMS.—

(1) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than April 1, 1997, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report—

(A) reviewing the Federal milk marketing order system established pursuant to section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, in light of the reforms required by subsection (a);

(B) describing the efforts underway and the progress made in implementing the reforms required by subsection (a); and

(C) containing such recommendations as the Secretary considers appropriate for further improvements and reforms to the Federal milk marketing order system.

(2) EFFECT OF OTHER LAWS.—Any limitation imposed by Act of Congress on the conduct or completion of reports to Congress shall not apply to the report required under this section, unless the limitation specifically refers to this section.

SEC. 144. [7 U.S.C. 7254] EFFECT ON FLUID MILK STANDARDS IN STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

Nothing in this Act or any other provision of law shall be construed to preempt, prohibit, or otherwise limit the authority of the State of California, directly or indirectly, to establish or continue to effect any law, regulation, or requirement regarding—

(1) the percentage of milk solids or solids not fat in fluid milk products sold at retail or marketed in the State of California; or

(2) the labeling of such fluid milk products with regard to milk solids or solids not fat.

SEC. 145. [7 U.S.C. 7255] MILK MANUFACTURING MARKETING ADJUSTMENT.

(a) MAXIMUM ALLOWANCES ESTABLISHED.—No State shall provide for a manufacturing allowance for the processing of milk in excess of—

(1) \$1.65 per hundredweight of milk for milk manufactured into butter and nonfat dry milk; and

(2) \$1.80 per hundredweight of milk for milk manufactured into cheese.

(b) MANUFACTURING ALLOWANCE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “manufacturing allowance” means—

(1) the amount by which the product price value of butter and nonfat dry milk manufactured from a hundred pounds of milk containing 3.5 pounds of butterfat and 8.7 pounds of milk solids not fat resulting from a State’s yield and product price formulas exceeds the class price for the milk used to produce those products; or

(2) the amount by which the product price value of cheese manufactured from a hundred pounds of milk containing 3.5

pounds of butterfat and 8.7 pounds of milk solids not fat resulting from a State's yield and product price formulas exceeds the class price for the milk used to produce cheese.

(c) EFFECT OF VIOLATION.—If the Secretary determines following a hearing that a State has in effect a manufacturing allowance that exceeds the manufacturing allowance authorized in subsection (a), the Secretary shall suspend purchases of cheddar cheese, butter, and nonfat dry milk produced in that State until such time as the State complies with such subsection.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE; IMPLEMENTATION.—This section (other than subsection (e)) shall be effective during the period beginning on the first day of the first month beginning after the date of enactment of this title and ending on December 31, 1999. During that period, the Secretary may exercise the authority provided to the Secretary under this section without regard to the issuance of regulations intended to carry out this section.

(e) CONFORMING REPEAL.—⁸

SEC. 146. PROMOTION.⁹

SEC. 147. [7 U.S.C. 7256] NORTHEAST INTERSTATE DAIRY COMPACT.

Congress hereby consents to the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact entered into among the States of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont as specified in section 1(b) Senate Joint Resolution 28 of the 104th Congress, as placed on the calendar of the Senate, subject to the following conditions:

(1) FINDING OF COMPELLING PUBLIC INTEREST.—Based upon a finding by the Secretary of a compelling public interest in the Compact region, the Secretary may grant the States that have ratified the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact, as of the date of enactment of this title, the authority to implement the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact.

(2) LIMITATION ON MANUFACTURING PRICE.—The Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact Commission shall not regulate Class II, Class III, or Class III-A milk used for manufacturing purposes or any other milk, other than Class I (fluid) milk, as defined by a Federal milk marketing order issued under section 8c of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c) reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937.

(3) DURATION.—Consent for the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact shall terminate on September 30, 2001.

(4) ADDITIONAL STATES.—Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia are the only additional States that may join the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact, individually or otherwise, if upon entry the State is contiguous to a participating State and if Congress consents to the entry of the State into the Compact after the date of enactment of this title.

⁸Sec. 145(e) repealed sec. 102 of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 1446e-1).

⁹Sec. 146 amended secs. 1999B, 1999C, 1999N, and 1999O of the Fluid Milk Promotion Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6401, 6402, 6413, and 6414).

(5) **COMPENSATION OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.**—Before the end of each fiscal year that a Compact price regulation is in effect, the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact Commission shall compensate the Commodity Credit Corporation for the cost of any purchases of milk and milk products by the Corporation that result from the projected rate of increase in milk production for the fiscal year within the Compact region in excess of the projected national average rate of the increase in milk production, as determined by the Secretary.

(6) **MILK MARKETING ORDER ADMINISTRATOR.**—At the request of the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact Commission, the Administrator of the applicable Federal milk marketing order issued under section 8(c)5 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, shall provide technical assistance to the Compact Commission and be compensated for that assistance.

(7) **FURTHER CONDITIONS.**—The Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact Commission shall not prohibit or in any way limit the marketing in the Compact region of any milk or milk product produced in any other production area in the United States. The Compact Commission shall respect and abide by the ongoing procedures between Federal milk marketing orders with respect to the sharing of proceeds from sales within the Compact region of bulk milk, packaged milk, or producer milk originating from outside of the Compact region. The Compact Commission shall not use compensatory payments under section 10(6) of the Compact as a barrier to the entry of milk into the Compact region or for any other purpose. Establishment of a Compact over-order price, in itself, shall not be considered a compensatory payment or a limitation or prohibition on the marketing of milk.

SEC. 148. DAIRY EXPORT INCENTIVE PROGRAM.¹⁰

SEC. 149. [7 U.S.C. 7257] AUTHORITY TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF ONE OR MORE EXPORT TRADING COMPANIES.

The Secretary of Agriculture shall, consistent with the obligations of the United States as a member of the World Trade Organization, provide such advice and assistance to the United States dairy industry as may be necessary to enable that industry to establish and maintain one or more export trading companies under the Export Trading Company Act of 1982 (15 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) for the purpose of facilitating the international market development for and exportation of dairy products produced in the United States.

SEC. 150. [7 U.S.C. 7258] STANDBY AUTHORITY TO INDICATE ENTITY BEST SUITED TO PROVIDE INTERNATIONAL MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND EXPORT SERVICES.

(a) **INDICATION OF ENTITY BEST SUITED TO ASSIST INTERNATIONAL MARKET DEVELOPMENT FOR AND EXPORT OF UNITED STATES DAIRY PRODUCTS.**—The Secretary of Agriculture shall indicate which entity or entities autonomous of the Government of the

¹⁰Sec. 148 amended sec. 153 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (15 U.S.C. 713a–14).

United States, which seeks such a designation, is best suited to facilitate the international market development for and exportation of United States dairy products, if the Secretary determines that—

(1) the United States dairy industry has not established an export trading company under the Export Trading Company Act of 1982 (15 U.S.C. 4001 et seq.) for the purpose of facilitating the international market development for an exportation of dairy products produced in the United States on or before June 30, 1997; or

(2) the quantity of exports of United States dairy products during the 12-month period preceding July 1, 1998 does not exceed the quantity of exports of United States dairy products during the 12-month period preceding July 1, 1997 by 1.5 billion pounds (milk equivalent, total solids basis).

(b) FUNDING OF EXPORT ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary shall assist the entity or entities identified under subsection (a) in identifying sources of funding for the activities specified in subsection (a) from within the dairy industry and elsewhere.

(c) APPLICATION OF SECTION.—This section shall apply only during the period beginning on July 1, 1997 and ending on September 30, 2000.

SEC. 151. [7 U.S.C. 7259] STUDY AND REPORT REGARDING POTENTIAL IMPACT OF URUGUAY ROUND ON PRICES, INCOME, AND GOVERNMENT PURCHASES.

(a) STUDY.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct a study, on a variety by variety of cheese basis, to determine the potential impact on milk prices in the United States, dairy producer income, and Federal dairy program costs, of the allocation of additional cheese granted access to the United States as a result of the obligations of the United States as a member of the World Trade Organization.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than June 30, 1997, the Secretary shall report to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives the results of the study conducted under this section.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Any limitation imposed by Act of Congress on the conduct or completion of studies or reports to Congress shall not apply to the study and report required under this section, unless the limitation specifically refers to this section.

SEC. 152. PROMOTION OF UNITED STATES DAIRY PRODUCTS IN INTERNATIONAL MARKETS THROUGH DAIRY PROMOTION PROGRAM.¹¹

CHAPTER 2—SUGAR

[SEC. 155. [7 U.S.C. 7271] PEANUT PROGRAM.¹²]

SEC. 156. [7 U.S.C. 7272] SUGAR PROGRAM.

(a) SUGARCANE.—The Secretary shall make loans available to processors of domestically grown sugarcane at a rate equal to—

¹¹Sec. 152 amended sec. 113(e) of the Dairy Production Stabilization Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 4504(e)).

¹²Sec. 155 was repealed by sec. 1310(a)(1) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, 116 Stat. 182, May 13, 2002.

(1) 18.00 cents per pound for raw cane sugar for the 2008 crop year;

(2) 18.25 cents per pound for raw cane sugar for the 2009 crop year;

(3) 18.50 cents per pound for raw cane sugar for the 2010 crop year;

(4) 18.75 cents per pound for raw cane sugar for each of the 2011 through 2018 crop years; and

(5) 19.75 cents per pound for raw cane sugar for each of the 2019 through 2023 crop years.

(b) SUGAR BEETS.—The Secretary shall make loans available to processors of domestically grown sugar beets at a rate equal to—

(1) 22.9 cents per pound for refined beet sugar for the 2008 crop year; and

(2) a rate that is equal to 128.5 percent of the loan rate per pound of raw cane sugar for the applicable crop year under subsection (a) for each of the 2009 through 2023 crop years.

(c) TERM OF LOANS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A loan under this section during any fiscal year shall be made available not earlier than the beginning of the fiscal year and shall mature at the earlier of—

(A) the end of the 9-month period beginning on the first day of the first month after the month in which the loan is made; or

(B) the end of the fiscal year in which the loan is made.

(2) SUPPLEMENTAL LOANS.—In the case of a loan made under this section in the last 3 months of a fiscal year, the processor may repledge the sugar as collateral for a second loan in the subsequent fiscal year, except that the second loan shall—

(A) be made at the loan rate in effect at the time the first loan was made; and

(B) mature in 9 months less the quantity of time that the first loan was in effect.

(d) LOAN TYPE; PROCESSOR ASSURANCES.—

(1) NONRECOURSE LOANS.—The Secretary shall carry out this section through the use of nonrecourse loans.

(2) PROCESSOR ASSURANCES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall obtain from each processor that receives a loan under this section such assurances as the Secretary considers adequate to ensure that the processor will provide payments to producers that are proportional to the value of the loan received by the processor for the sugar beets and sugarcane delivered by producers to the processor.

(B) MINIMUM PAYMENTS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to clause (ii), the Secretary may establish appropriate minimum payments for purposes of this paragraph.

(ii) LIMITATION.—In the case of sugar beets, the minimum payment established under clause (i) shall not exceed the rate of payment provided for under the

applicable contract between a sugar beet producer and a sugar beet processor.

(3) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary may not impose or enforce any prenotification requirement, or similar administrative requirement not otherwise in effect on May 13, 2002, that has the effect of preventing a processor from electing to forfeit the loan collateral (of an acceptable grade and quality) on the maturity of the loan.

(e) LOANS FOR IN-PROCESS SUGAR.—

(1) DEFINITION OF IN-PROCESS SUGARS AND SYRUPS.—In this subsection, the term “in-process sugars and syrups” does not include raw sugar, liquid sugar, invert sugar, invert syrup, or other finished product that is otherwise eligible for a loan under subsection (a) or (b).

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The Secretary shall make nonrecourse loans available to processors of a crop of domestically grown sugarcane and sugar beets for in-process sugars and syrups derived from the crop.

(3) LOAN RATE.—The loan rate shall be equal to 80 percent of the loan rate applicable to raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar, as determined by the Secretary on the basis of the source material for the in-process sugars and syrups.

(4) FURTHER PROCESSING ON FORFEITURE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—As a condition of the forfeiture of in-process sugars and syrups serving as collateral for a loan under paragraph (2), the processor shall, within such reasonable time period as the Secretary may prescribe and at no cost to the Commodity Credit Corporation, convert the in-process sugars and syrups into raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar of acceptable grade and quality for sugars eligible for loans under subsection (a) or (b).

(B) TRANSFER TO CORPORATION.—Once the in-process sugars and syrups are fully processed into raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar, the processor shall transfer the sugar to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

(C) PAYMENT TO PROCESSOR.—On transfer of the sugar, the Secretary shall make a payment to the processor in an amount equal to the amount obtained by multiplying—

(i) the difference between—

(I) the loan rate for raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar, as appropriate; and

(II) the loan rate the processor received under paragraph (3); by

(ii) the quantity of sugar transferred to the Secretary.

(5) LOAN CONVERSION.—If the processor does not forfeit the collateral as described in paragraph (4), but instead further processes the in-process sugars and syrups into raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar and repays the loan on the in-process sugars and syrups, the processor may obtain a loan under subsection (a) or (b) for the raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar, as appropriate.

(6) TERM OF LOAN.—The term of a loan made under this subsection for a quantity of in-process sugars and syrups, when combined with the term of a loan made with respect to the raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar derived from the in-process sugars and syrups, may not exceed 9 months, consistent with subsection (c).

(f) AVOIDING FORFEITURES; CORPORATION INVENTORY DISPOSITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (d)(3), to the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall operate the program established under this section at no cost to the Federal Government by avoiding the forfeiture of sugar to the Commodity Credit Corporation.

(2) INVENTORY DISPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—To carry out paragraph (1), the Commodity Credit Corporation may accept bids to obtain raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar in the inventory of the Commodity Credit Corporation from (or otherwise make available such commodities, on appropriate terms and conditions, to) processors of sugarcane and processors of sugar beets (acting in conjunction with the producers of the sugarcane or sugar beets processed by the processors) in return for the reduction of production of raw cane sugar or refined beet sugar, as appropriate.

(B) BIOENERGY FEEDSTOCK.—If a reduction in the quantity of production accepted under subparagraph (A) involves sugar beets or sugarcane that has already been planted, the sugar beets or sugarcane so planted may not be used for any commercial purpose other than as a bioenergy feedstock.

(C) ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY.—The authority provided under this paragraph is in addition to any authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation under any other law.

(g) INFORMATION REPORTING.—

(1) DUTY OF PROCESSORS AND REFINERS TO REPORT.—A sugarcane processor, cane sugar refiner, and sugar beet processor shall furnish the Secretary, on a monthly basis, such information as the Secretary may require to administer sugar programs, including the quantity of purchases of sugarcane, sugar beets, and sugar, and production, importation, distribution, and stock levels of sugar.

(2) DUTY OF PRODUCERS TO REPORT.—

(A) PROPORTIONATE SHARE STATES.—As a condition of a loan made to a processor for the benefit of a producer, the Secretary shall require each producer of sugarcane located in a State (other than the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) in which there are in excess of 250 producers of sugarcane to report, in the manner prescribed by the Secretary, the sugarcane yields and acres planted to sugarcane of the producer.

(B) OTHER STATES.—The Secretary may require each producer of sugarcane or sugar beets not covered by subparagraph (A) to report, in a manner prescribed by the

Secretary, the yields of, and acres planted to, sugarcane or sugar beets, respectively, of the producer.

(3) DUTY OF IMPORTERS TO REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall require an importer of sugars, syrups, or molasses to be used for human consumption or to be used for the extraction of sugar for human consumption to report, in the manner prescribed by the Secretary, the quantities of the products imported by the importer and the sugar content or equivalent of the products.

(B) TARIFF-RATE QUOTAS.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to sugars, syrups, or molasses that are within the quantities of tariff-rate quotas that are subject to the lower rate of duties.

(4) COLLECTION OF INFORMATION ON MEXICO.—

(A) COLLECTION.—The Secretary shall collect—

(i) information on the production, consumption, stocks, and trade of sugar in Mexico, including United States exports of sugar to Mexico; and

(ii) publicly available information on Mexican production, consumption, and trade of high fructose corn syrups.

(B) PUBLICATION.—The data collected under subparagraph (A) shall be published in each edition of the World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates.

(5) PENALTY.—Any person willfully failing or refusing to furnish the information required to be reported by paragraph (1), (2), or (3), or furnishing willfully false information, shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 for each such violation.

(6) MONTHLY REPORTS.—Taking into consideration the information received under this subsection, the Secretary shall publish on a monthly basis composite data on production, imports, distribution, and stock levels of sugar.

(h) SUBSTITUTION OF REFINED SUGAR.—For purposes of Additional U.S. Note 6 to chapter 17 of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States and the reexport programs and polyhydric alcohol program administered by the Secretary, all refined sugars (whether derived from sugar beets or sugarcane) produced by cane sugar refineries and beet sugar processors shall be fully substitutable for the export of sugar and sugar-containing products under those programs.

(i) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—This section shall be effective only for the 2008 through 2023 crops of sugar beets and sugarcane.

Subtitle E—Administration

SEC. 161. [7 U.S.C. 7281] ADMINISTRATION.

(a) USE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—The Secretary shall carry out this title through the Commodity Credit Corporation.

(b) LIMITATION ON EXPENDITURE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION FUNDS.—¹³

(c) DETERMINATIONS BY SECRETARY.—A determination made by the Secretary under this title shall be final and conclusive.

(d) REGULATIONS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary and the Commodity Credit Corporation, as appropriate, shall issue such regulations as are necessary to implement this title. The issuance of the regulations shall be made without regard to—

(1) the notice and comment provisions of section 553 of title 5, United States Code;

(2) the Statement of Policy of the Secretary of Agriculture effective July 24, 1971 (36 Fed. Reg. 13804) relating to notices of proposed rulemaking and public participation in rulemaking; and

(3) chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly know as the “Paperwork Reduction Act”).

SEC. 162. [7 U.S.C. 7282] ADJUSTMENTS OF LOANS.

(a) ADJUSTMENT AUTHORITY.—The Secretary may make appropriate adjustments in the loan rates for any commodity for differences in grade, type, quality, location, and other factors.

(b) MANNER OF ADJUSTMENT.—The adjustments under the authority of this section shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be made in such manner that the average loan level for the commodity will, on the basis of the anticipated incidence of the factors, be equal to the level of support determined as provided in this title and title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002.

(c) ADJUSTMENT ON COUNTY BASIS.—The Secretary may establish loan rates for a crop for producers in individual counties in a manner that results in the lowest such rate being 95 percent of the national average loan rate, except that such action shall not result in an increase in outlays. Adjustments under this subsection shall not result in an increase in the national average loan rate for any year.

SEC. 163. [7 U.S.C. 7283] COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION INTEREST RATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the monthly Commodity Credit Corporation interest rate applicable to loans provided for agricultural commodities by the Corporation shall be 100 basis points greater than the rate determined under the applicable interest rate formula in effect on October 1, 1995.

(b) SUGAR.—For purposes of this section, raw cane sugar, refined beet sugar, and in-process sugar eligible for a loan under section 156 shall not be considered an agricultural commodity.

SEC. 164. [7 U.S.C. 7284] PERSONAL LIABILITY OF PRODUCERS FOR DEFICIENCIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subsection (b), no producer shall be personally liable for any deficiency arising from the sale of the collateral securing any nonrecourse loan made under this title¹⁴ title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act

¹³Sec. 161(b) amended secs. 4, 11, and 13 of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714b, 714i, and 714k).

¹⁴So in original. Probably should be a comma.

of 2002, title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.), and¹⁵ title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014 unless the loan was obtained through a fraudulent representation by the producer.

(b) LIMITATIONS.—Subsection (a) shall not prevent the Commodity Credit Corporation or the Secretary from requiring a producer to assume liability for—

- (1) a deficiency in the grade, quality, or quantity of a commodity stored on a farm or delivered by the producer;
- (2) a failure to properly care for and preserve a commodity;

or

- (3) a failure or refusal to deliver a commodity in accordance with a program established under this title, title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.), and title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

(c) ACQUISITION OF COLLATERAL.—In the case of a nonrecourse loan made under this title, title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8702 et seq.), and¹⁶ title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014¹⁷ or the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act (15 U.S.C. 714 et seq.), if the Commodity Credit Corporation acquires title to the unredeemed collateral, the Corporation shall be under no obligation to pay for any market value that the collateral may have in excess of the loan indebtedness.

(d) SUGARCANE AND SUGAR BEETS.—A security interest obtained by the Commodity Credit Corporation as a result of the execution of a security agreement by the processor of sugarcane or sugar beets shall be superior to all statutory and common law liens on raw cane sugar and refined beet sugar in favor of the producers of sugarcane and sugar beets and all prior recorded and unrecorded liens on the crops of sugarcane and sugar beets from which the sugar was derived.

SEC. 165. [7 U.S.C. 7285] COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION SALES PRICE RESTRICTIONS.

(a) GENERAL SALES AUTHORITY.—The Commodity Credit Corporation may sell any commodity owned or controlled by the Corporation at any price that the Secretary determines will maximize returns to the Corporation.

(b) NONAPPLICATION OF SALES PRICE RESTRICTIONS.—Subsection (a) shall not apply to—

- (1) a sale for a new or byproduct use;
- (2) a sale of peanuts or oilseeds for the extraction of oil;
- (3) a sale for seed or feed if the sale will not substantially impair any loan program;
- (4) a sale of a commodity that has substantially deteriorated in quality or as to which there is a danger of loss or waste through deterioration or spoilage;
- (5) a sale for the purpose of establishing a claim arising out of a contract or against a person who has committed fraud,

¹⁵So in original. Probably should be “or”.

¹⁶So in original. “and” should probably be struck.

¹⁷So in original. Probably should be a comma after “2014”.

misrepresentation, or other wrongful act with respect to the commodity;

(6) a sale for export, as determined by the Corporation; and

(7) a sale for other than a primary use.

(c) **PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER AREAS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding subsection (a), on such terms and conditions as the Secretary may consider in the public interest, the Corporation may make available any commodity or product owned or controlled by the Corporation for use in relieving distress—

(A) in any area in the United States (including the Virgin Islands) declared by the President to be an acute distress area because of unemployment or other economic cause, if the President finds that the use will not displace or interfere with normal marketing of agricultural commodities; and

(B) in connection with any major disaster determined by the President to warrant assistance by the Federal Government under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).

(2) **COSTS.**—Except on a reimbursable basis, the Corporation shall not bear any costs in connection with making a commodity available under paragraph (1) beyond the cost of the commodity to the Corporation incurred in—

(A) the storage of the commodity; and

(B) the handling and transportation costs in making delivery of the commodity to designated agencies at 1 or more central locations in each State or other area.

(d) **EFFICIENT OPERATIONS.**—Subsection (a) shall not apply to the sale of a commodity the disposition of which is desirable in the interest of the effective and efficient conduct of the operations of the Corporation because of the small quantity of the commodity involved, or because of the age, location, or questionable continued storability of the commodity.

SEC. 166. [7 U.S.C. 7286] COMMODITY CERTIFICATES.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—In making in-kind payments under subtitle C of this title, title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, and Subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014, the Commodity Credit Corporation may—

(1) acquire and use commodities that have been pledged to the Commodity Credit Corporation as collateral for loans made by the Corporation;

(2) use other commodities owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation; and

(3) redeem negotiable marketing certificates for cash under terms and conditions established by the Secretary.

(b) **METHODS OF PAYMENT.**—The Commodity Credit Corporation may make in-kind payments—

(1) by delivery of the commodity at a warehouse or other similar facility;

(2) by the transfer of negotiable warehouse receipts;

(3) by the issuance of negotiable certificates, which the Commodity Credit Corporation shall exchange for a commodity owned or controlled by the Corporation in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Corporation; or

(4) by such other methods as the Commodity Credit Corporation determines appropriate to promote the efficient, equitable, and expeditious receipt of the in-kind payments so that a person receiving the payments receives the same total return as if the payments had been made in cash.

(c) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) FORM.—At the option of a producer, the Commodity Credit Corporation shall make negotiable certificates authorized under subsection (b)(3) available to the producer, in the form of program payments or by sale, in a manner that the Corporation determines will encourage the orderly marketing of commodities pledged as collateral for loans made to producers under subtitle C of this title, title I of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, and Subtitle B of title I of the Agricultural Act of 2014.

(2) TRANSFER.—A negotiable certificate issued in accordance with this subsection may be transferred to another person in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary.

(3) APPLICATION OF AUTHORITY.—Beginning with the 2015 crop marketing year, the Secretary shall carry out paragraph (1) under the same terms and conditions as were in effect for the 2008 crop year for loans made to producers under subtitle B of title I of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 8701 et seq.).

SEC. 167. [7 U.S.C. 7287] COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION STORAGE PAYMENTS.¹⁸

(a) INITIAL CROP YEARS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, for each of the 2008 through 2011 crop years, the Commodity Credit Corporation shall establish rates for the storage of forfeited sugar in an amount that is not less than—

(1) in the case of refined sugar, 15 cents per hundred-weight of refined sugar per month; and

(2) in the case of raw cane sugar, 10 cents per hundred-weight of raw cane sugar per month.

(b) SUBSEQUENT CROP YEARS.—For each of the 2012 and subsequent crop years, the Commodity Credit Corporation shall establish rates for the storage of forfeited sugar in the same manner as was used on the day before the date of enactment of this section.

¹⁸Sec. 1405 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, 122 Stat. 1718, amended “Subtitle E of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (7 U.S.C. 7281 et seq.)” by adding sec. 167 at the end. Amendment was executed to this title to effectuate the probable intent of Congress.

Subtitle F—Permanent Price Support Authority

SEC. 171. [7 U.S.C. 7301] SUSPENSION AND REPEAL OF PERMANENT PRICE SUPPORT AUTHORITY.

(a) AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 1938.—

(1) SUSPENSIONS.—The following provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 shall not be applicable to the 1996 through 2001 crops of loan commodities, peanuts, and sugar and shall not be applicable to milk during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this title and ending on December 31, 2002:

(A) Parts II through V of subtitle B of title III (7 U.S.C. 1326–1351).

(B) Subsections (a) through (j) of section 358 (7 U.S.C. 1358).

(C) Subsections (a) through (h) of section 358a (7 U.S.C. 1358a).

(D) Subsections (a), (b), (d), and (e) of section 358d (7 U.S.C. 1359).

(E) Part VII of subtitle B of title III (7 U.S.C. 1359aa–1359jj).

(F) In the case of peanuts, part I of subtitle C of title III (7 U.S.C. 1361–1368).

(G) In the case of upland cotton, section 377 (7 U.S.C. 1377).

(H) Subtitle D of title III (7 U.S.C. 1379a–1379j).

(I) Title IV (7 U.S.C. 1401–1407).

(2) REPORTS AND RECORDS.—¹⁹

(b) AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 1949.—

(1) SUSPENSIONS.—The following provisions of the Agricultural Act of 1949 shall not be applicable to the 1996 through 2002 crops of loan commodities, peanuts, and sugar and shall not be applicable to milk during the period beginning on the date of enactment of this title and ending on December 31, 2002:

(A) Section 101 (7 U.S.C. 1441).

(B) Section 103(a) (7 U.S.C. 1444(a)).

(C) Section 105 (7 U.S.C. 1444b).

(D) Section 107 (7 U.S.C. 1445a).

(E) Section 110 (7 U.S.C. 1445e).

(F) Section 112 (7 U.S.C. 1445g).

(G) Section 115 (7 U.S.C. 1445k).

(H) Section 201 (7 U.S.C. 1446).

(I) Title III (7 U.S.C. 1447–1449).

(J) Title IV (7 U.S.C. 1421–1433d), other than sections 404, 412, and 416 (7 U.S.C. 1424, 1429, and 1431).

(K) Title V (7 U.S.C. 1461–1469).

(L) Title VI (7 U.S.C. 1471–1471j).

¹⁹Sec. 171(a)(2) amended sec. 373(a) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1373(a)).

(2) REPEALS.—The following provisions of the Agricultural Act of 1949 are repealed:

- (A) Section 101B (7 U.S.C. 1441–2).
- (B) Section 103B (7 U.S.C. 1444–2).
- (C) Section 105B (7 U.S.C. 1444f).
- (D) Section 107B (7 U.S.C. 1445–3a).
- (E) Section 108B (7 U.S.C. 1445c–3).
- (F) Section 113 (7 U.S.C. 1445h).
- (G) Subsections (b) and (c) of section 114 (7 U.S.C. 1445j).
- (H) Sections 205, 206, and 207 (7 U.S.C. 1446f, 1446g, and 1446h).
- (I) Sections 406 and 427 (7 U.S.C. 1426 and 1433f).

(3) POTENTIAL PRICE SUPPORT FOR RICE.—²⁰

(c) SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN QUOTA PROVISIONS.—The joint resolution entitled “A joint resolution relating to corn and wheat marketing quotas under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended”, approved May 26, 1941 (7 U.S.C. 1330 and 1340), shall not be applicable to the crops of wheat planted for harvest in the calendar years 1996 through 2002.

SEC. 172. [7 U.S.C. 7302] EFFECT OF AMENDMENTS.

(a) EFFECT ON PRIOR CROPS.—Except as otherwise specifically provided in this title and notwithstanding any other provision of law, this title and the amendments made by this title shall not affect the authority of the Secretary to carry out a price support or production adjustment program for any of the 1991 through 1995 crops of an agricultural commodity established under a provision of law in effect immediately before the date of enactment of this title.

(b) LIABILITY.—A provision of this title or an amendment made by this title shall not affect the liability of any person under any provision of law as in effect before the date of enactment of this title.

Subtitle G—Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture

SEC. 181. [7 U.S.C. 7311] ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established a commission to be known as the “Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture” (in this subtitle referred to as the “Commission”).

SEC. 182. [7 U.S.C. 7312] COMPOSITION.

(a) MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of 11 members, appointed as follows:

- (1) Three members shall be appointed by the President.
- (2) Four members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives in consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee.
- (3) Four members shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the

²⁰Sec. 171(b)(3) added sec. 101(e) of the Agricultural Act of 1949 (7 U.S.C. 1441(e)).

Senate in consultation with the ranking minority member of the Committee.

(b) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—At least 1 of the members appointed under each of paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a) shall be an individual who is primarily involved in production agriculture. All other members of the Commission shall be appointed from among individuals having knowledge and experience in agricultural production, marketing, finance, or trade.

(c) **TERM OF MEMBERS; VACANCIES.**—A member of the Commission shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. A vacancy on the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(d) **TIME FOR APPOINTMENT; FIRST MEETING.**—The members of the Commission shall be appointed not later than October 1, 1997. The Commission shall convene its first meeting to carry out its duties under this subtitle 30 days after 6 members of the Commission have been appointed.

(e) **CHAIRPERSON.**—The chairperson of the Commission shall be designated jointly by the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate from among the members of the Commission.

SEC. 183. [7 U.S.C. 7313] COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF PAST AND FUTURE OF PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE.

(a) **INITIAL REVIEW.**—The Commission shall conduct a comprehensive review of changes in the condition of production agriculture in the United States since the date of enactment of this title and the extent to which the changes are the result of this title and the amendments made by this title. The review shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of the initial success of production flexibility contracts in supporting the economic viability of farming in the United States.

(2) An assessment of economic risks to farms delineated by size of farm operation (such as small, medium, or large farms) and region of production.

(3) An assessment of the food security situation in the United States in the areas of trade, consumer prices, international competitiveness of United States production agriculture, food supplies, and humanitarian relief.

(4) An assessment of the changes in farmland values and agricultural producer incomes since the date of enactment of this title.

(5) An assessment of the extent to which regulatory relief for agricultural producers has been enacted and implemented, including the application of cost/benefit principles in the issuance of agricultural regulations.

(6) An assessment of the extent to which tax relief for agricultural producers has been enacted in the form of capital gains tax reductions, estate tax exemptions, and mechanisms to average tax loads over high- and low-income years.

(7) An assessment of the effect of any Federal Government interference in agricultural export markets, such as the imposition of trade embargoes, and the degree of implementation and

success of international trade agreements and United States export programs.

(8) An assessment of the likely effect of the sale, lease, or transfer of farm poundage quota for peanuts across State lines.

(b) **SUBSEQUENT REVIEW.**—The Commission shall conduct a comprehensive review of the future of production agriculture in the United States and the appropriate role of the Federal Government in support of production agriculture. The review shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of changes in the condition of production agriculture in the United States since the initial review conducted under subsection (a).

(2) Identification of the appropriate future relationship of the Federal Government with production agriculture after 2002.

(3) An assessment of the personnel and infrastructure requirements of the Department of Agriculture necessary to support the future relationship of the Federal Government with production agriculture.

(4) An assessment of economic risks to farms delineated by size of farm operation (such as small, medium, or large farms) and region of production.

(c) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—In carrying out the subsequent review under subsection (b), the Commission shall develop specific recommendations for legislation to achieve the appropriate future relationship of the Federal Government with production agriculture identified under subsection (a)(2).

SEC. 184. [7 U.S.C. 7314] REPORTS.

(a) **REPORT ON INITIAL REVIEW.**—Not later than June 1, 1998, the Commission shall submit to the President, the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report containing the results of the initial review conducted under section 183(a).

(b) **REPORT ON SUBSEQUENT REVIEW.**—Not later than January 1, 2001, the Commission shall submit to the President and the congressional committees specified in subsection (a) a report containing the results of the subsequent review conducted under section 183(b).

SEC. 185. [7 U.S.C. 7315] POWERS.

(a) **HEARINGS.**—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out this subtitle, conduct such hearings, sit and act at such times, take such testimony, and receive such evidence, as the Commission considers appropriate.

(b) **ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AGENCIES.**—The Commission may secure directly from any department or agency of the Federal Government such information as may be necessary for the Commission to carry out its duties under this subtitle. On the request of the chairperson of the Commission, the head of the department or agency shall, to the extent permitted by law, furnish such information to the Commission.

(c) MAIL.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as the departments and agencies of the Federal Government.

(d) ASSISTANCE FROM SECRETARY.—The Secretary shall provide to the Commission appropriate office space and such reasonable administrative and support services as the Commission may request.

SEC. 186. [7 U.S.C. 7316] COMMISSION PROCEDURES.

(a) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet on a regular basis (as determined by the chairperson) and at the call of the chairperson or a majority of its members.

(b) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

SEC. 187. [7 U.S.C. 7317] PERSONNEL MATTERS.

(a) COMPENSATION.—Each member of the Commission shall serve without compensation, but shall be allowed travel expenses including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, when engaged in the performance of Commission duties.

(b) STAFF.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall appoint a staff director, who shall be paid at a rate not to exceed the maximum rate of basic pay under section 5376 of title 5, United States Code, and such professional and clerical personnel as may be reasonable and necessary to enable the Commission to carry out its duties under this subtitle without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title, or any other provision of law, relating to the number, classification, and General Schedule rates.

(2) LIMITATION ON COMPENSATION.—No employee appointed under this subsection (other than the staff director) may be compensated at a rate to exceed the maximum rate applicable to level GS-15 of the General Schedule.

(c) DETAILED PERSONNEL.—On the request of the chairperson of the Commission, the head of any department or agency of the Federal Government is authorized to detail, without reimbursement, any personnel of the department or agency to the Commission to assist the Commission in carrying out its duties under this section. The detail of any individual may not result in the interruption or loss of civil service status or other privilege of the individual.

SEC. 188. [7 U.S.C. 7318] TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.

The Commission shall terminate on submission of the final report required by section 184.

Subtitle H—Miscellaneous Commodity Provisions

SEC. 191. [7 U.S.C. 7331] OPTIONS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) PILOT PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED.—Until December 31, 2002, the Secretary of Agriculture may conduct a pilot program for 1 or more agricultural commodities supported under this title to ascertain whether futures and options contracts can provide producers with reasonable protection from the financial risks of fluctuations in price, yield, and income inherent in the production and marketing of the commodities. The pilot program shall be an alternative to other related programs of the Department of Agriculture.

(b) DISTRIBUTION OF PILOT PROGRAM.—For each agricultural commodity included in the pilot program, the Secretary may operate the pilot program in not more than 300 counties, except that not more than 25 of the counties may be located in any 1 State. The pilot program for a commodity shall not be operated in any county for more than 3 of the 1996 through 2002 calendar years.

(c) ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS.—In operating the pilot program, the Secretary may enter into contract with a producer who—

(1) is eligible for a production flexibility contract, a marketing assistance loan, or other assistance under this title;

(2) volunteers to participate in the pilot program during any calendar year in which a county in which the farm of the producer is located is included in the pilot program;

(3) operates a farm located in a county selected for the pilot program; and

(4) meets such other eligibility requirements as the Secretary may establish.

(d) NOTICE TO PRODUCERS.—The Secretary shall provide notice to each producer participating in the pilot program that—

(1) the participation of the producer is voluntary; and

(2) neither the United States, the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, the Department of Agriculture, nor any other Federal agency is authorized to guarantee that participants in the pilot program will be better or worse off financially as a result of participation in the pilot program than the producer would have been if the producer had not participated in the pilot program.

(e) CONTRACTS.—The Secretary shall set forth in each contract under the pilot program the terms and conditions for participation in the pilot program and the notice required by subsection (d).

(f) ELIGIBLE MARKETS.—Trades for futures and options contracts under the pilot program shall be carried out on commodity futures and options markets designated as contract markets under the Commodity Exchange Act (7 U.S.C. 1 et seq.).

(g) RECORDKEEPING.—A producer participating in the pilot program shall compile, maintain, and submit (or authorize the compilation, maintenance, and submission) of such documentation as the regulations governing the pilot program require.

(h) USE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—The Secretary shall fund and operate the pilot program through the Commodity Credit Corporation, except that the amount of Commodity Credit

Corporation funds used to carry out this section shall not exceed, to the maximum extent practicable, \$9,000,000 for fiscal year 2001, \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2002, and \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2003. To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary shall operate the pilot program in a budget neutral manner.

(i) CONFORMING REPEAL.—²¹

SEC. 192. [7 U.S.C. 7332] RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION.

In consultation with the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Secretary shall provide such education in management of the financial risks inherent in the production and marketing of agricultural commodities as the Secretary considers appropriate. As part of such educational activities, the Secretary may develop and implement programs to facilitate the participation of agricultural producers in commodity futures trading programs, forward contracting options, and insurance protection programs by assisting and training producers in the usage of such programs. In implementing this authority, the Secretary may use existing research and extension authorities and resources of the Department of Agriculture.

SEC. 193. [7 U.S.C. 1508] CROP INSURANCE.

(a) CATASTROPHIC RISK PROTECTION.—

(1) SINGLE DELIVERY.—²²

(2) WAIVER OF MANDATORY LINKAGE.—²³

(3) SPECIAL RULE FOR 1996.—

(A) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—This paragraph shall apply only to the 1996 crop year.

(B) AVAILABILITY.—During a period of not less than 2 weeks, but not more than 4 weeks, beginning on the date of enactment of this title, the Secretary shall provide producers with an opportunity to obtain catastrophic risk protection insurance under section 508(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)) for a spring-planted crop, and limited additional coverage for malting barley under the Malting Barley Price and Quality Endorsement. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation may attach such limitations and restrictions on obtaining insurance during this period as the Corporation considers necessary to maintain the actuarial soundness of the crop insurance program.

(C) ATTACHMENT.—Insurance coverage under any policy obtained under this paragraph during the extended sales period shall not attach until 10 days after the application.

(D) CANCELLATION.—During the extended period, a producer may cancel a catastrophic risk protection policy if—

(i) the policy is a continuation of a policy that was obtained for a previous crop year; and

²¹ Sec. 191(i) repealed the Options Pilot Program Act of 1990 (subtitle E of title XI of Public Law 101-624; 7 U.S.C. 1421 note).

²² Sec. 193(a)(1) added sec. 508(b)(4)(C) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)(4)(C)).

²³ Sec. 193(a)(2) amended sec. 508(b)(7)(A) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)(7)(A)).

(ii) the cancellation request is made before the acreage reporting date for the policy for the 1996 crop year.

(b) CROP INSURANCE PILOT PROJECT.—

(1) COVERAGE.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall develop and administer a pilot project for crop insurance coverage that indemnifies crop losses due to a natural disaster such as insect infestation or disease.

(2) ACTUARIAL SOUNDNESS.—A pilot project under this paragraph shall be actuarially sound, as determined by the Secretary and administered at no net cost.

(3) DURATION.—A pilot project under this paragraph shall be of two years' duration.

(c) CROP INSURANCE FOR NURSERY CROPS.—²⁴

(d) MARKETING WINDOWS.—²⁵

(e) FUNDING.—²⁶

(f) LIMITATION ON MULTIPLE BENEFITS FOR SAME LOSS.—²⁷

SEC. 194. [7 U.S.C. 6933] ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—²⁸

(b) FISCAL YEAR 1996 FUNDING.—From funds appropriated for the salaries and expenses of the Consolidated Farm Service Agency in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–37), the Secretary of Agriculture may use such sums as necessary for the salaries and expenses of the Office of Risk Management established under subsection (a).

(c) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—²⁹

SEC. 195. [7 U.S.C. 1508] REVENUE INSURANCE.³⁰

SEC. 196. [7 U.S.C. 7333] ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATION OF NON-INSURED CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

(a) OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—

(A) COVERAGES.—In the case of an eligible crop described in paragraph (2), the Secretary of Agriculture shall operate a noninsured crop disaster assistance program to provide coverages based on individual yields (other than for value-loss crops) equivalent to—

(i) catastrophic risk protection available under section 508(b) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(b)); or

(ii) except in the case of crops and grasses used for grazing, additional coverage available under subsections (c) and (h) of section 508 of that Act (7 U.S.C.

²⁴ Sec. 193(c) added sec. 508(a)(6)(D) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(a)(6)(D)).

²⁵ Sec. 193(d) added sec. 508(j)(4) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(j)(4)).

²⁶ Sec. 193(e) amended sec. 516 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1516).

²⁷ Sec. 193(f) added sec. 508(n) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(n)).

²⁸ Sec. 194(a) added sec. 226A of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6933).

²⁹ Sec. 194(c) struck sec. 226(b)(2) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 6932(b)(2)).

³⁰ Sec. 195 added sec. 508(h)(9) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508(h)(9)).

1508) that does not exceed 65 percent, as described in subsection (l).

(B) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall carry out this section through the Farm Service Agency (referred to in this section as the “Agency”).

(C) DATA COLLECTION AND SHARING.—The Secretary shall coordinate with the Administrator of the Risk Management Agency on the type and format of data received under the noninsured crop disaster assistance program that—

(i) best facilitates the use of that data in developing policies or plans of insurance offered under the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1501 et seq.); and

(ii) ensures the availability of that data on a regular basis.

(D) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate between the agencies of the Department that provide programs or services to farmers and ranchers that are potentially eligible for the noninsured crop disaster assistance program under this section—

(i) to make available coverage under—

(I) the fee waiver under subsection (k)(2); or

(II) the premium discount under subsection

(l)(3); and

(ii) to share eligibility information to reduce paperwork and avoid duplication.

(2) ELIGIBLE CROPS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), in this section, the term “eligible crop” means each commercial crop or other agricultural commodity that is produced for food or fiber (except livestock) for which catastrophic risk protection under subsection (b) of section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) and additional coverage under subsections (c) and (h) of such section are not available or, if such coverage is available, it is only available under a policy that provides coverage for specific intervals based on weather indexes or under a whole farm plan of insurance.

(B) CROPS SPECIFICALLY INCLUDED.—The term “eligible crop” shall include floricultural, ornamental nursery, and Christmas tree crops, turfgrass sod, seed crops, aquaculture (including ornamental fish), sea grass and sea oats, camelina, sweet sorghum, biomass sorghum, and industrial crops (including those grown expressly for the purpose of producing a feedstock for renewable biofuel, renewable electricity, or biobased products).

(C) COMBINATION OF SIMILAR TYPES OR VARIETIES.—At the option of the Secretary, all types or varieties of a crop or commodity, described in subparagraphs (A) and (B), may be considered to be a single eligible crop under this section.

(3) CAUSE OF LOSS.—To qualify for assistance under this section, the losses of the noninsured commodity shall be due to

drought, flood, or other natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) PROGRAM REDUCTION IN BENEFITS RELATING TO CROP PRODUCTION ON NATIVE SOD.—

(A) DEFINITION OF NATIVE SOD.—In this paragraph, the term “native sod” means land—

(i) on which the plant cover is composed principally of native grasses, grasslike plants, forbs, or shrubs suitable for grazing and browsing; and

(ii) that has never been tilled, or the producer cannot substantiate that the ground has ever been tilled, for the production of an annual crop as of the date of enactment of this paragraph.

(B) REDUCTION IN BENEFITS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—

(I) AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014.—During the first 4 crop years of planting, as determined by the Secretary, native sod acreage that has been tilled for the production of an annual crop during the period beginning on February 8, 2014, and ending on the date of enactment of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 shall be subject to a reduction in benefits under this section as described in this subparagraph.

(II) SUBSEQUENT YEARS.—Native sod acreage that has been tilled for the production of an eligible crop after the date of enactment of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 shall be subject to a reduction in benefits under this section as described in this subparagraph for not more than any 4 crop years—

(aa) during the first 10 crop years after the initial tillage; and

(bb) during which a crop on that acreage is enrolled under subsection (l)(2) or (k).

(ii) DE MINIMIS ACREAGE EXEMPTION.—The Secretary shall exempt areas of 5 acres or less from clause (i).

(iii) REDUCTION.—For purposes of the reduction in benefits for the acreage described in clause (i)—

(I) the approved yield shall be determined by using a yield equal to 65 percent of the county expected yield; and

(II) the service fees or premiums for crops planted on native sod shall be equal to 200 percent of the amount determined in subsections (l)(2) or (k), as applicable, but in no case shall exceed the amount determined in subsection (l)(2)(B)(ii).

(C) APPLICATION.—This paragraph shall only apply to native sod acreage in the States of Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska.

(b) APPLICATION FOR NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—

(1) **TIMELY APPLICATION.**—To be eligible for assistance under this section, a producer shall submit an application for noninsured crop disaster assistance at a local office of the Department. The application shall be in such form, contain such information, and be submitted by an appropriate deadline before the beginning of the coverage period, as determined by the Secretary.

(2) **RECORDS.**—To be eligible for assistance under this section, a producer shall provide annually to the Secretary records of crop acreage, acreage yields, and production for each crop, as required by the Secretary.

(3) **ACREAGE REPORTS.**—A producer shall provide annual reports on acreage planted or prevented from being planted, as required by the Secretary, by the designated acreage reporting date for the crop and location as established by the Secretary.

(4) **STREAMLINED SUBMISSION PROCESS.**—The Secretary shall establish a streamlined process for the submission of records and acreage reports under paragraphs (2) and (3) for diverse production systems such as those typical of urban production systems, other small-scale production systems, and direct-to-consumer production systems.

(c) **LOSS REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **CAUSE.**—To be eligible for assistance under this section, a producer of an eligible crop shall have suffered a loss of a noninsured commodity as the result of a cause described in subsection (a)(3).

(2) **ASSISTANCE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—On making a determination described in subsection (a)(3), the Secretary shall provide assistance under this section to producers of an eligible crop that have suffered a loss as a result of the cause described in subsection (a)(3).

(B) **AQUACULTURE PRODUCERS.**—On making a determination described in subsection (a)(3) for aquaculture producers, the Secretary shall provide assistance under this section to aquaculture producers from all losses related to drought.

(3) **PREVENTED PLANTING.**—Subject to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall make a prevented planting noninsured crop disaster assistance payment if the producer is prevented from planting more than 35 percent of the acreage intended for the eligible crop because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary.

(4) **AREA TRIGGER.**—The Secretary shall provide assistance to individual producers without any requirement of an area loss.

(d) **PAYMENT.**—The Secretary shall make available to a producer eligible for noninsured assistance under this section a payment computed by multiplying—

(1) the producer's share of the total acres devoted to the eligible crop; by

(2) the quantity that is less than 50 percent of the approved yield for the crop, as determined by the Secretary; by

(3)(A) in the case of each of the 1996 through 1998 crop years, 60 percent of the average market price for the crop (or any comparable coverage determined by the Secretary); or

(B) in the case of each of the 1999 and subsequent crop years, 55 percent of the average market price for the crop (or any comparable coverage determined by the Secretary); by

(4) a payment rate for the type of crop (as determined by the Secretary) that—

(A) in the case of a crop that is produced with a significant and variable harvesting expense, reflects the decreasing cost incurred in the production cycle for the crop that is—

(i) harvested;

(ii) planted but not harvested; and

(iii) prevented from being planted because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster (as determined by the Secretary); and

(B) in the case of a crop that is not produced with a significant and variable harvesting expense, as determined by the Secretary.

(e) YIELD DETERMINATIONS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish approved yields for purposes of providing noninsured crop disaster assistance under this section.

(2) ACTUAL PRODUCTION HISTORY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall determine an approved yield using the actual production history of the producer over a period of not less than the 4 previous consecutive crop years and not more than 10 consecutive crop years.

(B) CALCULATION.—Subject to paragraph (3), the approved yield for the year in which noninsured crop disaster assistance is sought shall be equal to the average of the actual production history of the producer during the period considered.

(3) ASSIGNMENT OF YIELD.—If a producer does not submit adequate documentation of production history to determine a crop yield under paragraph (2), the Secretary shall assign to the producer a yield equal to not less than 65 percent of the county expected yield (adjusted to reflect actual production reflected in the records acceptable to the Secretary for continuous years), as specified in regulations issued by the Secretary based on production history requirements.

(4) PROHIBITION ON ASSIGNED YIELDS IN CERTAIN COUNTIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—

(i) DOCUMENTATION.—If sufficient data are available to demonstrate that the acreage of a crop in a county for the crop year has increased by more than 100 percent over any year in the preceding 7 crop years or, if data are not available, if the acreage of the crop in the county has increased significantly from the previous crop years, a producer must provide such detailed documentation of production costs, acres plant-

ed, and yield for the crop year for which benefits are being claimed as is required by the Secretary. If the Secretary determines that the documentation provided is not sufficient, the Secretary may require documenting proof that the crop, had the crop been harvested, could have been marketed at a reasonable price.

(ii) PROHIBITION.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), a producer who produces a crop on a farm located in a county described in clause (i) may not obtain an assigned yield.

(B) EXCEPTION.—A crop or a producer shall not be subject to this subsection if—

(i) the planted acreage of the producer for the crop has been inspected by a third party acceptable to the Secretary; or

(ii)(I) the County Executive Director and the State Executive Director recommend an exemption from the requirement to the Administrator of the Agency; and

(II) the Administrator approves the recommendation.

(5) LIMITATION ON RECEIPT OF SUBSEQUENT ASSIGNED YIELD.—A producer who receives an assigned yield for the current year of a natural disaster because required production records were not submitted to the local office of the Department shall not be eligible for an assigned yield for the year of the next natural disaster unless the required production records of the previous 1 or more years (as applicable) are provided to the local office.

(6) YIELD VARIATIONS DUE TO DIFFERENT FARMING PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall ensure that noninsured crop disaster assistance accurately reflects significant yield variations due to different farming practices, such as between irrigated and nonirrigated acreage.

(f) CONTRACT PAYMENTS.—A producer who has received a guaranteed payment for production, as opposed to delivery, of a crop pursuant to a contract shall have the production of the producer adjusted upward by the amount of the production equal to the amount of the contract payment received.

(g) USE OF COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.—The Secretary may use the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation to carry out this section.

(h) EXCLUSIONS.—Noninsured crop disaster assistance under this section shall not cover losses due to—

(1) the neglect or malfeasance of the producer;

(2) the failure of the producer to reseed to the same crop in those areas and under such circumstances where it is customary to reseed; or

(3) the failure of the producer to follow good farming practices, as determined by the Secretary.

(i) PAYMENT AND INCOME LIMITATIONS.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection, the terms “legal entity” and “person” have the meanings given those terms in sec-

tion 1001(a) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308(a)).

(2) PAYMENT LIMITATION.—The total amount of payments received, directly or indirectly, by a person or legal entity (excluding a joint venture or general partnership) for any crop year may not exceed—

(A) in the case of catastrophic coverage under subsection (c), \$125,000; and

(B) in the case of additional coverage under subsection (1), \$300,000.

(3) LIMITATION ON MULTIPLE BENEFITS FOR SAME LOSS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), if a producer who is eligible to receive benefits under this section is also eligible to receive assistance for the same loss under any other program administered by the Secretary, the producer shall be required to elect whether to receive benefits under this section or under the other program, but not both.

(B) EXCEPTION.—Subparagraph (A) shall not apply to emergency loans under subtitle C of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 1961 et seq.).

(4) ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME LIMITATION.—A person or legal entity that has an average adjusted gross income in excess of the average adjusted gross income limitation applicable under section 1001D(b)(1)(A) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308–3a(b)(1)(A)), or a successor provision, shall not be eligible to receive noninsured crop disaster assistance under this section.

(5) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall issue regulations prescribing such rules as the Secretary determines necessary—

(A) to ensure a fair and equitable application of section 1001 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308), the general payment limitation regulations of the Secretary, and the limitations established under this subsection; and

(B) to ensure that payments under this section are attributed to a person or legal entity (excluding a joint venture or general partnership) in accordance with the terms and conditions of sections 1001 through 1001D of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1308 et seq.), as determined by the Secretary.

(j) CONFORMING REPEAL.—³²

(k) SERVICE FEE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive assistance for an eligible crop for a crop year under this section, a producer shall pay to the Secretary (at the time at which the producer submits the application under subsection (b)(1)) a service fee for the eligible crop in an amount that is equal to the lesser of—

(A) \$325 per crop per county; or

(B) \$825 per producer per county, but not to exceed a total of \$1,950 per producer.

³²Sec. 196(j) repealed sec. 519 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1519).

(2) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary shall waive the service fee required under paragraph (1) in the case of a limited resource, beginning, or socially disadvantaged farmer, as defined by the Secretary, or a veteran farmer or rancher (as defined in section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))).

(3) **USE.**—The Secretary shall deposit service fees collected under this subsection in the Commodity Credit Corporation Fund.

(1) **PAYMENT EQUIVALENT TO ADDITIONAL COVERAGE.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall make available non-insured assistance under this subsection (other than for crops and grasses used for grazing) at a payment amount that is equivalent to an indemnity for additional coverage under subsections (c) and (h) of section 508 of the Federal Crop Insurance Act (7 U.S.C. 1508) and equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(A) the producer's share of the total acres devoted to the crop;

(B) the amount that—

(i) the additional coverage yield, which shall be equal to the product obtained by multiplying—

(I) an amount not less than 50 percent nor more than 65 percent, as elected by the producer and specified in 5-percent increments; and

(II) the approved yield for the crop, as determined by the Secretary; exceeds

(ii) the actual yield;

(C) 100 percent of the average market price, contract price, or other premium price (such as a local, organic, or direct market price, as elected by the producer) for the crop, as determined by the Secretary; and

(D) a payment rate for the type of crop, as determined by the Secretary, that reflects—

(i) in the case of a crop that is produced with a significant and variable harvesting expense, the decreasing cost incurred in the production cycle for the crop that is, as applicable—

(I) harvested;

(II) planted but not harvested; or

(III) prevented from being planted because of drought, flood, or other natural disaster, as determined by the Secretary; or

(ii) in the case of a crop that is produced without a significant and variable harvesting expense, such rate as shall be determined by the Secretary.

(2) **SERVICE FEE AND PREMIUM.**—To be eligible to receive a payment under this subsection, a producer shall pay—

(A) the service fee required by subsection (k); and

(B) the lesser of—

(i) the sum of the premiums for each eligible crop, with the premium for each eligible crop obtained by multiplying—

- (I) the number of acres devoted to the eligible crop;
- (II) the yield, as determined by the Secretary under subsection (e);
- (III) the coverage level elected by the producer;
- (IV) the average market price, as determined by the Secretary;
- (V) a 5.25-percent premium fee; and
- (VI) the producer's share of the crop; or
- (ii) the product obtained by multiplying—
 - (I) a 5.25-percent premium fee; and
 - (II) the applicable payment limit.

(3) LIMITED RESOURCE, BEGINNING, VETERAN, AND SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS.—The coverage made available under this subsection shall be available to limited resource, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers, as determined by the Secretary, and veteran farmers or ranchers (as defined in section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 2279(a))) in exchange for a premium that is 50 percent of the premium determined under paragraph (2).

TITLE II—AGRICULTURAL TRADE

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SEC. 261. [7 U.S.C. 5678] EDWARD R. MADIGAN UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL EXPORT EXCELLENCE AWARD.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) United States producers of agricultural products are some of the most productive and efficient producers of agricultural products in the world;

(2) continued growth and expansion of markets for United States agricultural exports is crucial to the continued development and economic well-being of rural areas of the United States and the agricultural sector of the United States economy;

(3) in recent years, United States agricultural exports have steadily increased, surpassing \$54,000,000,000 in value in 1995;

(4) as United States agricultural producers move toward a market-oriented system in which planting and other decisions by producers are driven by national and international market signals, developing new and expanding agricultural export markets is vital to maintaining a vibrant and healthy agricultural sector and rural economy; and

(5) a United States agricultural export excellence award will increase United States agricultural exports by—

(A) identifying efforts of United States entities to develop and expand markets for United States agricultural exports through the development of new products and services and through the use of innovative marketing techniques;

(B) recognizing achievements of those who have exhibited or supported entrepreneurial efforts to expand and create new markets for United States agricultural exports or increase the volume or value of United States agricultural exports; and

(C) disseminating information on successful methods used to develop and expand markets for United States agricultural exports.

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award, which shall be evidenced by a medal bearing the inscription “Edward R. Madigan United States Agricultural Export Excellence Award”. The medal shall be of such design and materials and bear such additional inscriptions as the Secretary of Agriculture (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) may prescribe.

(c) SELECTION OF RECIPIENT.—The President or the Secretary (on the basis of recommendations received from the board established under subsection (h)) shall periodically provide the award to companies and other entities that in the judgment of the President or the Secretary substantially encourage entrepreneurial efforts in the food and agriculture sector for advancing United States agricultural exports.

(d) PRESENTATION OF AWARD.—The presentation of the award shall be made by the President or the Secretary with such ceremonies as the President or the Secretary considers proper.

(e) PUBLICATION OF AWARD.—An entity to which an award is made under this section may publicize the receipt of the award by the entity and use the award in advertising of the entity.

(f) CATEGORIES FOR WHICH AWARD MAY BE GIVEN.—Separate awards shall be made to qualifying entities in each of the following categories:

(1) Development of new products or services for agricultural export markets.

(2) Development of new agricultural export markets.

(3) Creative marketing of products or services in agricultural export markets.

(g) CRITERIA FOR QUALIFICATION.—An entity may qualify for an award under this section only if the entity—

(1)(A) applies to the board established under subsection (h) in writing for the award; or

(B) is recommended for the award by a Governor of a State;

(2)(A) has exhibited significant entrepreneurial effort to create new markets for United States agricultural exports or increase United States agricultural exports; or

(B) has provided significant assistance to others in an effort to create new markets for United States agricultural exports or increase United States agricultural exports;

(3) has not received another award in the same category under subsection (f) during the preceding 5-year period; and

(4) meets such other requirements and specifications as the Secretary determines are appropriate to achieve the objectives of this section.

(h) BOARD.—

(1) SELECTION.—The Secretary shall appoint a board of evaluators, consisting of at least 5 individuals from the private sector selected for their knowledge and experience in exporting United States agricultural products.

(2) MEETINGS.—The board shall meet at least once annually to review and evaluate all applicants and entities recommended by States under subsection (g)(1).

(3) RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOARD.—The board shall report its recommendations concerning the making of the award to the Secretary.

(4) TERM.—Each member of the board may serve a term of not to exceed 3 years.

(i) FUNDING.—The Secretary may seek and accept gifts from public and private sources to carry out this section.

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SEC. 282. SENSE OF CONGRESS CONCERNING MULTILATERAL DISCIPLINES ON CREDIT GUARANTEES.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) in negotiations to establish multilateral disciplines on agricultural export credits and credit guarantees, the United States should not agree to any arrangement that is incompatible with the provisions of United States law that authorize agricultural export credits and credit guarantees;

(2) in the negotiations (which are held under the auspices of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), the United States should not reach any agreement that fails to impose disciplines on the practices of foreign government trading entities such as the Australian Wheat Board, the Canadian Wheat Board, the New Zealand Dairy Board, and the Australian Dairy Board; and

(3) the disciplines should include greater openness in the operations of the entities as long as the entities are subsidized by the foreign government or have monopolies for exports of a commodity that are sanctioned by the foreign government.

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TITLE III—CONSERVATION

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Subtitle B—Highly Erodible Land Conservation

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SEC. 317. [16 U.S.C. 3811 note] WIND EROSION ESTIMATION PILOT PROJECT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall conduct a pilot project to review, and modify as appropriate, the use of wind erosion factors under the highly erodible conservation requirements of subtitle B of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3811 et seq.).

(b) SELECTION OF COUNTIES AND PRODUCERS.—The pilot project shall be conducted for producers in those counties that—

(1) have approximately 100 percent of their cropland determined to be highly erodible under title XII of the Act;

(2) have a reasonable likelihood that the use of wind erosion factors under title XII of the Act have resulted in an inequitable application of the highly erodible land requirements of title XII of the Act; and

(3) if the use of the land classification system under section 1201(a)(9)(A) of the Act (as redesignated by section 301(a)(1)) may result in a more accurate delineation of the cropland.

(c) ERRORS IN DELINEATION.—If the Secretary determines that a significant error has occurred in delineating cropland under the pilot project, the Secretary shall, at the request of the owners or operators of the cropland, conduct a new delineation of the cropland using the most accurate available delineation process, as determined by the Secretary.

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【Section 325 was repealed by section 2817 of Public Law 115–334.】

Subtitle E—Conservation Funding and Administration

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SEC. 343. [16 U.S.C. 3862 note] PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT FOR REVISIONS TO CERTAIN STATE TECHNICAL GUIDES.

After the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall provide for public notice and comment under section 553 of title 5, United States Code, with regard to any future revisions to those provisions of the Natural Resources Conservation Service State technical guides that are used to carry out subtitles A, B, and C of title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.).

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Subtitle H—Miscellaneous Conservation Provisions

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【Section 385 was repealed by section 2814 of Public Law 115–334.】

[SEC. 386. [16 U.S.C. 2005b] CONSERVATION OF PRIVATE GRAZING LAND.³⁴]

[SEC. 387. [16 U.S.C. 3836a] WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM.³⁵]

[SEC. 388. [16 U.S.C. 3830 note] FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM.³⁶]

SEC. 389. [16 U.S.C. 526 note] INTERIM MORATORIUM ON BYPASS FLOWS.

(a) **MORATORIUM.**—There shall be an 20-month moratorium on any Forest Service decision to require bypass flows or any other relinquishment of the unimpaired use of a decreed water right as a condition of renewal or reissuance of a land use authorization permit.

(b) **LIMITATIONS.**—Subsection (a) shall not affect—

(1) obligations or authority of the Secretary of Agriculture to protect public health and safety; and

(2) obligations or authority under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), or applicable State law.

(c) **RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**—

(1) **EXISTING NON-FEDERAL WATER RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this section prevents or inhibits the exercise of the use and operation of existing non-Federal water rights on or above the National Forest land that require land use authorization permits from the Forest Service to access water supply facilities.

(2) **RENEWAL OR REISSUANCE OF EXPIRING LAND USE AUTHORIZATION FOR DECREED WATER RIGHTS.**—Nothing in this section prevents or inhibits the renewal or reissuance of expiring land use authorizations for decreed water rights. The Forest Service may extend, as needed, any expiring land use authorization for such time as is necessary to incorporate the results of the study authorized by subsection (d).

(d) **STUDY OF WATER RIGHTS ACROSS FEDERAL LANDS.**—

(1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, there shall be established a Water Rights Task Force to study the subjects described in paragraph (3).

(2) **MEMBERSHIP.**—The Task Force shall be composed of 7 members appointed as follows:

(A) 1 member shall be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(B) 2 members shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and 1 member shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

(C) 2 members shall be appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate and 1 member shall be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

³⁴Sec. 386 repealed by sec. 2502(b) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, P.L. 107–171, 116 Stat. 267, May 13, 2002.

³⁵Sec. 387 repealed by sec. 2502(b) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, P.L. 107–171, 116 Stat. 267, May 13, 2002.

³⁶Sec. 388 repealed by sec. 2503(b)(1)(A) of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, P.L. 107–171, 116 Stat. 269, May 13, 2002. Sec. 2503(b)(2) of that Act provides that “The amendment made by paragraph (1)(A) shall have no effect on any contract entered into under section 388 of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (16 U.S.C. 3830 note) that is in effect as of the date of enactment of this Act.”

(3) SUBJECTS TO BE STUDIED.—The Task Force shall study and make recommendations on—

(A) whether Federal water rights should be acquired for environmental protection on National Forest land;

(B) measures necessary to protect the free exercise of non-Federal water rights requiring easements and permits from the Forest Service;

(C) the protection of minimum instream flows for environmental and watershed management purposes on National Forest land through purchases or exchanges from willing sellers in accordance with State law;

(D) the effects of any of the recommendations made under this paragraph on existing State laws, regulations, and customs of water usage; and

(E) measures that would be useful in avoiding or resolving conflicts between the Forest Service's responsibilities for natural resource and environmental protection, the public interest, and the property rights and interests of water holders with special use permits for water facilities, including the study of the Federal acquisition of water rights, dispute resolution, mitigation, and compensation.

(4) FINAL REPORT.—As soon as practicable, but not later than 14 months, after the date of enactment of this Act, the Task Force shall provide the final report of the Task Force to—

(A) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(B) the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(C) the President pro tempore of the Senate;

(D) the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives;

(E) the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(F) the Chairman of the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives; and

(G) the Chairman of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

(5) AUTHORIZATION OF FUNDS.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall use funds made available for salaries and administrative expenses of the Department of Agriculture to carry out this subsection.

(e) EXTENSION FOR DELAY.—There shall be a day-for-day extension to the 20-month moratorium required by subsection (a) and a day-for-day extension to the report required by subsection (d)(4)—

(1) for every day of delay in implementing or establishing the Water Rights Task Force caused by a failure to nominate Task Force members by the Administration or by the Congress; or

(2) for every day of delay caused by a failure by the Secretary of Agriculture to identify adequate resources as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture to carry out the purposes of the Task Force.

SEC. 390. EVERGLADES ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—On July 1, 1996, out of any funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the Secretary of the Treasury

shall provide \$200,000,000 to the Secretary of the Interior to carry out this section.

(b) ENTITLEMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”)—

(1) shall be entitled to receive the funds made available under subsection (a);

(2) shall accept the funds; and

(3) shall use the funds to—

(A) conduct restoration activities in the Everglades ecosystem in South Florida, which shall include the acquisition of real property and interests in real property located within the Everglades ecosystem; and

(B) fund resource protection and resource maintenance activities in the Everglades ecosystem.

(c) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this subsection precludes the Secretary from transferring funds to the Army Corps of Engineers, the State of Florida, or the South Florida Water Management District to carry out subsection (b)(3).

(d) DEADLINE.—The Secretary shall use the funds made available under subsection (a) for restoration activities referred to in subsection (b)(3) not later than December 31, 1999.

(e) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—For each of calendar years 1996 through 1999, the Secretary shall submit an annual report to Congress describing all activities carried out under subsection (b)(3).

(f) SEPARATE AND ADDITIONAL EVERGLADES RESTORATION ACCOUNT.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a special account (to be known as the “Everglades Restoration Account”), which shall consist of such funds as may be deposited in the account under paragraph (2). The account shall be separate, and in addition to, funds deposited in the Treasury under subsection (a).

(2) SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR ACCOUNT.—

(A) PROCEEDS FROM SURPLUS PROPERTY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Administrator shall deposit in the special account all funds received by the Administrator, on or after the date of enactment of this Act and before the date of enactment of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, from the disposal pursuant to the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 471 et seq.) of surplus real property located in the State of Florida.

(ii) AVAILABILITY AND DISPOSITION OF FEDERAL LAND.—

(I) IDENTIFICATION.—Any Federal real property located in the State of Florida (excluding lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary that are set aside for conservation purposes) shall be identified for disposal or exchange under this subsection and shall be presumed available for purposes of this subsection unless the head of the agency controlling the property de-

termines that there is a compelling program need for any property identified by the Secretary.

(II) AVAILABILITY.—Property identified by the Secretary for which there is no demonstrated compelling program need shall, not later than 90 days after a request by the Secretary, be reported to the Administrator and shall be made available to the Administrator who shall consider the property to be surplus property for purposes of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 471 et seq.).

(III) PRIORITIZATION OF DISPOSITION.—The Administrator may prioritize the disposition of property made available under this subparagraph to permit the property to be sold as quickly as practicable in a manner that is consistent with the best interests of the Federal Government.

(B) LIMIT ON TOTAL AMOUNT OF DEPOSITS.—The total amount of funds deposited in the special account under subparagraph (A) shall not exceed \$100,000,000.

(C) EFFECT ON CLOSURE OF MILITARY INSTALLATIONS.—Nothing in this section alters the disposition of any proceeds arising from the disposal of real property pursuant to a base closure law.

(3) USE OF SPECIAL ACCOUNT.—Funds in the special account shall be available to the Secretary until expended under this paragraph. The Secretary shall use funds in the special account to assist in the restoration of the Everglades ecosystem in South Florida through—

(A) subject to paragraph (4), the acquisition of real property and interests in real property located within the Everglades ecosystem; and

(B) the funding of resource protection and resource maintenance activities in the Everglades ecosystem.

(4) STATE CONTRIBUTION.—The Secretary may not expend any funds from the special account to acquire a parcel of real property, or an interest in a parcel of real property, under paragraph (3)(A) unless the Secretary obtains, or has previously obtained, a contribution from the State of Florida in an amount equal to not less than 50 percent of the appraised value of the parcel or interest to be acquired, as determined by the Secretary.

(5) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Administrator” means the Administrator of General Services.

(B) BASE CLOSURE LAW.—The term “base closure law” means each of the following:

(i) The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (part A of title XXIX of Public Law 101–510; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note).

(ii) Title II of the Defense Authorization Amendments and Base Closure and Realignment Act (Public Law 100–526; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note).

(iii) Section 2687 of title 10, United States Code.

(iv) Any other similar law enacted after the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) EVERGLADES ECOSYSTEM.—The term “Everglades ecosystem” means the Florida Everglades Restoration area that extends from the Kissimmee River basin to Florida Bay.

(D) EXCESS PROPERTY.—The term “excess property” has the meaning provided in section 3 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 472).

(E) EXECUTIVE AGENCY.—The term “executive agency” has the meaning provided in section 3 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 472).

(F) SPECIAL ACCOUNT.—The term “special account” means the Everglades Restoration Account established under paragraph (1).

(G) SURPLUS PROPERTY.—The term “surplus property” has the meaning provided in section 3 of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 (40 U.S.C. 472).

(g) REPORT TO DETERMINE THE FEASIBILITY OF ADDITIONAL LAND ACQUISITION AND RESTORATION ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct an investigation to determine what, if any, unreserved and unappropriated Federal lands (or mineral interests in any such lands) under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary are suitable for disposal or exchange for the purpose of conducting restoration activities in the Everglades region.

(2) CONSERVATION LANDS.—No lands under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary that are set aside for conservation purposes shall be identified for disposal or exchange under this subsection.

(3) FLORIDA.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, determine which lands and mineral interests located within the State of Florida are suitable for disposal or exchange before making the determination for eligible lands or interests in other States.

(4) PUBLIC ACCESS.—In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary shall consider that in disposing of lands, the Secretary shall retain such interest in the lands as may be necessary to ensure that the general public is not precluded from reasonable access to the lands for purposes of fishing, hunting, or other recreational uses.

(5) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit a report to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate describing the results of the investigation conducted under this subsection. The report shall describe the specific parcels identified under this subsection, establish the priorities for disposal or exchange among the parcels, and estimate the values of the parcels.

SEC. 391. [7 U.S.C. 5405] AGRICULTURAL AIR QUALITY RESEARCH OVERSIGHT.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) various studies have alleged that agriculture is a source of PM-10 emissions;

(2) many of these studies have often been based on erroneous data;

(3) Federal research activities are currently being conducted by the Department of Agriculture to determine the true extent to which agricultural activities contribute to air pollution and to determine cost-effective ways in which the agricultural industry can reduce any pollution that exists; and

(4) any Federal policy recommendations that may be issued by any Federal agency to address air pollution problems related to agriculture or any other industrial activity should be based on sound scientific findings that are subject to adequate peer review and should take into account economic feasibility.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to encourage the Secretary of Agriculture to continue to strengthen vital research efforts related to agricultural air quality.

(c) OVERSIGHT COORDINATION.—

(1) INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable with respect to the Department of Agriculture and other Federal departments and agencies, ensure intergovernmental cooperation in research activities related to agricultural air quality and avoid duplication of the activities.

(2) CORRECT DATA.—The Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure that the results of any research related to agricultural air quality conducted by Federal agencies not report erroneous data with respect to agricultural air quality.

(d) TASK FORCE.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Chief of the National Resources Conservation Service shall establish a task force to address agricultural air quality issues.

(2) COMPOSITION.—The task force shall be comprised of employees of the Department of Agriculture, industry representatives, and other experts in the fields of agriculture and air quality.

(3) DUTIES.—The task force shall advise the Secretary with respect to the role of the Secretary for providing oversight and coordination related to agricultural air quality.

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TITLE V—AGRICULTURAL PROMOTION

Subtitle A—Commodity Promotion and Evaluation

SEC. 501. [7 U.S.C. 7401] COMMODITY PROMOTION AND EVALUATION.

(a) COMMODITY PROMOTION LAW DEFINED.—In this section, the term “commodity promotion law” means a Federal law that provides for the establishment and operation of a promotion program regarding an agricultural commodity that includes a combination of promotion, research, industry information, or consumer information activities, is funded by mandatory assessments on producers or processors, and is designed to maintain or expand markets and uses for the commodity (as determined by the Secretary). The term includes—

- (1) the marketing promotion provisions under section 8c(6)(I) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7 U.S.C. 608c(6)(I)), reenacted with amendments by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937;
- (2) Public Law 89–502 (7 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.);
- (3) title III of Public Law 91–670 (7 U.S.C. 2611 et seq.);
- (4) Public Law 93–428 (7 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.);
- (5) Public Law 94–294 (7 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.);
- (6) subtitle B of title I of Public Law 98–180 (7 U.S.C. 4501 et seq.);
- (7) Public Law 98–590 (7 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.);
- (8) subtitle B of title XVI of Public Law 99–198 (7 U.S.C. 4801 et seq.);
- (9) subtitle C of title XVI of Public Law 99–198 (7 U.S.C. 4901 et seq.);
- (10) subtitle B of title XIX of Public Law 101–624 (7 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.);
- (11) subtitle E of title XIX of Public Law 101–624 (7 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.);
- (12) subtitle H of title XIX of Public Law 101–624 (7 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.);
- (13) Public Law 103–190 (7 U.S.C. 6801 et seq.);
- (14) Public Law 103–407 (7 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.);
- (15) subtitle B;
- (16) subtitle C;
- (17) subtitle D;
- (18) subtitle E; or
- (19) any other provision of law enacted after April 4, 1996,

that provides for the establishment and operation of a promotion program described in the first sentence.

(b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

- (1) It is in the national public interest and vital to the welfare of the agricultural economy of the United States to maintain and expand existing markets and develop new markets and uses for agricultural commodities through industry-funded, Government-supervised, generic commodity promotion programs established under commodity promotion laws.

(2) These generic commodity promotion programs, funded by the agricultural producers or processors who most directly reap the benefits of the programs and supervised by the Secretary of Agriculture, provide a unique opportunity for producers and processors to inform consumers about their products.

(3) The central congressional purpose underlying each commodity promotion law has always been to maintain and expand markets for the agricultural commodity covered by the law, rather than to maintain or expand the share of those markets held by any individual producer or processor.

(4) The commodity promotion laws were neither designed nor intended to prohibit or restrict, and the promotion programs established and funded pursuant to these laws do not prohibit or restrict, individual advertising or promotion of the covered commodities by any producer, processor, or group of producers or processors.

(5) It has never been the intent of Congress for the generic commodity promotion programs established and funded by the commodity promotion laws to replace the individual advertising and promotion efforts of producers or processors.

(6) An individual producer's or processor's own advertising initiatives are typically designed to increase the share of the market held by that producer or processor rather than to increase or expand the overall size of the market.

(7) In contrast, a generic commodity promotion program is intended and designed to maintain or increase the overall demand for the agricultural commodity covered by the program and increase the size of the market for that commodity, often by utilizing promotion methods and techniques that individual producers and processors typically are unable, or have no incentive, to employ.

(8) The commodity promotion laws establish promotion programs that operate as "self-help" mechanisms for producers and processors to fund generic promotions for covered commodities which, under the required supervision and oversight of the Secretary of Agriculture—

(A) further specific national governmental goals, as established by Congress; and

(B) produce nonideological and commercial communication the purpose of which is to further the governmental policy and objective of maintaining and expanding the markets for the covered commodities.

(9) While some commodity promotion laws grant a producer or processor the option of crediting individual advertising conducted by the producer or processor for all or a portion of the producer's or processor's marketing promotion assessments, all promotion programs established under the commodity promotion laws, both those programs that permit credit for individual advertising and those programs that do not contain such provisions, are very narrowly tailored to fulfill the congressional purposes of the commodity promotion laws without impairing or infringing the legal or constitutional rights of any individual producer or processor.

(10) These generic commodity promotion programs are of particular benefit to small producers who often lack the resources or market power to advertise on their own and who are otherwise often unable to benefit from the economies of scale available in promotion and advertising.

(11) Periodic independent evaluation of the effectiveness of these generic commodity promotion programs will assist Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture in ensuring that the objectives of the programs are met.

(c) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF PROMOTION PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS.—Except as otherwise provided by law, each commodity board established under the supervision and oversight of the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to a commodity promotion law shall, not less often than every 5 years, authorize and fund, from funds otherwise available to the board, an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the generic commodity promotion programs and other programs conducted by the board pursuant to a commodity promotion law. The board shall submit to the Secretary, and make available to the public, the results of each periodic independent evaluation conducted under this subsection.

(d) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—The Secretary shall annually provide to the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate information on administrative expenses on programs established under commodity promotion laws.

(e) EXEMPTION OF CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCTS FROM PROMOTION ORDER ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any provision of a commodity promotion law, a person that produces, handles, markets, or imports organic products may be exempt from the payment of an assessment under a commodity promotion law with respect to any agricultural commodity that is certified as “organic” or “100 percent organic” (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)).

(2) SPLIT OPERATIONS.—The exemption described in paragraph (1) shall apply to the certified “organic” or “100 percent organic” (as defined in part 205 of title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)) products of a producer, handler, or marketer regardless of whether the agricultural commodity subject to the exemption is produced, handled, or marketed by a person that also produces, handles, or markets conventional or nonorganic agricultural products, including conventional or nonorganic agricultural products of the same agricultural commodity as that for which the exemption is claimed.

(3) APPROVAL.—The Secretary shall approve the exemption of a person under this subsection if the person maintains a valid organic certificate issued under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.).

(4) TERMINATION OF EFFECTIVENESS.—This subsection shall be effective until the date on which the Secretary issues an organic commodity promotion order in accordance with subsection (f).

(5) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations concerning eligibility and compliance for an exemption under paragraph (1).

(f) ORGANIC COMMODITY PROMOTION ORDER.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) CERTIFIED ORGANIC FARM.—The term “certified organic farm” has the meaning given the term in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502).

(B) COVERED PERSON.—The term “covered person” means a producer, handler, marketer, or importer of an organic agricultural commodity.

(C) DUAL-COVERED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term “dual-covered agricultural commodity” means an agricultural commodity that—

(i) is produced on a certified organic farm; and

(ii) is covered under both—

(I) an organic commodity promotion order issued pursuant to paragraph (2); and

(II) any other agricultural commodity promotion order issued under a commodity promotion law.

(2) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary may issue an organic commodity promotion order under section 514 that includes any agricultural commodity that—

(A) is produced or handled (as defined in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502)) and that is certified to be sold or labeled as “organic” or “100 percent organic” (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation)); or

(B) is imported with a valid organic certificate (as defined in that part).

(3) ELECTION.—If the Secretary issues an organic commodity promotion order described in paragraph (2), a covered person may elect, for applicable dual-covered agricultural commodities and in the sole discretion of the covered person, whether to be assessed under the organic commodity promotion order or another applicable agricultural commodity promotion order.

(4) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary shall promulgate regulations concerning eligibility and compliance for an exemption under paragraph (1).

Subtitle B—Issuance of Orders for Promotion, Research, and Information Activities Regarding Agricultural Commodities

SEC. 511. [7 U.S.C. 7411 note] SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996”.

SEC. 512. [7 U.S.C. 7411] FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress finds the following:

(1) The production of agricultural commodities plays a significant role in the economy of the United States. Thousands of producers in the United States are involved in the production of agricultural commodities, and such commodities are consumed by millions of people throughout the United States and foreign countries.

(2) Agricultural commodities must be of high quality, readily available, handled properly, and marketed efficiently to ensure that consumers have an adequate supply.

(3) The maintenance and expansion of existing markets and the development of new markets for agricultural commodities through generic commodity promotion, research, and information programs are vital to the welfare of persons engaged in the production, marketing, and consumption of such commodities, as well as to the general economy of the United States.

(4) Generic promotion, research, and information activities for agricultural commodities play a unique role in advancing the demand for such commodities, since such activities increase the total market for a product to the benefit of consumers and all producers. These generic activities complement branded advertising initiatives, which are aimed at increasing the market share of individual competitors, and are of particular benefit to small producers who lack the resources or market power to advertise on their own. These generic activities do not impede the branded advertising efforts of individual firms, but instead increase general market demand for an agricultural commodity using methods that individual companies do not have the incentive to employ.

(5) Generic promotion, research, and information activities for agricultural commodities, paid by the producers and others in the industry who reap the benefits of such activities, provide a unique opportunity for producers to inform consumers about a particular agricultural commodity.

(6) It is important to ensure that generic promotion, research, and information activities for agricultural commodities be carried out in an effective and coordinated manner designed to strengthen the position of the commodities in the marketplace and to maintain and expand their markets and uses. Independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the generic promotion activities of these programs will assist the Secretary of Agriculture and Congress in ensuring that these objectives are met.

(7) The cooperative development, financing, and implementation of a coordinated national program of research, promotion, and information regarding agricultural commodities are necessary to maintain and expand existing markets and to develop new markets for these commodities.

(8) Agricultural commodities move in interstate and foreign commerce, and agricultural commodities and their products that do not move in such channels of commerce directly

burden or affect interstate commerce in agricultural commodities and their products.

(9) Commodity promotion programs have the ability to provide significant conservation benefits to producers and the public.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this subtitle is to authorize the establishment, through the exercise by the Secretary of Agriculture of the authority provided in this subtitle, of an orderly program for developing, financing, and carrying out an effective, continuous, and coordinated program of generic promotion, research, and information regarding agricultural commodities designed to—

(1) strengthen the position of agricultural commodity industries in the marketplace;

(2) maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for agricultural commodities;

(3) develop new markets and uses for agricultural commodities; or

(4) assist producers in meeting their conservation objectives.

(c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subtitle provides for the control of production or otherwise limits the right of any person to produce, handle, or import an agricultural commodity.

SEC. 513. [7 U.S.C. 7412] DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle (unless the context otherwise requires):

(1) AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY.—The term “agricultural commodity” means—

(A) agricultural, horticultural, viticultural, and dairy products;

(B) livestock and the products of livestock;

(C) the products of poultry and bee raising;

(D) the products of forestry;

(E) products, as a class, that are—

(i) produced on a certified organic farm (as defined in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502)); and

(ii) certified to be sold or labeled as “organic” or “100 percent organic” (as defined in part 205 of title 7, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation));

(F) other commodities raised or produced on farms, as determined appropriate by the Secretary; and

(G) products processed or manufactured from products specified in the preceding subparagraphs, as determined appropriate by the Secretary.

(2) BOARD.—The term “board” means a board established under an order issued under section 514.

(3) CONFLICT OF INTEREST.—The term “conflict of interest” means a situation in which a member or employee of a board has a direct or indirect financial interest in a person that performs a service for, or enters into a contract with, a board for anything of economic value.

(4) DEPARTMENT.—The term “Department” means the Department of Agriculture.

(5) **FIRST HANDLER.**—The term “first handler” means the first person who buys or takes possession of an agricultural commodity from a producer for marketing. If a producer markets the agricultural commodity directly to consumers, the producer shall be considered to be the first handler with respect to the agricultural commodity produced by the producer.

(6) **IMPORTER.**—The term “importer” means any person who imports an agricultural commodity from outside the United States for sale in the United States as a principal or as an agent, broker, or consignee of any person.

(7) **INFORMATION.**—The term “information” means information and programs that are designed to increase—

(A) efficiency in processing; and

(B) the development of new markets, marketing strategies, increased marketing efficiency, and activities to enhance the image of agricultural commodities on a national or international basis.

(8) **MARKET.**—The term “market” means to sell or to otherwise dispose of an agricultural commodity in interstate, foreign, or intrastate commerce.

(9) **ORDER.**—The term “order” means an order issued by the Secretary under section 514 that provides for a program of generic promotion, research, and information regarding agricultural commodities designed to—

(A) strengthen the position of agricultural commodity industries in the marketplace;

(B) maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for agricultural commodities;

(C) develop new markets and uses for agricultural commodities; or

(D) assist producers in meeting their conservation objectives.

(10) **PERSON.**—The term “person” means any individual, group of individuals, partnership, corporation, association, cooperative, or any other legal entity.

(11) **PRODUCER.**—The term “producer” means any person who is engaged in the production and sale of an agricultural commodity in the United States and who owns, or shares the ownership and risk of loss of, the agricultural commodity.

(12) **PROMOTION.**—The term “promotion” means any action taken by a board under an order, including paid advertising, to present a favorable image of an agricultural commodity to the public to improve the competitive position of the agricultural commodity in the marketplace and to stimulate sales of the agricultural commodity.

(13) **RESEARCH.**—The term “research” means any type of test, study, or analysis designed to advance the image, desirability, use, marketability, production, product development, or quality of an agricultural commodity.

(14) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(15) **STATE.**—The term “State” means any of the States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or any territory or possession of the United States.

(16) SUSPEND.—The term “suspend” means to issue a rule under section 553 of title 5, United States Code, to temporarily prevent the operation of an order during a particular period of time specified in the rule.

(17) TERMINATE.—The term “terminate” means to issue a rule under section 553 of title 5, United States Code, to cancel permanently the operation of an order beginning on a date certain specified in the rule.

(18) UNITED STATES.—The term “United States” means collectively the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the territories and possessions of the United States.

SEC. 514. [7 U.S.C. 7413] ISSUANCE OF ORDERS.

(a) ISSUANCE AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To effectuate the purpose of this subtitle, the Secretary may issue, and amend from time to time, orders applicable to—

- (A) the producers of an agricultural commodity;
- (B) the first handlers of the agricultural commodity and other persons in the marketing chain as appropriate; and

(C) the importers of the agricultural commodity, if imports of the agricultural commodity are subject to assessment under section 516(f).

(2) NATIONAL SCOPE.—Each order issued under this section shall be national in scope.

(b) PROCEDURE FOR ISSUANCE.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OR RECEIPT OF PROPOSED ORDER.—A proposed order with respect to an agricultural commodity may be—

- (A) prepared by the Secretary at any time; or
- (B) submitted to the Secretary by—
 - (i) an association of producers of the agricultural commodity; or
 - (ii) any other person that may be affected by the issuance of an order with respect to the agricultural commodity.

(2) CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED ORDER.—If the Secretary determines that a proposed order is consistent with and will effectuate the purpose of this subtitle, the Secretary shall publish the proposed order in the Federal Register and give due notice and opportunity for public comment on the proposed order.

(3) EXISTENCE OF OTHER ORDERS.—In deciding whether a proposal for an order is consistent with and will effectuate the purpose of this subtitle, the Secretary may consider the existence of other Federal promotion, research, and information programs or orders issued or developed pursuant to any other law.

(4) PREPARATION OF FINAL ORDER.—After notice and opportunity for public comment under paragraph (2) regarding a proposed order, the Secretary shall take into consideration the comments received in preparing a final order. The Secretary

shall ensure that the final order is in conformity with the terms, conditions, and requirements of this subtitle.

(c) **ISSUANCE AND EFFECTIVE DATE.**—If the Secretary determines that the final order developed with respect to an agricultural commodity is consistent with and will effectuate the purpose of this subtitle, the Secretary shall issue the final order. Except in the case of an order for which an initial referendum is conducted under section 518(a), the final order shall be issued and become effective not later than 270 days after the date of publication of the proposed order that was the basis for the final order.

(d) **AMENDMENTS.**—From time to time the Secretary may amend any order, consistent with the requirements of section 523.

SEC. 515. [7 U.S.C. 7414] REQUIRED TERMS IN ORDERS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Each order shall contain the terms and conditions specified in this section.

(b) **BOARD.**—

(1) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Each order shall establish a board to carry out a program of generic promotion, research, and information regarding the agricultural commodity covered by the order and intended to effectuate the purpose of this subtitle.

(2) **BOARD MEMBERSHIP.**—

(A) **NUMBER OF MEMBERS.**—Each board shall consist of the number of members considered by the Secretary, in consultation with the agricultural commodity industry involved, to be appropriate to administer the order. In addition to members, the Secretary may also provide for alternates on the board.

(B) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Secretary shall appoint the members and any alternates of a board from among producers of the agricultural commodity and first handlers and others in the marketing chain as appropriate. If imports of the agricultural commodity covered by an order are subject to assessment under section 516(f), the Secretary shall also appoint importers as members of the board and as alternates if alternates are included on the board. The Secretary may appoint 1 or more members of the general public to each board.

(C) **NOMINATIONS.**—The Secretary may make appointments from nominations made pursuant to the method set forth in the order.

(D) **GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION.**—To ensure fair and equitable representation of the agricultural commodity industry covered by an order, the composition of each board shall reflect the geographical distribution of the production of the agricultural commodity involved in the United States and the quantity or value of the agricultural commodity imported into the United States.

(3) **REAPPORTIONMENT OF BOARD MEMBERSHIP.**—In accordance with rules issued by the Secretary, at least once in each 5-year period, but not more frequently than once in each 3-year period, each board shall—

(A) review the geographical distribution in the United States of the production of the agricultural commodity cov-

ered by the order involved and the quantity or value of the agricultural commodity imported into the United States; and

(B) if warranted, recommend to the Secretary the reapportionment of the board membership to reflect changes in the geographical distribution of the production of the agricultural commodity and the quantity or value of the imported agricultural commodity.

(4) NOTICE.—

(A) VACANCIES.—Each order shall provide for notice of board vacancies to the agricultural commodity industry involved.

(B) MEETINGS.—Each board shall provide the Secretary with prior notice of meetings of the board to permit the Secretary, or a designated representative of the Secretary, to attend the meetings.

(5) TERM OF OFFICE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The members and any alternates of a board shall each serve for a term of 3 years, except that the members and any alternates initially appointed to a board shall serve for terms of not more than 2, 3, and 4 years, as specified by the order.

(B) LIMITATION ON CONSECUTIVE TERMS.—A member or alternate may serve not more than 2 consecutive terms.

(C) CONTINUATION OF TERM.—Notwithstanding subparagraph (B), each member or alternate shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed by the Secretary.

(D) VACANCIES.—A vacancy arising before the expiration of a term of office of an incumbent member or alternate of a board shall be filled in a manner provided for in the order.

(6) COMPENSATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Members and any alternates of a board shall serve without compensation.

(B) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—If approved by a board, members or alternates shall be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses, which may include a per diem allowance or actual subsistence incurred while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the board.

(c) POWERS AND DUTIES OF A BOARD.—Each order shall specify the powers and duties of the board established under the order, which shall include the power and duty—

(1) to administer the order in accordance with its terms and conditions and to collect assessments;

(2) to develop and recommend to the Secretary for approval such bylaws as may be necessary for the functioning of the board and such rules as may be necessary to administer the order, including activities authorized to be carried out under the order;

(3) to meet, organize, and select from among the members of the board a chairperson, other officers, and committees and subcommittees, as the board determines to be appropriate;

(4) to employ persons, other than the members, as the board considers necessary to assist the board in carrying out its duties, and to determine the compensation and specify the duties of the persons;

(5) subject to subsection (e), to develop and carry out generic promotion, research, and information activities relating to the agricultural commodity covered by the order;

(6) to prepare and submit for the approval of the Secretary, before the beginning of each fiscal year, rates of assessment under section 517 and an annual budget of the anticipated expenses to be incurred in the administration of the order, including the probable cost of each promotion, research, and information activity proposed to be developed or carried out by the board;

(7) to borrow funds necessary for the startup expenses of the order;

(8) subject to subsection (f), to enter into contracts or agreements to develop and carry out generic promotion, research, and information activities relating to the agricultural commodity covered by the order;

(9) to pay the cost of the activities with assessments collected under section 517, earnings from invested assessments, and other funds;

(10) to keep records that accurately reflect the actions and transactions of the board, to keep and report minutes of each meeting of the board to the Secretary, and to furnish the Secretary with any information or records the Secretary requests;

(11) to receive, investigate, and report to the Secretary complaints of violations of the order; and

(12) to recommend to the Secretary such amendments to the order as the board considers appropriate.

(d) PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES.—A board may not engage in, and shall prohibit the employees and agents of the board from engaging in—

(1) any action that would be a conflict of interest;

(2) using funds collected by the board under the order, any action undertaken for the purpose of influencing any legislation or governmental action or policy other than recommending to the Secretary amendments to the order; and

(3) any advertising, including promotion, research, and information activities authorized to be carried out under the order, that may be false or misleading or disparaging to another agricultural commodity.

(e) ACTIVITIES AND BUDGETS.—

(1) ACTIVITIES.—Each order shall require the board established under the order to submit to the Secretary for approval plans and projects for promotion, research, or information relating to the agricultural commodity covered by the order.

(2) BUDGETS.—

(A) SUBMISSION TO SECRETARY.—Each order shall require the board established under the order to submit to the Secretary for approval a budget of its anticipated annual expenses and disbursements to be paid to administer the order. The budget shall be submitted before the begin-

ning of a fiscal year and as frequently as may be necessary after the beginning of the fiscal year.

(B) REIMBURSEMENT OF SECRETARY.—Each order shall require that the Secretary be reimbursed for all expenses incurred by the Secretary in the implementation, administration, and supervision of the order, including all referenda costs incurred in connection with the order.

(3) INCURRING EXPENSES.—A board may incur the expenses described in paragraph (2) and other expenses for the administration, maintenance, and functioning of the board as authorized by the Secretary.

(4) PAYMENT OF EXPENSES.—Expenses incurred under paragraph (3) shall be paid by a board using assessments collected under section 517, earnings obtained from assessments, and other income of the board. Any funds borrowed by the board shall be expended only for startup costs and capital outlays.

(5) LIMITATION ON SPENDING.—For fiscal years beginning 3 or more years after the date of the establishment of a board, the board may not expend for administration (except for reimbursements to the Secretary required under paragraph (2)(B)), maintenance, and functioning of the board in a fiscal year an amount that exceeds 15 percent of the assessment and other income received by the board for the fiscal year.

(f) CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each order shall provide that, with the approval of the Secretary, the board established under the order may—

(A) enter into contracts and agreements to carry out generic promotion, research, and information activities relating to the agricultural commodity covered by the order, including contracts and agreements with producer associations or other entities as considered appropriate by the Secretary; and

(B) pay the cost of approved generic promotion, research, and information activities using assessments collected under section 517, earnings obtained from assessments, and other income of the board.

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—Each contract or agreement shall provide that any person who enters into the contract or agreement with the board shall—

(A) develop and submit to the board a proposed activity together with a budget that specifies the cost to be incurred to carry out the activity;

(B) keep accurate records of all of its transactions relating to the contract or agreement;

(C) account for funds received and expended in connection with the contract or agreement;

(D) make periodic reports to the board of activities conducted under the contract or agreement; and

(E) make such other reports as the board or the Secretary considers relevant.

(g) RECORDS OF BOARD.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each order shall require the board established under the order—

(A) to maintain such records as the Secretary may require and to make the records available to the Secretary for inspection and audit;

(B) to collect and submit to the Secretary, at any time the Secretary may specify, any information the Secretary may request; and

(C) to account for the receipt and disbursement of all funds in the possession, or under the control, of the board.

(2) AUDITS.—Each order shall require the board established under the order to have—

(A) its records audited by an independent auditor at the end of each fiscal year; and

(B) a report of the audit submitted directly to the Secretary.

(h) PERIODIC EVALUATION.—In accordance with section 501(c), each order shall require the board established under the order to provide for the independent evaluation of all generic promotion, research, and information activities undertaken under the order.

(i) BOOKS AND RECORDS OF PERSONS COVERED BY ORDER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each order shall require that producers, first handlers and other persons in the marketing chain as appropriate, and importers covered by the order shall—

(A) maintain records sufficient to ensure compliance with the order and regulations;

(B) submit to the board established under the order any information required by the board to carry out its responsibilities under the order; and

(C) make the records described in subparagraph (A) available, during normal business hours, for inspection by employees or agents of the board or the Department, including any records necessary to verify information required under subparagraph (B).

(2) TIME REQUIREMENT.—Any record required to be maintained under paragraph (1) shall be maintained for such time period as the Secretary may prescribe.

(3) OTHER INFORMATION.—The Secretary may use, and may authorize the board to use under this subtitle, information regarding persons subject to an order that is collected by the Department under any other law.

(4) CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, all information obtained under paragraph (1) or as part of a referendum under section 518 shall be kept confidential by all officers, employees, and agents of the Department and of the board.

(B) DISCLOSURE.—Information referred to in subparagraph (A) may be disclosed only if—

(i) the Secretary considers the information relevant; and

(ii) the information is revealed in a judicial proceeding or administrative hearing brought at the direction or on the request of the Secretary or to which

the Secretary or any officer of the Department is a party.

(C) OTHER EXCEPTIONS.—This paragraph shall not prohibit—

(i) the issuance of general statements based on reports or on information relating to a number of persons subject to an order if the statements do not identify the information furnished by any person; or

(ii) the publication, by direction of the Secretary, of the name of any person violating any order and a statement of the particular provisions of the order violated by the person.

(D) PENALTY.—Any person who willfully violates this subsection shall be subject, on conviction, to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or to imprisonment for not more than 1 year, or both.

(5) WITHHOLDING INFORMATION.—This subsection shall not authorize the withholding of information from Congress.

SEC. 516. [7 U.S.C. 7415] PERMISSIVE TERMS IN ORDERS.

(a) EXEMPTIONS.—An order issued under this subtitle may contain—

(1) authority for the Secretary to exempt from the order any de minimis quantity of an agricultural commodity otherwise covered by the order; and

(2) authority for the board established under the order to require satisfactory safeguards against improper use of the exemption.

(b) DIFFERENT PAYMENT AND REPORTING SCHEDULES.—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority for the board established under the order to designate different payment and reporting schedules to recognize differences in agricultural commodity industry marketing practices and procedures used in different production and importing areas.

(c) ACTIVITIES.—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority to develop and carry out research, promotion, and information activities designed to expand, improve, or make more efficient the marketing or use of the agricultural commodity covered by the order in domestic and foreign markets. Section 515(e) shall apply with respect to activities authorized under this subsection.

(d) RESERVE FUNDS.—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority to reserve funds from assessments collected under section 517 to permit an effective and continuous coordinated program of research, promotion, and information in years when the yield from assessments may be reduced, except that the amount of funds reserved may not exceed the greatest aggregate amount of the anticipated disbursements specified in budgets approved under section 515(e) by the Secretary for any 2 fiscal years.

(e) CREDITS.—

(1) GENERIC ACTIVITIES.—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority to provide credits of assessments for those individuals who contribute to other similar generic re-

search, promotion, and information programs at the State, regional, or local level.

(2) **BRANDED ACTIVITIES.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary may permit a farmer cooperative that engages in branded activities relating to the marketing of the products of members of the cooperative to receive an annual credit for the activities and related expenditures in the form of a deduction of the total cost of the activities and related expenditures from the amount of any assessment that would otherwise be required to be paid by the producer members of the cooperative under an order issued under this subtitle.

(B) **ELECTION BY COOPERATIVE.**—A farmer cooperative may elect to voluntarily waive the application of subparagraph (A) to the cooperative.

(f) **ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTS.**—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority for the board established under the order to assess under section 517 an imported agricultural commodity, or products of such an agricultural commodity, at a rate comparable to the rate determined by the appropriate board for the domestic agricultural commodity covered by the order.

(g) **OTHER AUTHORITY.**—An order issued under this subtitle may contain authority to take any other action that—

(1) is not inconsistent with the purpose of this subtitle, any term or condition specified in section 515, or any rule issued to carry out this subtitle; and

(2) is necessary to administer the order.

SEC. 517. [7 U.S.C. 7416] ASSESSMENTS.

(a) **ASSESSMENTS AUTHORIZED.**—While an order issued under this subtitle is in effect with respect to an agricultural commodity, assessments shall be—

(1) paid by first handlers with respect to the agricultural commodity produced and marketed in the United States; and

(2) paid by importers with respect to the agricultural commodity imported into the United States, if the imported agricultural commodity is covered by the order pursuant to section 516(f).

(b) **COLLECTION.**—Assessments required under an order shall be remitted to the board established under the order at the time and in the manner prescribed by the order.

(c) **LIMITATION ON ASSESSMENTS.**—Not more than 1 assessment may be levied on a first handler or importer under subsection (a) with respect to any agricultural commodity.

(d) **ASSESSMENT RATES.**—The board shall recommend to the Secretary 1 or more rates of assessment to be levied under subsection (a). If approved by the Secretary, the rates shall take effect. An order may provide that an assessment rate may not be increased unless approved by a referendum conducted pursuant to section 518.

(e) **LATE-PAYMENT AND INTEREST CHARGES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Late-payment and interest charges may be levied on each person subject to an order who fails to remit an assessment in accordance with subsection (b).

(2) RATE.—The rate for the charges shall be specified by the Secretary.

(f) INVESTMENT OF ASSESSMENTS.—Pending disbursement of assessments under a budget approved by the Secretary, a board may invest assessments collected under this section in—

(1) obligations of the United States or any agency of the United States;

(2) general obligations of any State or any political subdivision of a State;

(3) interest-bearing accounts or certificates of deposit of financial institutions that are members of the Federal Reserve System; or

(4) obligations fully guaranteed as to principal and interest by the United States.

(g) REFUND OF ASSESSMENTS FROM ESCROW ACCOUNT.—

(1) ESCROW ACCOUNT.—During the period beginning on the effective date of an order and ending on the date the Secretary announces the results of a referendum that is conducted under section 518(b)(1) with respect to the order, the board established under the order shall—

(A) establish and maintain an escrow account of the kind described in subsection (f)(3) to be used to refund assessments; and

(B) deposit funds in the account in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) AMOUNT TO BE DEPOSITED.—The board shall deposit in the account an amount equal to 10 percent of the assessments collected during the period referred to in paragraph (1).

(3) RIGHT TO RECEIVE REFUND.—Subject to paragraphs (4), (5), and (6), persons subject to an order shall be eligible to demand a refund of assessments collected during the period referred to in paragraph (1) if—

(A) the assessments were remitted on behalf of the person; and

(B) the order is not approved in the referendum.

(4) FORM OF DEMAND.—The demand for a refund shall be made at such time and in such form as specified by the order.

(5) PAYMENT OF REFUND.—A person entitled to a refund shall be paid promptly after the board receives satisfactory proof that the assessment for which the refund is demanded was paid on behalf of the person who makes the demand.

(6) PRORATION.—If the funds in the escrow account required by paragraph (1) are insufficient to pay the amount of all refunds that persons subject to an order otherwise would have a right to receive under this subsection, the board shall prorate the amount of the funds among all the persons.

(7) CLOSING OF ESCROW ACCOUNT.—If the order is approved in a referendum conducted under section 518(b)(1)—

(A) the escrow account shall be closed; and

(B) the funds shall be available to the board for disbursement as authorized in the order.

SEC. 518. [7 U.S.C. 7417] REFERENDA.

(a) INITIAL REFERENDUM.—

(1) **OPTIONAL REFERENDUM.**—For the purpose of ascertaining whether the persons to be covered by an order favor the order going into effect, the order may provide for the Secretary to conduct an initial referendum among persons to be subject to an assessment under section 517 who, during a representative period determined by the Secretary, engaged in—

(A) the production or handling of the agricultural commodity covered by the order; or

(B) the importation of the agricultural commodity.

(2) **PROCEDURE.**—The results of the referendum shall be determined in accordance with subsection (e). The Secretary may require that the agricultural commodity industry involved post a bond or other collateral to cover the cost of the referendum.

(b) **REQUIRED REFERENDA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—For the purpose of ascertaining whether the persons covered by an order favor the continuation, suspension, or termination of the order, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum among persons subject to assessments under section 517 who, during a representative period determined by the Secretary, have engaged in—

(A) the production or handling of the agricultural commodity covered by the order; or

(B) the importation of the agricultural commodity.

(2) **TIME FOR REFERENDUM.**—The referendum shall be conducted not later than 3 years after assessments first begin under the order.

(3) **EXCEPTION.**—This subsection shall not apply if an initial referendum was conducted under subsection (a).

(c) **SUBSEQUENT REFERENDA.**—The Secretary shall conduct a subsequent referendum—

(1) not later than 7 years after assessments first begin under the order;

(2) at the request of the board established under the order; or

(3) at the request of 10 percent or more of the number of persons eligible to vote under subsection (b)(1); to determine if the persons favor the continuation, suspension, or termination of the order.

(d) **OTHER REFERENDA.**—The Secretary may conduct a referendum at any time to determine whether the continuation, suspension, or termination of the order or a provision of the order is favored by persons eligible to vote under subsection (b)(1).

(e) **APPROVAL OF ORDER.**—An order may provide for its approval in a referendum—

(1) by a majority of those persons voting;

(2) by persons voting for approval who represent a majority of the volume of the agricultural commodity; or

(3) by a majority of those persons voting for approval who also represent a majority of the volume of the agricultural commodity.

(f) **COSTS OF REFERENDA.**—The board established under an order with respect to which a referendum is conducted under this

section shall reimburse the Secretary for any expenses incurred by the Secretary to conduct the referendum.

(g) MANNER OF CONDUCTING REFERENDA.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A referendum conducted under this section shall be conducted in the manner determined by the Secretary to be appropriate.

(2) ADVANCE REGISTRATION.—If the Secretary determines that an advance registration of eligible voters in a referendum is necessary before the voting period in order to facilitate the conduct of the referendum, the Secretary may institute the advance registration procedures by mail, or in person through the use of national and local offices of the Department.

(3) VOTING.—Eligible voters may vote by mail ballot in the referendum or in person if so prescribed by the Secretary.

(4) NOTICE.—Not later than 30 days before a referendum is conducted under this section with respect to an order, the Secretary shall notify the agricultural commodity industry involved, in such manner as determined by the Secretary, of the period during which voting in the referendum will occur. The notice shall explain any registration and voting procedures established under this subsection.

SEC. 519. [7 U.S.C. 7418] PETITION AND REVIEW OF ORDERS.

(a) PETITION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person subject to an order issued under this subtitle may file with the Secretary a petition—

(A) stating that the order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order, is not established in accordance with law; and

(B) requesting a modification of the order or an exemption from the order.

(2) HEARING.—The Secretary shall give the petitioner an opportunity for a hearing on the petition, in accordance with regulations issued by the Secretary.

(3) RULING.—After the hearing, the Secretary shall make a ruling on the petition. The ruling shall be final, subject to review as set forth in subsection (b).

(4) LIMITATION ON PETITION.—Any petition filed under this subsection challenging an order, any provision of the order, or any obligation imposed in connection with the order, shall be filed within 2 years after the effective date of the order, provision, or obligation subject to challenge in the petition.

(b) REVIEW.—

(1) COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION.—The district court of the United States for any district in which a person who is a petitioner under subsection (a) resides or carries on business shall have jurisdiction to review the final ruling on the petition of the person, if a complaint for that purpose is filed not later than 20 days after the date of the entry of the final ruling by the Secretary under subsection (a)(3).

(2) PROCESS.—Service of process in a proceeding may be made on the Secretary by delivering a copy of the complaint to the Secretary.

(3) REMANDS.—If the court determines that the ruling is not in accordance with law, the court shall remand the matter to the Secretary with directions—

(A) to make such ruling as the court determines to be in accordance with law; or

(B) to take such further action as, in the opinion of the court, the law requires.

(c) EFFECT ON ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS.—The pendency of a petition filed under subsection (a) or an action commenced under subsection (b) shall not operate as a stay of any action authorized by section 520 to be taken to enforce this subtitle, including any rule, order, or penalty in effect under this subtitle.

SEC. 520. [7 U.S.C. 7419] ENFORCEMENT.

(a) JURISDICTION.—The district courts of the United States shall have jurisdiction specifically to enforce, and to prevent and restrain a person from violating, an order or regulation issued under this subtitle.

(b) REFERRAL TO ATTORNEY GENERAL.—A civil action authorized to be brought under this section shall be referred to the Attorney General for appropriate action, except that the Secretary shall not be required to refer to the Attorney General a violation of this subtitle if the Secretary believes that the administration and enforcement of this subtitle would be adequately served by providing a suitable written notice or warning to the person who committed the violation or by an administrative action under this section.

(c) CIVIL PENALTIES AND ORDERS.—

(1) CIVIL PENALTIES.—A person who willfully violates an order or regulation issued by the Secretary under this Act may be assessed by the Secretary a civil penalty of not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$10,000 for each violation.

(2) SEPARATE OFFENSE.—Each violation and each day during which there is a failure to comply with an order or regulation issued by the Secretary shall be considered to be a separate offense.

(3) CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDERS.—In addition to, or in lieu of, a civil penalty, the Secretary may issue an order requiring a person to cease and desist from violating the order or regulation.

(4) NOTICE AND HEARING.—No order assessing a penalty or cease-and-desist order may be issued by the Secretary under this subsection unless the Secretary provides notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record with respect to the violation.

(5) FINALITY.—An order assessing a penalty or a cease-and-desist order issued under this subsection by the Secretary shall be final and conclusive unless the person against whom the order is issued files an appeal from the order with the United States court of appeals, as provided in subsection (d).

(d) REVIEW BY COURT OF APPEALS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A person against whom an order is issued under subsection (c) may obtain review of the order by—

(A) filing, not later than 30 days after the person receives notice of the order, a notice of appeal in—

(i) the United States court of appeals for the circuit in which the person resides or carries on business; or

(ii) the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit; and

(B) simultaneously sending a copy of the notice of appeal by certified mail to the Secretary.

(2) RECORD.—The Secretary shall file with the court a certified copy of the record on which the Secretary has determined that the person has committed a violation.

(3) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—A finding of the Secretary under this section shall be set aside only if the finding is found to be unsupported by substantial evidence on the record.

(e) FAILURE TO OBEY CEASE-AND-DESIST ORDERS.—A person who fails to obey a valid cease-and-desist order issued by the Secretary under this section, after an opportunity for a hearing, shall be subject to a civil penalty assessed by the Secretary of not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$10,000 for each offense. Each day during which the failure continues shall be considered to be a separate violation of the cease-and-desist order.

(f) FAILURE TO PAY PENALTIES.—If a person fails to pay a civil penalty imposed under this section by the Secretary, the Secretary shall refer the matter to the Attorney General for recovery of the amount assessed in the district court of the United States for any district in which the person resides or carries on business. In the action, the validity and appropriateness of the order imposing the civil penalty shall not be subject to review.

(g) ADDITIONAL REMEDIES.—The remedies provided in this section shall be in addition to, and not exclusive of, other remedies that may be available.

SEC. 521. [7 U.S.C. 7420] INVESTIGATIONS AND POWER TO SUBPOENA.

(a) INVESTIGATIONS.—The Secretary may make such investigations as the Secretary considers necessary—

(1) for the effective administration of this subtitle; or

(2) to determine whether any person subject to this subtitle has engaged, or is about to engage, in any action that constitutes or will constitute a violation of this subtitle or any order or regulation issued under this subtitle.

(b) SUBPOENAS, OATHS, AND AFFIRMATIONS.—For the purpose of any investigation under subsection (a), the Secretary may administer oaths and affirmations, subpoena witnesses, compel the attendance of witnesses, take evidence, and require the production of any records or documents that are relevant to the inquiry. The attendance of witnesses and the production of records or documents may be required from any place in the United States.

(c) AID OF COURTS.—In the case of contumacy by, or refusal to obey a subpoena issued to, any person, the Secretary may invoke the aid of any court of the United States within the jurisdiction of which the investigation or proceeding is carried on, or where the person resides or carries on business, in order to require the attendance and testimony of the person or the production of records or documents. The court may issue an order requiring the person

to appear before the Secretary to produce records or documents or to give testimony regarding the matter under investigation.

(d) CONTEMPT.—Any failure to obey the order of the court may be punished by the court as a contempt of the court.

(e) PROCESS.—Process in any case under this section may be served in the judicial district in which the person resides or carries on business or wherever the person may be found.

SEC. 522. [7 U.S.C. 7421] SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.

(a) MANDATORY SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.—The Secretary shall suspend or terminate an order or a provision of an order if the Secretary finds that an order or a provision of an order obstructs or does not tend to effectuate the purpose of this subtitle, or if the Secretary determines that the order or a provision of an order is not favored by persons voting in a referendum conducted under section 518.

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION.—If, as a result of a referendum conducted under section 518, the Secretary determines that an order is not approved, the Secretary shall—

(1) not later than 180 days after making the determination, suspend or terminate, as the case may be, collection of assessments under the order; and

(2) as soon as practicable, suspend or terminate, as the case may be, activities under the order in an orderly manner.

SEC. 523. [7 U.S.C. 7422] AMENDMENTS TO ORDERS.

The provisions of this subtitle applicable to an order shall be applicable to any amendment to an order, except that section 518 shall not apply to an amendment.

SEC. 524. [7 U.S.C. 7423] EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.

This subtitle shall not affect or preempt any other Federal or State law authorizing promotion or research relating to an agricultural commodity.

SEC. 525. [7 U.S.C. 7424] REGULATIONS.

The Secretary may issue such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this subtitle and the power vested in the Secretary under this subtitle.

SEC. 526. [7 U.S.C. 7425] AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out this subtitle.

(b) LIMITATION ON EXPENDITURES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Funds appropriated to carry out this subtitle may not be expended for the payment of expenses incurred by a board to administer an order.

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**TITLE VIII—RESEARCH, EXTENSION,
AND EDUCATION**

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