



PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT



AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

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USDA Sets Hearings For Proposed Amendments to Marketing Order For Tart Cherries Grown in 7 States

WASHINGTON, March 14, 2011 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold two public hearings on a proposal to amend the federal marketing order for tart cherries grown in Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin.

The Cherry Industry Administrative Board, which is responsible for local administration of the order, proposed the amendments. On April 20, the first hearing in Grand Rapids, Mich., is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, One Division Avenue, 3rd Floor Courtroom A. If necessary, the hearing will continue April 21 at 9 a.m. at the same location.

The second hearing April 26 in Provo, Utah, is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Utah County Administration Building, 100 E. Center Street, Room L900. If necessary, the hearing will continue April 27 at 9 a.m. at the same location.

The proposed amendments are:

--Revise the definition of "handle" under the order so grower-diverted cherries are not considered handled;

--Revise the "marketing policy" provisions so grower-diverted cherries are not counted as production in the volume control formula; and

--Revise the "grower diversion privilege" provisions so grower-diverted cherries are not treated as actual harvested cherries.

If evidence submitted at the hearings favors these proposals, and if USDA agrees that the amendments would improve the order's operation, tart cherry producers and processors in the production area would vote in a referendum.

The proposal and the hearing notice will be published in the March 14, 2011, *Federal Register*. Copies may be obtained by contacting, in writing, Parisa Salehi or Kathleen Finn at: USDA, AMS, F&V, MOAB, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Stop 0237, Washington, DC, 20250-0237. Salehi can be called at (202) 720-9918; Finn, (202) 720-2491. Both can be sent a fax, (202) 720-8938, or they can be emailed: parisa.salehi@usda.gov or kathy.finn@usda.gov.

An electronic version of this news release can be obtained via the Internet at:
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Ex 2

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