

USDA And IRS Team Up

Public Comment On Proposal Ends April 6

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In response to the discovery of nearly \$50 million in payments to ineligible farmers, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the USDA and the IRS have begun efforts to ensure those requesting USDA payments meet income limits set forth in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Farmers have until April 6 to comment on the following proposal. Beginning with the 2009 crop year and for successive years, in order to be eligible to receive USDA payments, recipients will be required to sign a separate form which grants the IRS the authority to provide information to the USDA. Before the IRS will provide

the information for a producer, IRS form 8821, or a similar form, must be obtained from each producer authorizing the release of information. Failure to obtain such form will make the producer ineligible for program benefits.

According to the USDA, "the 2008 Farm Bill mandates that recipients of many Farm Bill payments, including direct payments, are not eligible for these payments if their gross non-farm income average for the previous three taxable years is greater than \$500,000. Additionally, direct payments cannot be paid to participants whose average adjusted gross farm income for the three-year-period exceeds \$750,000. Participants are ineligible for conservation payments if their nonfarm average gross income for the three-year-period exceeds \$1 million, unless at least two-thirds of their total average adjusted gross income is derived from farming." Δ



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