

USDA Seeks Comment on Petition to Issue Rules Restricting Certain Livestock Practices

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13, 1997--The U.S. Department of Agriculture tomorrow will publish a notice in the Federal Register seeking public comment on a petition for rulemaking from the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) that calls for USDA to restrict certain livestock procurement practices.

"USDA understands the concerns that gave rise to this petition," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. "To evaluate fully the petition, we are encouraging all interested parties to comment on the important issues it raises."

The WORC petition requests that the Secretary of Agriculture initiate rulemaking under the Packers and Stockyards Act to prohibit packers from procuring cattle for slaughter through the use of a forward contract unless certain specified conditions are met, and from owning and feeding cattle unless the cattle are sold for slaughter in an open, public market.

Comments received will be used by USDA to assess the need for the requested rulemaking.

An original and two copies of comments should be submitted on or before April 14 to the Deputy Administrator, Packers and Stockyards Programs, USDA, GIPSA, Stop 3641, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-3641.