



## USDA Sets Dates for Processed Raspberry Promotion, Research, and Information Program Referendum

AMS No. 232-09

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 12, 2009 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that it will conduct a referendum March 22 to April 2, 2010, for eligible producers of raspberries for processing, and importers of processed raspberries, to determine if a new national Processed Raspberry Promotion, Research, and Information Order should be established.

If approved by a simple majority of the eligible producers and importers voting in the referendum, the program will be implemented. Both producers of raspberries for processing and importers of processed raspberries of 20,000 or more pounds per calendar year are eligible to vote.

If implemented, the program would be administered by a 13-member council and its alternates who will be responsible for carrying out activities intended to strengthen the position of the processed raspberry industry in the marketplace. In addition, the council will work to develop, maintain and expand domestic and foreign markets for processed raspberries and raspberries for processing.

The national coordinated generic program would be financed by a mandatory assessment of one cent per pound paid by producers and importers. Both producers of raspberries for processing and importers of processed raspberries of less than 20,000 pounds per calendar year would be exempt from paying assessments.

The proposed order, referendum order and referendum procedures for the program was published in the Feb. 8, 2010, Federal Register, and posted electronically on the Internet at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/FVPromotion> and <http://www.regulations.gov>.

On March 8, 2010, AMS will mail the ballots, voting instructions and a summary of the proposed program to all known eligible producers of raspberries for processing and importers of processed raspberries. Eligible producers or importers who do not receive a ballot should contact Kimberly Coy, Research and Promotion Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, AMS, USDA, Stop 0244, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-0244; by calling (888) 720-9917; faxing (202) 205-2800; or e-mailing [Kimberly.Coy@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Coy@ams.usda.gov).