

**§ 4611. Requirements of referendum****(a) In general**

For the purpose of ascertaining whether issuance of an order is approved by producers, importers, and in the case of an order assessing handlers, handlers, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum among producers, importers, and, in the case of an order assessing handlers, handlers, not exempt under section 4606(e)(4) of this title, that, during a representative period determined by the Secretary, have been engaged in the production, importation, or handling of honey or honey products.

**(b) Effectiveness of order****(1) In general**

No order issued under this chapter shall be effective unless the Secretary determines that—

(A) the order is approved by a majority of the producers, importers, and if covered by the order, handlers, voting in the referendum; and

(B) the producers, importers, and handlers comprising the majority produced, imported, and handled not less than 50 percent of the quantity of the honey and honey products produced, imported, and handled during the representative period by the persons voting in the referendum.

**(2) Amendments to orders**

The Secretary may amend an order in accordance with the administrative procedures specified in sections 4604 and 4605 of this title, except that the Secretary may not amend a provision of an order that implements a provision of this chapter that specifically provides for approval in a referendum without the approval provided for in this section.

**(c) Producer-packers and importers****(1) In general**

Each producer-packer and each importer shall have 1 vote as a handler as well as 1 vote as a producer or importer (unless exempt under section 4606(e)(4) of this title) in all referenda concerning orders assessing handlers to the extent that the individual producer-packer or importer owes assessments as a handler.

**(2) Attribution of quantity of honey**

For the purpose of subsection (b)(1)(B)—

(A) the quantity of honey or honey products on which the qualifying producer-packer or importer owes assessments as a handler shall be attributed to the person's vote as a handler under paragraph (1); and

(B) the quantity of honey or honey products on which the producer-packer or importer owes an assessment as a producer or importer shall be attributed to the person's vote as a producer or importer.

**(d) Confidentiality**

The ballots and other information or reports that reveal, or tend to reveal, the identity or vote of any producer, importer, or handler of honey or honey products shall be held strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed.

(Pub. L. 98-590, §12, Oct. 30, 1984, 98 Stat. 3123; Pub. L. 105-185, title VI, §605(k), June 23, 1998, 112 Stat. 600.)

## AMENDMENTS

1998—Pub. L. 105-185 reenacted section catchline without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: "For the purpose of ascertaining whether issuance of an order is approved or favored by producers and importers, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum among those producers and importers not exempt under section 4606(e)(2) of this title who, during a representative period determined by the Secretary, have been engaged in the production and importation of honey. No order issued pursuant to this chapter shall be effective unless the Secretary determines that the issuance of such an order is approved or favored by not less than two-thirds of the producers and importers voting in such referendum or by a majority of the producers and importers voting in such referendum if such majority produced and imported not less than two-thirds of the honey produced and imported during the representative period. The ballots and other information or reports which reveal, or tend to reveal, the vote of any producer or importer of honey shall be held strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed."

**§ 4612. Termination or suspension****(a) "Person" defined**

In this section, the term "person" means a producer, importer, or handler.

**(b) Authority of Secretary**

If the Secretary finds that an order issued under this chapter, or any provision of the order, obstructs or does not tend to effectuate the purposes of this chapter, the Secretary shall terminate or suspend the operation of the order or provision.

**(c) Periodic referenda**

Except as provided in subsection (d)(3) and section 4613(g) of this title, on the date that is 5 years after the date on which the Secretary issues an order authorizing the collection of assessments on honey or honey products under this chapter, and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum to determine if the persons subject to assessment under the order approve continuation of the order in accordance with section 4611 of this title.

**(d) Referenda on request****(1) In general**

On the request of the Honey Board or the petition of at least 10 percent of the total number of persons subject to assessment under the order, the Secretary shall conduct a referendum to determine if the persons subject to assessment under the order approve continuation of the order in accordance with section 4611 of this title.

**(2) Limitation**

Referenda conducted under paragraph (1) may not be held more than once every 2 years.

**(3) Effect on periodic referenda**

If a referendum is conducted under this subsection and the Secretary determines that continuation of the order is approved under section 4611 of this title, any referendum otherwise required to be conducted under subsection (c) shall not be held before the date that is 5 years after the date of the referendum conducted under this subsection.