

(b) Records and reports; availability

Handlers and importers responsible for payment of assessments under subsection (a) of this section shall maintain and make available for inspection by the Secretary such books and records as required by the plan and file reports at the times, in the manner, and having the content prescribed by the plan, to the end that information and data shall be made available to the board and to the Secretary which is appropriate or necessary to the effectuation, administration, or enforcement of this chapter or of any plan or regulation issued pursuant to this chapter.

(c) Confidential information; disclosure during proceedings; prohibition inapplicable to general statements and publication of violations; penalties; removal from office

All information obtained pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall be kept confidential by all officers and employees of the Department of Agriculture and of the board, and only such information so furnished or acquired as the Secretary deems relevant shall be disclosed by them, and then only in a suit or administrative hearing brought at the direction, or upon the request, of the Secretary, or to which he or any officer of the United States is a party, and involving the plan with reference to which the information to be disclosed was furnished or acquired. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit—

(1) the issuance of general statements based upon the reports of a number of handlers or importers subject to a plan if such statements do not identify the information furnished by any person, or

(2) the publication by direction of the Secretary of the name of any person violating any plan together with a statement of the particular provisions of the plan violated by such person.

Any such officer or employee violating the provisions of this subsection shall upon conviction be subject to a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year, or both, and shall be removed from office.

(Pub. L. 91-670, title III, §310, Jan. 11, 1971, 84 Stat. 2044; Pub. L. 101-624, title XIX, §1942, Nov. 28, 1990, 104 Stat. 3867; Pub. L. 102-237, title VIII, §804, Dec. 13, 1991, 105 Stat. 1882.)

Editorial Notes**AMENDMENTS**

1991—Subsec. (a)(2). Pub. L. 102-237 substituted “(2) When” for “(2) when”.

1990—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 101-624, §1942(1), designated existing provisions as par. (1) and added par. (2).

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 101-624, §1942(2), inserted “and importers” after “Handlers”.

Subsec. (c)(1). Pub. L. 101-624, §1942(3), inserted “or importers” after “handlers”.

§ 2620. Procedural rights of persons subject to plan**(a) Administrative proceedings; petition; hearing; finality of ruling**

Any person subject to a plan may file a written petition with the Secretary, stating that

such plan or any provision of such plan or any obligation imposed in connection therewith is not in accordance with law and praying for a modification thereof or to be exempted therefrom. He shall thereupon be given an opportunity for a hearing upon such petition, in accordance with regulations made by the Secretary. After such hearing, the Secretary shall make a ruling upon the prayer of such petition which shall be final, if in accordance with law.

(b) Judicial review; jurisdiction; complaint; remand; relief during pendency of proceedings

The district courts of the United States in any district in which such person is an inhabitant, or has his principal place of business, are hereby vested with jurisdiction to review such ruling: *Provided*, That a complaint for that purpose is filed within twenty days from the date of the entry of such ruling. Service of process in such proceedings may be had upon the Secretary by delivering to him a copy of the complaint. If the court determines that such ruling is not in accordance with law, it shall remand such proceedings to the Secretary with directions either (1) to make such ruling as the court shall determine to be in accordance with law, or (2) to take such further proceedings as, in its opinion, the law requires. The pendency of proceedings instituted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall not impede, hinder, or delay the United States or the Secretary from obtaining relief pursuant to section 2621(a) of this title.

(Pub. L. 91-670, title III, §311, Jan. 11, 1971, 84 Stat. 2045.)

§ 2621. Enforcement**(a) Jurisdiction of United States district courts; administrative action**

The several district courts of the United States are vested with jurisdiction specifically to enforce, and to prevent and restrain any person from violating any plan or regulation made or issued under this chapter. The facts relating to any civil action authorized to be brought under this subsection shall be referred to the Attorney General for appropriate action: *Provided*, That nothing in this chapter shall be construed as requiring the Secretary to refer to the Attorney General violations of this chapter whenever the Secretary believes that the administration and enforcement of any such plan or regulation would be adequately served by administrative action under subsection (b) of this section or suitable written notice or warning to any person committing such violations.

(b) Civil penalties; cease and desist orders; appeal; failure to comply with order or assessment; further proceedings and penalties

(1) Any person who violates any provision of any plan or regulation issued by the Secretary under this chapter, or who fails or refuses to pay, collect, or remit any assessment or fee duly required of such person thereunder, may be assessed a civil penalty by the Secretary of not less than \$500 or more than \$5,000 for each such violation. Each violation shall be a separate offense. In addition to or in lieu of such civil penalty the Secretary may issue an order requiring such person to cease and desist from continuing