



National Agricultural Statistics Service

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NASS Mission

To provide timely, accurate,
and useful statistics in service
to U.S. Agriculture

NASS 2007 Census of Agriculture



- Released in February, 2009 – earliest ever; all data on web
- Response rate of 85.2% adjusted for nonresponse and undercoverage
- Publications include U.S., State, County, Congressional Districts, for the 1st time Watersheds, and special ethnic, demographic, and economic profiles



2007 Census Follow-Ons

- Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey
- Census of Horticulture
- Census of Aquaculture
- Survey of Land Ownership

Periodic Surveys using 2007 Census as Sampling Frame



- Organic Production Survey
- On Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey



Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey - 2008



- Provided irrigation data that supplemented data collected in the Census of Agriculture
- Provides one of the most complete and detailed profiles of irrigation in the United States
- Originally released in November, 2009 and updated in July, 2010

Organic Production Survey - 2008



- First in-depth survey of organic farming in the United States
- Data collected from USDA certified farms or farms making the transition to organic production or farms exempt from certification because of sales less than \$5,000
- Survey results released in February, 2010 and updated in July, 2010

Census of Horticulture - 2009



- Leading source of detailed horticulture production and sales data at the U.S. and State level
- Included all operations that reported \$10,000 in horticulture sales from the Census of Agriculture
- Report was released in December, 2010



On-Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey - 2009



- First on-farm renewable energy production survey conducted on the national level by NASS
- Survey focused on farms producing energy from wind, solar and manure/methane digesters
- Provided information on start up costs, funding sources and utility savings
- Publication was released in February, 2011

2007 Census Follow-On Program

- Two other follow-on programs were suspended due to funding:
 - Census of Aquaculture - 2010
 - Tenure Ownership and Transition of Agricultural Land (TOTAL) - 2010

2012 Census of Agriculture Planning



- Two-Team Approach
 - Content Team (What?)
 - Data Collection Testing Team (How?)

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Content Objectives

- Solicit input from internal and external Data Users
- Evaluate and enhance data to support Annual Programs
- Capitalize on methodology differences between census and sampled surveys

Internal Content Recommendations



- Collect Animal Grazing Unit Month
- Collect sheep and goats data together and by ownership for Western States
- Collect land area rented by utilization
- Expand Renewable Energy Section



Solicitation of External Review

- C-FARE Panel Review
- Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics
- Commodity organizations and data users
- Federal Register Notice
- On-line solicitation of input
- USDA initiatives and new legislation

External Content Recommendations

- Count number of farms with agroforestry practices
- Count number of farms that sell to intermediary outlets
- Count number of on-farm packing facilities
- Add pre-listed biomass crops (switch grass, camelina, and miscanthus)

Evaluation and Data Collection Test Objectives

- Evaluate performance of previous form
- Increase internet responses
- Fully test data collection modes and processing systems
- Improve data quality

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Evaluation Methods

- Cognitive Testing
- Field Testing
- Evaluation of Historical Data
- Follow-Up Interviews
- Expert Review

Evaluation and Data Collection Test Deliverables



- Evaluation of 2007 forms
- Small Scale Content Test
- Test of data collection procedures
- Dry Run of processes
- Final Form
- Historical Documentation

Methods for Evaluation of 2007 Form

- Imputation rates by data item
- Frequency of edit action
- Calls to the help line
- Analyst comments



Results of Evaluation of 2007 Form

- Eliminate form with open table design to report commodities
- Restructured Land Sections
- Collect production and sales data together

Small Scale Census Test Objectives

- First mail test of revised form with follow-up cognitive interviews
- Experiments to increase web reporting
- Experiments to induce early web reporting

Small Scale Census Test Results



- Some questionnaire problems were resolved, additional revisions included in larger subsequent mail out test
- Mixed results for web reporting

Large Scale Census Test Objectives

- Field test data collection procedures, “final” questionnaire content and format, & processing
- Embed experiments to test methods of increasing response
- Use test data as initial donor pool for 2012 Census of Agriculture

Large Scale Census Test Experiments



- Pre-notification using autodial
- Web push experiment
- Tailored message directed to likely non-farms to encourage response
- Certified mail as last resort mail contact to significant operations

Large Scale Census Test Results

- Pre-census autodial notification had 9% increase over no notification
- Web push response had 17% lower overall response rate
- Tailored message to likely non-farms gained small increase in response
- Follow-up contact (postcard or autodial) stressing potential personal visit or phone contact had small increase in response



Census Mail List Classification Surveys

- Conducted in 2010 and 2011
- Provides a better quality list for the census and agricultural survey program
- Improves list coverage and survey stratification

2012 Census Mail List Classification Survey



- Conducted in 2012
- Mandatory
- Estimated 1.2 million records
 - On-line reporting available
 - Two mailings
 - Phone follow-up

2012 Census of Agriculture Data Collection Plans



- Autodial or postcard pre-census notice
- On-line web reporting available after notice
- Initial mail-out of questionnaire to mail list
- Follow up postcard or autodial reminder
- Second questionnaire mailing
 - Special letter tailored to potential non-farms
 - Message stating nonresponse will result in additional contact
- Potential certified mailing to selected cases

2012 Census of Agriculture Public Awareness



- Mail List Development Focus
 - September 2011
- Data Collection Focus
 - January 2012
- Data Dissemination Focus
 - September 2013

2012 Census of Agriculture Data Collection and Publication Schedule



- On-line web reporting available November 2012
- Initial mail-out end of December 2012
- Collection thru May 2013
- Results available early 2014



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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