

Supporting Statement – Part A

LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

OMB No. 0535-0005

JUSTIFICATION

This submission is a request for approval of this long-running information collection for an additional 3 years. There are only minor changes in the survey program, mostly updating universe/sample sizes after list frame maintenance.

- 1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.**

The primary purpose of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue official State and National estimates of crop and livestock production, disposition, and prices. This docket contains the two non-probability livestock slaughter surveys conducted by NASS: Federally- and non-Federally- inspected livestock slaughter. Information collected from both types of plants are combined to estimate total red meat production, consisting of the number of head slaughtered plus live weights of cattle, calves, hogs, and sheep.

General authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204. This statute specifies that "The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which he can obtain ... by the collection of statistics ... and shall distribute them among agriculturists."

- 2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

Federally-inspected livestock slaughter (FI) is reported under a cooperative arrangement between USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), and NASS. FSIS fulfills its responsibilities mandated by the Federal Meat Inspection Act (U.S. Code Title 21, Sections 620 and 661) by collecting daily slaughter data from all Federally-inspected plants.

Non-Federally-inspected livestock slaughter (NFI) data is collected by NASS Field Offices from State inspection agencies and/or by conducting a mail survey.

Each office is responsible for maintaining a list frame of all slaughter plants that are not inspected by FSIS or the State so that they can be mailed a questionnaire.

NASS obtains the daily FI data, combines it with the monthly NFI data, and publishes a monthly commercial slaughter report. These published data are used by the United States Department of Agriculture, other Federal and State agencies, and the livestock industry, in combination with data from other NASS livestock surveys, to project future meat supplies and producer prices. Agricultural economists in both the public and private sectors also use this information in economic analysis and research.

- 3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

Most FI plants are currently reporting head slaughtered and live and dressed weight to FSIS using computers with software designed specifically for and by FSIS for the purpose of reporting data to their Headquarters unit. In 2007, NASS implemented a new system which obtains the FSIS information, eliminating the need for keying. About a dozen of the 800 plants still use the paper FI questionnaire. NASS currently utilizes Web-based reporting for the NFI portion of the monthly slaughter; plants defined as NFI are allowed an opportunity to report their monthly head and live weights for cattle, calves, hogs, sheep, goats and bison. It is estimated that about 25 of 2,000 NFI respondents will use this Web option. Total percentage of electronic responses is estimated at $(800 \text{ FI} + 25 \text{ NFI}) / (800 + 2,000) = 29.5\%$ (see table in A.12 for sample size figures).

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

These surveys meet both State and Federal needs, thus eliminating duplication and minimizing reporting burden on the livestock industry. The data is not available from any other source. NASS receives notification of new grants and withdrawals from FSIS to prevent duplication of data reporting.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-1), describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

Small custom slaughter plants are generally NFI. The data for these plants are collected either from State inspection agencies or through the monthly NFI Slaughter Report. The data collected through the monthly NFI Slaughter Report may allow for reporting multiple months on a report, thereby reducing the number of contacts. Moreover, information requested on the livestock slaughter surveys can be provided with a minimum of difficulty by operators, generally from normal operating records.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

Collecting data less frequently would eliminate data that is needed by the Department of Agriculture, markets, and the livestock industry to keep abreast of changes at the State and National level. The Food Safety and Inspection Service is required by law to collect slaughter data from all Federally-inspected plants each week. Timing and frequency of the various reports have evolved to meet the needs of producers, agribusinesses, and government agencies, yet minimize burden on the reporting public.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner (*inconsistent with the general information guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5*):

- requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;
- requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; . . .

Data collection plans require a segment of the respondents to prepare a written response within 30 days of receipt and to respond weekly or monthly in order to comply with the Federal Meat Inspection Act (U.S. Code Title 21, Sections 620 and 661) and to publish the releases on time. The government and industry depend on these publication dates to make policy and business decisions. There are no other special circumstances associated with this survey.

8. Provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments.

The Federal Register Notice soliciting comments was published on Feb. 5, 2008, in Vol. 73, Number 24, Page 6692. NASS received two public comments.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Statisticians from NASS Field Offices (FO's) and Headquarters attend numerous meetings throughout the year to explain the crop and livestock estimating program. These meetings frequently provide feedback on data needs and suggested program improvements. NASS regularly holds data user meetings across the country to solicit comments about its surveys. NASS works closely with FSIS and AMS to keep the slaughter survey instruments current and relevant.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

All NFI questionnaires include a statement that individual reports are kept confidential. U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1905 and U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2276 provide for the confidentiality of reported information. All employees of NASS and all NASDA enumerators hired and supervised under a cooperative agreement with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture must read the regulation and sign a statement of compliance.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.

Total hours of burden is based on calculations shown in the following table. Minutes per response is based on length of questionnaire and routine nature of data collection. See table in Item B.1 for source of estimated counts. The approximately 800 FI plants account for over 95% of all livestock slaughter.

Projected 2008 Annual Response Burden Hours for Livestock Slaughter												
Survey	No. Respondents	Freq.	Response				Non-response				Total Burden Hours	
			Est. Count	Freq. x Count	Min./ Resp.	Burden Hours	Count	Freq. x Count	Min./ Non-res	Burden Hours		
Weekly Livestock Slaughter Report (FI)	800	52	800	41,600	15	0*	0	0	1	0*	0*	
Slaughter Report (monthly) (NFI)	1,000	12	800	9,600	10	1,600	200	2,400	1	40	1,640	
Total	1,800			51,200		1,600		2,400		40	1,640	

* Weekly slaughter figures are reported by Federal inspectors and incur no public burden.

The combined reporting time for all surveys of 1,640 hours is multiplied by \$24 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$39,360.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There is no cost burden to respondents.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government; provide a description of the method used to estimate cost which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (equipment, overhead, printing, and staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The total cost to the Federal government for the livestock slaughter surveys is estimated at \$1.0 million. Virtually all of the costs are personnel costs associated with data collection and review. Other costs include postage (with no postage for FI), computer processing, summarization, and printing.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I (reasons for changes in burden).

The response burden hours increased from 550 hours to 1,640 hours. Several factors impacted the shift in burden hours. The number of NFI plants contacted by NASS increased from 750 to approximately 1,000 per month. (There are approximately 2,000 NFI plants, half of these are covered by State inspections that send the data to NASS each month. The remaining 1,000 are mailed a questionnaire monthly with some phone follow up for the non-respondents.) The average amount of time it takes to complete a NFI questionnaire was increased from 5 minutes to 10 minutes to more accurately depict the actual amount of time it takes the operator to complete the questionnaire.

16. **For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

This docket contains the two non-probability livestock slaughter surveys conducted by NASS: Federally-inspected (FI) and non-Federally-inspected slaughter (NFI). The combined information collected from plants is used to estimate total red meat production consisting of the number of head slaughtered plus live and dressed weights of cattle, calves, hogs, and sheep. It is also used in preparing production, disposition, and income statistics.

FI livestock slaughter is reported under a cooperative arrangement between USDA's AMS, FSIS, and NASS. FSIS Federal meat inspectors are responsible for compiling daily FI plant data comparable to Weekly Livestock Slaughter Report and submitting that data to FSIS which then shares the data with NASS. NASS imputes data for any plants not included in the FSIS totals based on historical data for that plant or current data from plants of similar capacity, then accumulates FI head slaughtered, live weight, and dressed weight by species and class to monthly totals for summarization with NFI totals.

NFI slaughter is collected by NASS field offices from State inspection agencies by using the monthly Slaughter Report printed questionnaire or Web-based questionnaire. Each State office is responsible for maintaining a list frame of all slaughter plants that are not inspected by FSIS or the State, if applicable. NASS statisticians review the NFI reports for reasonableness prior to transmitting the data to NASS Headquarters. The combined FI/NFI summary gives commercial slaughter of cattle, calves, hogs, and sheep in the U.S. It is also used to derive total red meat production and prepare production, disposition, and income statistics.

Weekly slaughter totals are published by AMS in *Livestock, Meat, & Grain Highlights*. NASS publishes slaughter totals and commercial red meat production monthly in *Livestock Slaughter*, reached from NASS Web-site at nass.usda.gov or directly by URL

(<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1096>) and annually, in March, in *Livestock Slaughter, Annual Summary*

(<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do;jsessionid=7DCF7F39FE0C0E0419AECAC4FEA1B4D4?documentID=1097>).

In addition, *Meat Animals Production, Disposition, and Income*

(<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1101>) which is published each April uses slaughter data in

marketings. Weekly slaughter totals are also made available on the NASS website, via the on-line database.

Data Collection and Publication				
Livestock Slaughter	Data Collection		Publication	
	Freq	Collection Period	Publication Name	Release Date
Federally-Inspected	52	weekly	<i>Livestock Slaughter</i>	monthly
			<i>Livestock Slaughter Annual Summary</i>	March
Non-Federally-Inspected	12	monthly	<i>Meat Animals Production, Disposition, and Income</i>	April

- 17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

There is no request for approval of non-display of the expiration date.

- 18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions” of OMB Form 83-I.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.