



DRAFT

2008 FARM and RANCH
IRRIGATION SURVEY

United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service

The 2008 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey (FRIS), conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), is USDA's primary source of information on farm and ranch irrigation practices, quantity of water used, and method of application. This FRIS is the 7th survey devoted entirely to the collection of on-farm irrigation information for the Nation. Data collected on the 2008 FRIS combined with 2007 Census of Agriculture data will provide one of the most complete and detailed profiles of irrigation in the United States.

HOW ARE THE DATA COLLECTED?

The FRIS is conducted once every 5 years as a follow on supplement to the Census of Agriculture. For the 2008 survey, operations are selected from a sample of farms and ranches that reported irrigated acres on the 2007 Census. Approximately 25,000 of the Nation's 299,000 irrigated farms and ranches will be asked to participate in this survey. Therefore, every response is vital. Operators will be contacted, beginning in mid January through mid May 2009, and will be asked to participate in the survey using one of the following data collection methods:

- Mail – Participants fill out and mail back the survey report form that was mailed to them.
- Internet – Secure, online reporting is the timeliest, most cost-effective option.

Field Offices will make telephone calls and personal visits to non respondents to maximize survey responses.

All participating operators will be asked to provide data on land use, acres, and yield of irrigated and non irrigated crops, quantity of water applied and method of application to selected crops, acres irrigated by type of water distribution system, number of irrigation wells and pumps, and irrigation expenditures, as well as other irrigation related information for the survey year 2008.

Beginning with the 1998 FRIS, data were published for each of the 50 States. Previous irrigation surveys published data only for leading irrigated States, with a US total, excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

NASS will release results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture in February 2009.

NASS will publish 2008 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey results in November 2009.

HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

Information collected from the FRIS is used not just by USDA, but also by industry representatives, leaders, and planners to:

- access energy and water conservation
- show trends in solar and other renewable resources on irrigated land
- rank states in order of total acres irrigated
- help develop irrigation practices that improve productivity for producers, their families, and their communities, and
- chart the best course for the future of on-farm irrigation

The information provided by survey respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

All reports are available through the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.