

Supporting Statement Part B

ORGANIC PRODUCTION SURVEY (OPS)

OMB No. 0535 - NEW

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The 2008 Organics Production Survey (OPS) is a complete census of operations identified with potential organic activity. This includes certified producers, producer's transitioning to certification, and those exempt from certification (sales less than \$5,000). The population of potential organic producers is approximately 20,000 operations. The target response rate is set at 80 percent or higher.

Estimates for the survey will be computed by weighting the data for each respondent by an expansion factor to account for non-respondents. The target response rate is 80 percent or higher.

- 2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**
 - statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
 - estimation procedure,**
 - degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
 - unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures.**

Extensive efforts will be used to maximize response, and thus reduce the extent of non-response adjustment to the survey. Approximately 20,000 forms will be mailed in May 2009. All questionnaires will be keyed from image at the National Processing Center (NPC) in Jeffersonville, IN. The initial mailings will contain the questionnaire, a cover letter, an Industry Testimonial letter, and an Electronic Data Reporting (EDR) instruction sheet. For non-respondents, the follow up mailing will contain another copy of the questionnaire and a cover letter. There will be phone follow up for those who do not respond to the mail requests. There will also be a limited number of face-to-face interviews conducted in an effort to account for coverage area and larger operations.

- 3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

A public information campaign will be used for the 2008 OPS. The objective is to make organic producers aware of the survey, its importance to them and the Nation, and to encourage their response. This campaign will work through farm organizations, radio broadcasters, farm press, agribusinesses, and the State offices operated by NASS.

To ensure a high response rate and to reduce the non-response bias in the final 2008 OPS estimates, NASS will attempt to collect data from non-respondents by telephone. A limited number of interviews will be done by personal enumeration. The telephone and personal enumeration activities will begin in mid-June 2009, and extend through much of July.

The targeted population is designed to provide reliable estimates for certified organic producers, transitional organic producers, and producers exempt from organic certification.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.

Approximately 30 interviews with producers will be conducted with the intent to clarify and improve the flow and questions on the report form. Additionally, the feedback will provide valuable information to be used for training enumerator staff involved in the follow-up interviews.

The population will be marked with a unique identifier for performing split sample research. The research will be designed to enhance our data collection methods and reduce response error for future follow-on censuses and other surveys conducted by NASS.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

NASS is conducting the 2008 OPS through its Census and Survey Division: Chris Messer, Census Planning Branch Chief, (202)690-8747.

Sample Design was performed by Bob McEwen (202)720-5269, Survey Design by Chris Gottschall (202)720-3159 and Specifications by Matt Guilbeau (202)690-8802. These were then reviewed by NASS' Statistics Division: Brad Summa, Census Data Section Head, (202) 690-3387.

Data collection is carried out by NASS Field Offices; Deputy Administrator for Field Operations is Marshall Datzler, (202)720-8220.

The NASS survey statistician in Headquarters for this survey is Donald Buysse, (202)690-8767 in the Census and Survey Division. He is responsible for coordination of sampling, questionnaires, data collection, data processing, and Field Office support.

The NASS commodity statistician in Headquarters is Douglas Farmer, (202)720-7492 in the Environmental, Economics and Demographics Branch, Statistics Division. He is responsible for summary and publication.

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