

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

2009 Census of Horticultural Specialties OMB No. 0535-0236

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 potential respondent universe for this census are the farms identified in the 2007 Census of Agriculture as having sales of \$10,000 or more from horticultural crops. Along with any new operations that have come into business after the 2007 Census of Agriculture, and who have \$10,000 or more in production. The supplemental names come from list building activities conducted by NASS Field Offices, using lists of operations obtained from State Plant Inspectors, growers associations, or from operations that have sold their business and have identified the new operators.

Census of Horticulture - Response Rates for 1998					
Survey	Sample Size	Freq	Total Contacts	Total Responses	Response Rates
Pre Survey Screening Form for New Operations (New in 2009)	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Census of Horticulture	45,092	1	45,092	37,513	83.2%

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**

A census follow-on design will be employed with the Census of Horticulture. All operations that were in the 2007 Ag Census, that qualify for the Census of Horticulture will be brought forward, with their 2007 final Census weight. All final 2007 Census weights were integerized on the interval [1,6]. The final 2007 Ag Census weight will initially be used to represent all of the Horticulture operations that were in business in 2007, that either didn't respond or were not on the Ag Census mail list. These operations will then be stratified by value of sales and a second stage non-response weight will be computed to account for anyone who doesn't respond to the Census of Horticulture. Any new operation that NASS has found since 2007 will be added to the sample with an initial weight of one. These new operations will then be stratified by value of sales and a non-response weight will be added to account for the new operation non-respondents. Estimation will occur by simply multiplying individually reported data by the multi-layered final weight from the Census of Horticulture. Estimates will then be aggregated by State, Region and United States for publication purposes. All estimates will be run through a disclosure algorithm that ensures all published numbers adhere to agency disclosure policies. Any estimate that fails the disclosure test will be suppressed from publication.

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.**

Extensive efforts are used to maximize response and thus reduce the extent of nonresponse imputation in the census. A public information campaign will again be used for the 2009 Census of Horticultural Specialties. The objective is to make growers aware of the census, its importance to them and to encourage their response. This campaign will work through farm organizations, radio broadcasters, farm press, agribusinesses, and the Field Offices operated by NASS.

To ensure a high response rate and to eliminate the need for large non-response adjustment, NASS will follow up the initial mailing of the questionnaire with a second mailing to non-respondents. This will be followed up by a post card reminder a few weeks later. Remaining non-respondents will then be attempted by either telephone enumeration or personal visits by one of our field enumerators or Field Office staff. When response cannot be obtained from operations, data will be imputed using the 2007 Census of Agriculture and information from similar operations that responded to the 1998 Census of Horticultural Specialties.

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

NASS will be conducting two small scale pre-tests. The first phase will consist of cognitive interviews conducted with 3 to 5 growers in 7 States. The States (CA, FL, IL, MI, NC, PA and TX) are from different regions of the country and contain a very diverse listing of commodities. The second phase will consist of a mail questionnaire that will be mailed out to 15 – 20 producers in the test States. The sample will consist of different size and type of producers in each State that is representative of their population.

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.

Sample size for each State is determined by the Sampling Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is William Iwig, (202)720-3895.

Summary programs are prepared by the Agency's Statistical Methods Branch; Branch Chief is Dave Aune, (202)720-4008.

Data collection is carried out by NASS Field Offices; Deputy Administrator for Field Operations is Marshall Dantzler, (202)720-8220. NASS HQ survey administrator is Perry Game of the Census Planning Branch (202)690-8768.

Survey data are also reviewed and summarized by the State Field Offices. Publication of data, will generated by HQ on both State and National levels when possible.

September, 2009