

**OMB INFORMATION COLLECTION SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**ARS Animal Health National Program Assessment Survey Form**

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

ARS is charged with extending the Nation's scientific knowledge with research projects in agriculture, human nutrition, food safety, natural resources, the environment, and other topics affecting the Nation. Research in the Agency is conducted through coordinated National Programs on a five year cycle. The cycle (see attachment \*) ensures that ARS research meets OMB's Research and Development Investment Criteria and other external requirements, including the Research Title of the Farm Bill, the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and OMB Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). The ARS Animal Health National Program (AHNP) is concluding its first five year cycle and so is required to conduct a national program assessment and to gather customer, stakeholder, and partner input to the next program cycle.

The program assessment has two components designed to measure if our program has made significant progress toward or reached the goals set forth five years ago. The first component is an assessment by an independent expert panel that reviews the scientific performance of the program. A workshop was held for the expert panel at the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) annual conference.

The second component of the national program assessment is to survey the partners and stakeholders that provided the input for formulating the action plan that ARS implemented in the 2005-2009 national program cycle. Accordingly, an electronic survey has been prepared to reach out to as many of the customers, partners, and stakeholders of the Animal Health National Program that contributed to the action plan. The goal is not to survey the entire population of individuals that are the beneficiaries of ARS research, but to survey the stakeholders and the representatives that are active in professional and trade associations with which we interact frequently and that provided the input that formed the basis for the action plan that ARS implemented in the last national program cycle. The input received from our stakeholder representatives is a critical part of assessing whether our national research program had impact. The information is also very important to meet our obligations under GPRA and OMB PART.

GPRA requires agencies to set specific objectives for each program and to evaluate the success and effectiveness of each program retrospectively. The proposed assessment instrument will enable ARS to ascertain the level of customer and stakeholder satisfaction with the quality, relevance, and performance of its Animal Health research program.

In the late fall/early winter of FY 2010, ARS will conduct an OMB Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) Analysis on its Goal 3 research which includes livestock protection. The Animal Health National Program is the core of ARS' livestock protection research. The results from the proposed assessment instrument will directly support the Goal 3 PART Analysis.

The information collected is also necessary to feed into the goals of the Program's next five year cycle. To ensure relevancy, a customer, stakeholder, and partner workshop is held at the beginning of the five year cycle. Input from participants is taken into account with Presidential and Administration priorities, Congressional feedback, and Agency initiatives when a Program Action Plan is written. This Action Plan lays out the goals and objectives for the research in the next cycle. Information from the survey will be used to supplement the information collected at the workshop.

- 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.**

An electronic survey was prepared by ARS, to reach out to as many of the customers, partners, and stakeholders of the Animal Health National Research Program as possible. This is a reinstatement of the previous survey. The purpose of the survey/questionnaire is to assess impact of the research in the 2005-2009 national program cycle and ensure relevance for the cycle beginning in 2010.

- 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 to the collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.**

The questionnaire is an electronic survey that can only be completed on-line by double-clicking on the following URL:

<http://www.afmtestlab.ars.usda.gov/surveys/ahnp/survey.htm>.

The software selected for this survey, Survey Tracker, will allow the efficient analysis of information provided by a diverse group of customers with varied needs representing the beef, dairy, poultry, pork, and sheep industry, scientists at universities that are ARS collaborators conducting animal health research, ARS collaborators from the private sector conducting animal health research, and action and regulatory agencies in Federal and State agencies that are the beneficiaries of the research conducted within the ARS Animal Health National Program.

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

ARS National Program Assessments are for research projects planned as part of a 5-year program cycle. There is no known tracking system for our customers, partners, and stakeholders to assess the performance and impact of our research.

**5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 82-I), describe any methods to minimize the burden.**

The information collected will have no economic impact on small businesses or small entities.

**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.**

Failure to collect input from our customers on the performance and impact of our research program would significantly inhibit the relevance and credibility of the research conducted at ARS. The survey will only be conducted once every 5-years.

**7. Special Circumstances Relating to Guidelines 5 CFR 1320.5**

There are no special circumstances for the collection of information requirements.

**8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside Agency**

In accordance with 5CFR 1320.8(d), a 60-day notice for public comment on the information collection provisions was published in the Federal Register. The notice was published August 6, 2009, (Volume 74, Number 150, Page 39283). A correction notice was published in the Federal Register to extend the commenting period to October 9, 2009. One comment was received from the public that did not impact the collection.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payment or gift was or will be provided to respondents.

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

The confidentiality of information received by NPS is consistent with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

**11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

Questions of a sensitive nature are not applicable to this information collection. The questions in the electronic survey deal entirely with the performance and impact of the Animal Health National Program.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.**

The estimated annual burden is 100 hours

No. Responses /Respondent	Total No. Respondents annually	Minutes per response	Total Hours
400	400	15 minutes	100 hours

Based on the number of stakeholders that attended previous ARS workshops it is estimated that we will receive a maximum of 400 responses. The estimated hours are based on the length of the survey. It is expected that it will take 15 minutes to complete the survey/questionnaire.

Federal representatives from action regulatory agencies, university scientists, and trade association representatives will be completing this survey. The total estimated cost to respondents is \$5,000.

Activity	Number of Hours	Cost per hour	Total Cost
Reporting	100	\$50	\$5,000

**13. Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Record-Keepers**

There are no capital and start-up, or operation, maintenance and purchase costs associated with this information collection.

**14. Annualized Costs to the Federal Government.**

The estimated annualized cost to the Federal government is \$300. The estimated time to extract the information from the software (Survey Tracker) is 5 hours.

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

This is a reinstatement of the previous approved collection resulting in a program change of 100 burden hours.

**16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.**

Information will be reported based on queries via the ARS online database search page.

**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.**

The National Program Staff is not seeking approval to exempt display of the expiration date for OMB approval.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified Item 19 “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act.”**

There are not exceptions to Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.