

**2006 ARMS PHASE II
SAMPLE RESPONDENT LETTER**

[Month Day], 2006

Dear [Mr./Ms. LastName]:

As a farm operator, you rely on quality information and sound government policies in order to run a successful business. That's why your participation in the 2006 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is so important.

ARMS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's primary source of information on the production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America's farm households. ARMS information is used not only by USDA, but by policymakers, farm organizations, agribusinesses and others who make the decisions that shape the future of U.S. agriculture.

You are one of about 9,000 farm operators nationwide who have been selected to participate in Phase II of the 2006 survey, which focuses on production costs and practices. ***During this time of skyrocketing fuel and input costs, it's especially important that we obtain accurate, up-to-date data from producers like you in order to help quantify the impact on the farm sector.***

Between now and [Month Day] a representative from the [State] field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will contact you to schedule a convenient time for in-person interview. During the interview, you will be asked to provide information on your fertilizer, nutrient and pesticide applications, as well as your pest management and irrigation practices. The NASS representative will contact you again early next year, asking you to provide additional economic information about your operation during Phase III of the survey. **[NOTE TO STATES: Delete the preceding sentence when corresponding with wheat growers.]**

As is the case with all NASS surveys, please be assured that your responses to ARMS will be kept ***completely confidential***, as required by federal law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual respondent or operation can be identified.

I realize that your time is valuable. But it is only through the participation of producers like you that USDA can continue to gather and disseminate accurate, up-to-date data on the current state of American agriculture. And better data means better decisions.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important survey. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or [Firstname Lastname] at (800) [XXX-XXXX].

Sincerely,

Signature

[Director's Name]

Director, [State] Field Office
National Agricultural Statistics Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture