

1 Supporting Statement

2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

OMB No. 0535-0226

A. JUSTIFICATION

This submission is for reinstatement of the Census of Agriculture which is conducted every 5 years. The last census was done in 2008, covering the 2007 crop year. The 2012 census will be the fourth census conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The planned publication date is February 2014.

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

The National Agricultural Statistics Service conducts surveys in order to prepare national, State, and county estimates of crop and livestock production, disposition, prices, and collects information on related environmental and economic factors. Every five years these survey statistics are benchmarked with a complete census of agriculture. This census is required by law under the "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997," Pub. L. No. 105-113 (7 U.S.C. 2204g). It is the primary source of detailed State and county data that provide critical information for the agricultural sector. Without the census, there would be no source of reliable, comparable data throughout the more than 3,000 counties in the 50 States and Puerto Rico. For the outlying areas of American Samoa (AS), Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Guam, and U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI), it is the only source of consistent, comparable agricultural data.

- 2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection.**

The census of agriculture provides data on the number and types of farms, land use, crop area and selected production, livestock inventory and sales, production contracts, production expenses, farm-related income, and other demographic characteristics. These data are collected from farmers, ranchers, nursery operators, citrus caretakers, and other producers of agricultural products. This census information promotes a stable economic atmosphere and reduces risk for production, marketing, and distribution operations. Modern agriculture increasingly needs reliable, timely, and detailed information because it affects the

commodities market, government policy, imports, exports, prices, and private industry.

Census information is used by the Administration, Congress, and Federal agencies to formulate and evaluate national agricultural programs and policy, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Economic Analysis to compile farm sector economic indicators, and by State and county governments in the development of local agricultural programs. Participation in Federal farm programs is often based on county and State census figures. Farm organizations and agribusinesses use census data for assessing the agricultural economy and for marketing analysis. New developments in the agricultural sector make census data valuable in measuring changes and production trends. Census data are also used to evaluate estimates made from the more frequent sample survey data.

Many of the specialty commodities are not surveyed in any other survey other than the Census of Agriculture every five years. This is the only opportunity to measure their change in production on a national level.

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

Web-based or electronic data reporting (EDR) will be an option for the 2012 census. NASS is working to increase the response rates from this mode above the 4% received for the 2007 census. Also, telephone help lines will be staffed to assist respondents who: request additional forms, report receipt of multiple questionnaires, have questions or concerns with any part of the questionnaire, or need help completing the form(s).

2007 Census of Agriculture Response Rates by Mode of Data Collection ^{1/}	
Mail	83%
Telephone	7%
Electronic Data Reporting (EDR) - Internet	4%
Face to Face - Field Enumeration	2%
Other (Administrative or Historic Data)	4%

^{1/} The percentages in this table refer to completed reports.

During its' content testing, NASS encouraged participants to choose the Internet as a response mode by sending pre-notification correspondence without a hard copy questionnaire enclosed in the mailing. These efforts proved unsuccessful particularly when factoring in cost of postage and printing. Effectively, the testing showed that respondents need to have a questionnaire in order to prompt a response. For the 2012 data collection strategy, NASS will emphasize online reporting as quicker, easier, and secure in all its correspondence. NASS will send a pre-notification phone recording (autodial) to respondents previously identified as having high-speed Internet. The personnel staffing the helpline during the mail phase of data collection will be trained to encourage online response. NASS will utilize three mailings of the report form with instruction for web reporting prior to phone follow-up for non-respondents.

CATI technology was used in previous efforts and will again be utilized during the 2012 Census of Agriculture. A majority of the calling will take place after the three mail attempts to curb cost. At this time, CAPI technology has not been implemented into the strategy for the 2012 Ag Census. However, it can be seamlessly incorporated into our field collection strategy when and where available.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

To determine census report form content and eliminate duplication of data, NASS consults data users, Federal and State agencies, State governors, State departments of agriculture, land-grant universities and colleges, other federal agencies, and the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics. There is no other source of detailed, comparable agricultural data for all farms in all States and counties.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods to minimize burden.

Although this collection is required by law, every effort is made to minimize respondent burden. The census form will be tailored to various regions of the country, as in past censuses. A screening survey, conducted prior to the census, will again be used and enable NASS to eliminate non-farm operations from the census mail list. Additional steps include utilizing improved skip pattern boxes throughout the instrument and allowing respondents to use estimates. Comprehensive testing (0535-0243) was conducted to improve the wording and flow of the questionnaire to make it easier for the respondent to complete the questionnaire. Toll-free telephone help lines and the agency Web address are

available to all respondents to aid in reporting. Nonresponse follow-up will be more heavily targeted to larger operations. A group of approximately 100,000 previous non-respondent records with unknown agricultural status will be sampled for non-response follow-up and, as indicated in Item 3, EDR will be available for this census.

Lists of farm operators and potential operators in each of the outlying areas will be compiled with the help of Federal agencies, the local governments, and farmer associations. Each of these persons or businesses will be contacted and asked to complete an agriculture census questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to quickly screen out respondents without farming activities. Only essential questions will be included on the questionnaire to reduce burden on respondents. Noncommercial farm households in American Samoa will be sampled to decrease overall burden.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted, or is conducted less frequently, as well as technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The census of agriculture is required by law every five years. It is also important that the Census of Agriculture is conducted using the same reference year as the other economic census programs conducted by the Bureau of the Census. This simultaneous data collection provides the American public with a complete snapshot of the United States economy; it is also critical to the work performed by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (US Dept of Commerce). Less frequent collections would hinder Federal, State, and local governments' ability to recognize changing trends in the agricultural sector and weaken the ability to monitor the farm programs and environmental regulations affecting the agricultural economy.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.

8. Provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken in response to these comments.

The Notice soliciting comment on this information collection was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2011 on pages 28416 - 28418. One comment was received from the public. The comment is attached to this docket submission.

The comment did not warrant a response.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data requirements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

On Tuesday, May 19, 2009, NASS published a Notice of Opportunity to Submit Content Requests for the 2012 Census of Agriculture. The notice was published in the Federal Register on page 23389. NASS received over 50 requests for new content from public and private organizations. A large portion of these requests came from colleges and universities. The following organizations were included in those who submitted comments:

Alabama Forestry Commission	Intertribal Ag Council
University of California, Davis (2)	Penn State Cooperative Extension
Oklahoma Dept of Libraries	Farm Credit Council
Biotechnology Industry Organization	Oklahoma State University
Wilson College	University of Hawaii
Custom Gardens Organic Produce Farm	American Farmland Trust
Nebraska Dept of Labor	Tufts University
North American Gamebird Association	Ecotrust
Iowa State University	North Lawndale Greening Committee (Chicago, IL)
USDA NRCS - Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania Department of Ag
New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty	Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
National Immigration Farming Initiative	West Virginia University
Sustainable Bainbridge	Youth Development and Capacity Building, Inc
Oregon State University	Alameda Co Agricultural Commissioner (California)
University of Maryland	Michelin North America Agriculture Tire Product Line
Crossroads Resource Center	Gourmet Gorilla, Inc
Chesapeake Bay Foundation	University of Wisconsin- Extension
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute	

NASS also received over 1,000 form letters from an animal rights group.

NASS held meetings with data users and contacted Federal and State agencies that use census statistics to discuss data needs and ask for recommendations on content for the 2012 census. The proposed new or changed census content was designed on the basis of recommendations received from Federal Government agencies; State governors, State departments of agriculture, land-grant universities and colleges, other State agencies, and agricultural organizations; and the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics.

The Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, is the principal contact with data users outside the Federal Government. It meets on a regular basis and makes recommendations regarding all areas of the Agency's agriculture statistics program, with a special

focus on the census. The committee advises the agency on current and future data needs, the ability (or willingness) of respondents to supply the information requested, general data collection methods, content and format of census and survey report forms, and publicity. The advisory committee provided assistance with prioritizing requests for changes to census content based on data needs and respondent burden issues.

A separate but similar review process will be done for the agricultural censuses of the outlying areas of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands. Designated departments or agencies in each of the territory or commonwealth areas are responsible for coordinating census activities. They communicate census issues throughout the agriculture community, usually through interagency committees similar to the U.S. Census Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics. Because of the simplicity of the questionnaires, the small number of questionnaires needed, distance, and the cost of travel to the territories and commonwealths, this review process has not yet been done for these areas. During the 2012 fiscal year, staff will be visiting each of the areas to meet with advisory groups and discuss what, if any, changes should be made in the previous census questionnaire and presentation of census data for the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gifts to respondents.

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

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

All questionnaires include a statement that individual reports are kept confidential. The specific Census of Agriculture citation, Title 7 U.S. Code Section 2204(g), plus Title 18 Section 1905 and Title 7 Section 2276 provide for the confidentiality of reported information. All employees of NASS and all enumerators hired and supervised under a cooperative agreement with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) must read the regulations and sign a statement of compliance.

Additionally, NASS and NASS contractors comply with OMB Implementation Guidance, "Implementation Guidance for Title V of the E-Government Act, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA), (Public Law 107-347). CIPSEA supports NASS' pledge of confidentiality to all respondents and facilitates the agency's efforts to reduce burden by supporting statistical activities of collaborative agencies through designation of NASS agents; subject to the limitations and penalties described in CIPSEA.

11. Provide additional justification for questions of a sensitive nature.

The questions on race and ethnicity on both the screening form and the report forms comply with the OMB Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity. The question on total household income is a collapse of the stratum breaks used on the approved Agricultural Resource Management Survey, OMB Control #0535-0218.

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

The table below shows estimates of the amount of time needed to complete the report forms based on results from the 2010 Census of Agriculture Content Test (OMB No. 0535-0243). The interview lengths were weighted by the 2007 percentages of farms by size group based on value of sales; value of sales ranges used were: less than \$10,000; \$10,000-49,999; and \$50,000 plus. Estimates of the non-farm response are based on re-contacts completed for the 2007 Census of Agriculture and the 2010 Content Test.

The combined reporting for all surveys of 2,545,498 hours is multiplied by \$24 per hour, for a total estimated cost to the public of \$61,091,952.

2012 Census of Agriculture Survey	QID	Sample Size	Freq 3/	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours
				Resp. Count	Freq x Count	Min / Resp.	Burden Hours	Non resp Count	Freq x Count	Min / Nonr. ^a	Burden Hours	
Screening or List Building												
First Mailing		1,200,000	1	360,000	360,000	10	60,000	840,000	840,000	1	14,000	74,000
Second Mailing ^{2/}		740,000	1	148,000	148,000	10	24,667	592,000	592,000	1	9,867	34,534
Phone Follow Up ^{2/}		592,000	1	177,600	177,600	10	29,600	414,400	414,400	2	13,813	43,413
Screening Sub - Total		1,200,000		685,600			114,267	1,846,400			37,680	151,947
Questionnaires												
50 States												
First Mailing		3,000,000	1	1,350,000	1,350,000	50	1,125,000	1,650,000	1,650,000	1	27,500	1,152,500
Incoming Telephone Calls - Out of Scope		100,000	1	100,000	100,000	4	6,667	0	0	2	0	6,667
Second Mailing ^{2/}		1,250,000	1	625,000	625,000	50	520,835	625,000	625,000	1	10,417	531,252
Third Mailing		605,000	1	302,500	302,500	50	252,083	302,500	302,500	1	5,042	257,125
Phone Follow Up ^{2/}		165,000	1	140,250	140,250	40	93,500	24,750	24,750	2	825	94,325
Field Enumeration ^{4/}		50,000	1	42,500	42,500	50	35,417	7,500	7,500	2	250	35,667
Sub - Total		3,000,000		2,560,250			2,033,502	2,609,750			44,034	2,077,536
American Indians ^{2/}												
First Mailing		12,000	1	1,800	1,800	35	1,050	10,200	10,200	1	170	1,220
Field Enumeration ^{4/}		10,200	1	8,160	8,160	35	4,750	2,040	2,040	2	68	4,826
Sub - Total		12,000		9,960			5,810	12,240			238	6,048
US Territories												
Puerto Rico - Mailing		20,000	1	8,000	8,000	30	4,000	12,000	12,000	1	200	4,200
Puerto Rico - Follow-up enumeration ^{2/}		10,000	1	8,000	8,000	30	4,000	2,000	2,000	2	67	4,067
American Samoa - enumeration only		2,500	1	2,250	2,250	30	1,125	250	250	2	8	1,133
Guam - enumeration only		200	1	180	180	30	90	20	20	2	1	91
US Virgin Islands - enumeration only		200	1	180	180	30	90	20	20	2	1	91
Northern Mariana Islands only		200	1	180	180	30	90	20	20	2	1	91
Sub - Total		23,100		18,790			9,395	14,310			278	9,673
Questionnaire Sub - Total		3,035,100		2,589,000			2,048,707	2,636,300			44,550	2,093,257

2012 Census of Agriculture Survey	QID	Sample Size	Freq 3/	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours
				Resp. Count	Freq x Count	Min / Resp.	Burden Hours	Nonresp Count	Freq. x Count	Min / Nonr. ^{6/}	Burden Hours	
Publicity Materials for ALL surveys												
Screening Phase												
First Mailing Instruction letter and EDR instructions	n/a	1,200,000	1	360,000	360,000	5	30,000	840,000	840,000	1	14,000	44,000
Second Mailing Instruction letter and EDR instructions	n/a	740,000	1	148,000	148,000	5	12,333	592,000	592,000	1	9,867	22,200
Survey Phase												
First Mailing Instruction letter and EDR instructions	n/a	3,032,000	1	1,359,800	1,359,800	5	113,317	1,672,200	1,672,200	1	27,870	141,187
Second Mailing Instruction letter and EDR instructions	n/a	1,250,000	1	625,000	625,000	5	52,083	625,000	625,000	1	10,417	62,500
Third Mailing Instruction letter and EDR instructions	n/a	605,000	1	302,500	302,500	5	25,208	302,500	302,500	1	5,042	30,250
Publicity Materials Sub -Total		6,827,000		2,795,300			232,941	4,031,700			67,196	300,137
Quality Control Survey (Telephone Only) - Recontact operators to verify quality of NASDA enumerators.												
Enumerator Quality Control Survey (phone only)		2,000	1	1,800	1,800	5	150	200	200	2	7	157
Totals		4,237,100		3,276,400			2,396,065	4,482,900			149,433	2,545,498
^{1/} After the first mailing 100,000 operators were removed from the sample due to being undeliverable by mail. ^{2/} After the first mailing, 150,000 operators were removed from the sample due to being undeliverable by mail. Along with 250,000 records that will be sub-sampled for follow-up mailings (non-response survey). ^{3/} Due to budget and time constraints phone follow-up was concentrated on operations who had the higher probability of being in business and being of substantial size. ^{4/} Due to budget and time constraints non-response Field Enumeration was concentrated on the larger or more complex farms. ^{5/} After the first mailing 2,000 operators were removed from the sample due to being undeliverable by mail. ^{6/} All mailings contain both the questionnaire and the publicity materials. Burden for each non-response is 2 minutes. One minute for the questionnaire and one minute for the publicity materials. ^{7/} Alaska Natives are not included in the American Indian counts. All potential farmers in Alaska will receive the same US version of the questionnaire.												

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or records keepers resulting from the collection of information.

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to Federal Government; provide a description of the method used to estimate said costs which should include quantifying hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, staff, printing, and overhead), and any other expense that would not have incurred without this collection of information.

2012 Census of Agriculture
Estimated Full Cycle Costs without Follow-ons
(\$1,000)

Line Item	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total Costs
Direction	\$ 7,700	\$ 7,400	\$ 7,300	\$ 7,950	\$ 8,650	\$ 39,000
Content Determination and Design (includes printing)	\$ 2,500	\$ 7,400	\$ 13,550	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,900	\$ 29,150
Mail List Development and Mail Out	\$ 7,100	\$ 6,000	\$ 8,900	\$ 14,700	\$ 5,300	\$ 42,000
Collection and Processing	\$ 16,808	\$ 9,773	\$ 8,139	\$ 31,500	\$ 12,400	\$ 78,620
Publication	\$ 3,800	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,750	\$ 5,550	\$ 11,000	\$ 26,600
Total Obligations	\$ 37,908	\$ 33,073	\$ 41,639	\$ 62,500	\$ 40,250	\$215,370

The annual average cost for the three years (2012, 2013, & 2014) covered under this OMB docket is \$48,130,000.

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

Since the Census of Agriculture information collection is a reinstatement, there is no current inventory of burden hours. From the calculations in A.12, we estimate that 2,545,498 respondent burden hours will be needed. Non-response burden is included in this calculation.

- 16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, include beginning and ending dates for the information collection, completion of report, publication dates and other actions.**

The initial mailing of report forms for the 50 States and Puerto Rico will occur in December 2012 with a due date of February 4, 2013. Publication of final reports (Volume I—see below) will be in February, 2014.

For the outlying areas of CNMI, Guam, and USVI, data collection will be done by field enumerators in early 2013 and publication will follow in October 2013. For American Samoa, data collection will be done in early 2014 and publication is targeted for October 2014.

Timetable for the 2012 Census of Agriculture

List Development	Jan 2009 - Aug 2012
Conduct and Analyze Content Test.....	Oct 2010 - Mar 2011
Evaluate Content Test.....	Feb 2011 - May 2011
Develop Final Report Forms.....	Jun 2011 - Sept 2012
Print and Assemble Packages.....	Jan 2012 - Oct 2012
Mail Screener.....	Dec 2011
Follow-up Screener Mailings.....	Jan 2012 - Mar 2012
Public Relations Campaign.....	Jun 2012 - Feb 2013
American Indian Special Collection. . . .	Jul 2012 - Nov 2012
Mail 2007 Census of Agriculture.....	Dec 2012
Data Processing and Analysis.....	Jan 2013 - Oct 2013
Follow-up Census Mailings.....	Feb 2013 - Mar 2013
Selected CATI Non-response Follow-up.	Mar 2013 - Jun 2013
Preliminary Weighted Summary.....	Apr 2013 - Jun 2013
Data Collection Close out.....	Jun 2013
Final Weighted Summary.....	Sep 2013
Final Figures Available.....	Oct 2013
Disclosure Applied.....	Oct 2013 - Nov 2013
Final Tabulations Complete.....	Dec 2013
Public Release of Data.....	Feb 2014

Tabulations will be generated at the county, State, and national levels. Final publications of the Census of Agriculture information will be available in one or more forms—printed reports, on the Internet, and/or on CD-ROM. There will be three volumes: Volume 1, Geographic Area Series; Volume 2, Subject Series; and Volume 3, Special Studies.

Volume 1 contains three reports: State and County Highlights (Internet), State and County Profiles (Internet), and the full State and County Data (print, Internet, and CD-ROM). For the State and County Data version, there is a separate, bound report for each State, Parts 1-50, the United States, Part 51, and Outlying Areas, Parts 52-56, about 400 pages each. The table of contents from the 2007 census Volume 1, Part 51. Volume 2 contains ZIP Code and Congressional District Tabulations (CD-ROM), Agricultural Atlas of the United States (print and Internet), and Ranking of States and Counties (print and Internet). Volume 3 is for the results of census follow-on surveys to be conducted under separate OMB approvals.

Internet links to the primary 2007 Census of Agriculture Publications:

2007 Census of Agriculture Volume 1

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/usv1.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture, Guam

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/guam.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture, American Samoa

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/AmericanSamoa.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture, Northern Mariana Islands

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/cnmi.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture, Puerto Rico

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/prv1.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture, US Virgin Islands

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/usvi.pdf

2007 Census of Agriculture Interactive link for State and County level data.

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/County_Profiles/index.asp

2007 Census of Agriculture Rankings by Congressional Districts

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/Congressional_District_Rankings/index.asp

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

There is no request for approval of non-display of the expiration date.

- 18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions” of OMB Form 83-I.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

October 2011