

Dear **Association Contact**:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will be asking vegetable growers in **(State)** to participate in the 2006 Vegetable Chemical Use Survey. The survey gives producers the opportunity to report first-hand information on their crop production practices, thus ensuring that accurate, real-world data are available to help government agencies and others make sound decisions about the future availability of crop protection products.

Previous NASS surveys have shown that educating respondents about the intent and importance of a survey greatly increases cooperation. Because of this, we ask for your support informing vegetable growers about the benefits of the survey and why they should respond.

The Vegetable Chemical Use Survey benefits growers and the entire fresh vegetable industry because:

- The survey helps ensure that USDA has the most accurate, up-to-date chemical use information, straight from the source – producers themselves.
- Information on actual chemical usage is a critical component of the decision-making process for the federal Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), helping the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency make informed decisions about pesticide registration, registration and product alternatives.
- Accurate and timely information on pesticide usage is the only way to ensure that producers continue to have access to the chemicals they need. Many of the pesticides used on fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops are classified as “minor use.” In many cases, there are no alternatives to these chemicals. If growers do not accurately document their use of these products, the products might not be re-registered.

Please encourage your members to participate in the 2006 Vegetable Chemical Use Survey. This can easily be done by acknowledging your support of the survey in your association newsletter or other communications with members. I hope you will find the enclosed information useful in this endeavor.

Thank you in advance for your support and help in this important effort. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at **(800) xxx-xxxx**.

Sincerely,

**(State Director's Name)**

Enclosure