



Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS II)

United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service Economic Research Service

The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS), conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Economic Research Service (ERS), is USDA's primary source of information on the production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America's farm operations and farm households. ARMS is conducted in three phases, with each phase focusing on different types of data.

In the fall, NASS conducts the second phase of ARMS to gather data on chemical use and other production practices, as well as cost of production information. NASS targets selected commodities on a rotating basis. This year the targets are barley and sorghum.

HOW ARE THE DATA COLLECTED?

During the second phase of ARMS, NASS representatives will collect data about production practices and costs for 3,200 farms in 18 states. During this phase of the survey, all information is gathered through in-person interviews.

Beginning October 1, and continuing through mid-December, interviewers will visit producers to collect information on their nutrient or fertilizer use, biocontrol or pesticide applications, and pest management and irrigation practices. In early 2012, NASS will follow up with some of the participants to obtain additional economic data.

HOW IS THE INFORMATION USED?

The information from ARMS is used not just by USDA, but also by Congress, farm groups, agribusinesses and others who make the decisions that shape the future of U.S. agriculture. In fact, just about every federal policy and program that affects U.S. farmers and farm families is based on ARMS data. For example:

- When considering federal disaster assistance for producers, policymakers rely on ARMS as a source of baseline data.
- USDA's Office of Energy Policy and New Uses relies on ARMS data to estimate farmers' annual expenses for gasoline, diesel, natural gas, propane and other fuels.
- ARMS documents farmers' use of crop protection chemicals, ensuring that the Environmental Protection Agency and other regulators use real-world data when making decisions about the future availability of these products.
- ARMS provides annual cost-of-production estimates required by Congress for more than 15 commodities covered by farm-support legislation.
- ARMS data underpin USDA's estimates of net farm income and demonstrate agriculture's contribution to the gross domestic product.

The information provided by survey respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes data only in aggregate form, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

NASS will publish the chemical use data in the *Agricultural Chemical Usage – Field Crops* report, to be released in May, 2012. All reports are available through the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.

All ERS reports are available on ERS website: www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/arms

