

September 24, 2012

Change Request for Generic Testing Docket 0535-0248
Area Code Experiment for December Ag

NASS is submitting this non-substantive change request for the Generic Testing Docket (0535-0248). The NASS Research and Development Division (RDD) is conducting a series of experiments on the effect of caller ID on response rates at the request of the National Operations Center (NOC) in St. Louis, Missouri. In the past year, there has been a decline in response rates for calling that took place in the NOC. One reason for this may be that farmers/operations are reluctant to answer a call from an out-of-state telephone number. Several state offices, who also experienced less than desirable response rates, also suspected that information being displayed on respondents' caller ID might be influencing their response rates, particularly when calling other states. As a solution, several state offices began calling respondents on cell phones with local area codes to boost response rates at the end of the calling period. Several states claim to have seen a rise in response rates. However, the relationship between the information displayed on respondents' caller ID and response rates was not empirically tested. Therefore the RDD was asked to examine this relationship for calls placed from the NOC.

RDD conducted a preliminary experiment on the September Ag Survey. In this experiment, half of the Nebraska cases assigned to the NOC were called using landlines with a Missouri area code and the other half were called using cell phones programmed with a Nebraska area code. Results of this experiment are still pending.

RDD is currently planning a second experiment that will be carried out on December Ag Survey using the Minnesota and Ohio samples assigned to the NOC. This experiment will be conducted through the NOC and only affects respondents in these two states who will receive a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) survey. This experiment will utilize a 2x2 design, in which respondents will be randomly assigned one of four conditions:

- Condition 1: MO area code & "Ag Counts"
- Condition 2: MO area code & "USDA"
- Condition 3: MN/OH area code & "Ag Counts"
- Condition 4: MN/OH area code & "USDA"

At the end of the December Ag Survey we would like to ask respondents from Minnesota and Ohio about their use of caller ID (see questions below). We are asking OMB for permission to add these questions to the December Ag Survey. The questions will only be asked of 2,450 respondents from Minnesota and Ohio who are assigned to be called from the NOC. The total respondent burden used to conduct this test is estimated at 410 hours.

To make sure you know it is NASS calling in the future, we would like to ask you a few additional questions regarding your use of caller ID.

- 1) Do you have caller ID?
Yes go to question 2

No go to END

2) Did you look at your caller ID before answering this call?

Yes go to question 3

No go to question 7

3) Did the information displayed on the caller ID influence your decision to answer the phone?

Yes go to question 4

No go to question 5

4) Did the information displayed on the caller ID make you more hesitant or more willing to answer the phone?

1. More hesitant

2. More willing

5) Can you recall what was displayed on the caller ID?

Yes go to question 6

No go to question 7

6) What was displayed on the caller ID? (DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS)

1. (MN/OH) phone number only
2. MO phone number only
3. "Missouri" and MO phone number
4. "Minnesota/Ohio" and MN/OH phone number
5. Ag Counts
6. USDA
7. Ag Counts and phone number
8. USDA and phone number
9. Unavailable number
10. Unknown cell phone caller
11. Out of area number
12. Other: _____

7) When we call you in the future, how would you prefer we identify ourselves on your caller ID?

1. USDA
2. NASS
3. Ag Counts
4. Minnesota/Ohio Agricultural Statistics Service
5. Something else: _____

END