

**CENSUS OF AQUACULTURE**

OMB No. 0535-0237

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

This docket is being submitted to reinstate the Census of Aquaculture, a follow-on program to the Census of Agriculture. The Census of Agriculture is conducted every 5 years. The last Census of Aquaculture was conducted as follow-on to the 2002 Census of Agriculture and was conducted in 2005. A Census of Aquaculture was not conducted following the 2007 Census of Agriculture due to budget restraints. There are some minor changes to methodology or procedures from the previous submission.

- 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 Census of Aquaculture is one of a series of special study programs that comprise the follow-on study to the Census of Agriculture and is designed to provide detailed statistics on the aquaculture industry. The primary objective of the 2013 Census of Aquaculture is to obtain a comprehensive and detailed picture of the aquaculture sector of the economy. The Census of Aquaculture is the only source of comparable and consistent data at the national and State levels for the aquaculture industry. The Census of Aquaculture will cover all operations, commercial or noncommercial, for which \$1,000 or more of aquaculture products were sold or normally would have been sold during the census year. Data from the 2013 Census of Aquaculture will be tabulated to provide benchmark statistics at the U.S. and State levels. These data will provide information on the aquaculture industry necessary for policy makers to implement regulations affecting the growth of the industry and the well being of the economy. The following statement was received from a representative of NOAA:

“NOAA-Fisheries and the NOAA Aquaculture Program welcome the opportunity to formally collaborate with USDA and provide our input on the Census of Aquaculture. We remain available for further discussion and clarification. We want to see a Census that meets the needs of the freshwater and marine

aquaculture communities and allows us to accurately demonstrate the size and importance of the sector and helps us to fulfill our international reporting obligations.”

Continuing changes in the aquaculture industry necessitate a current data set to reflect this industry. Authority to administer the Census of Aquaculture is covered by Public Law 105-113, the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Title 7, United States Code.

The census of agriculture is required by law under the "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997," Public Law 105-113 (Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g). The law authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct surveys deemed necessary to furnish annual or other data on the subjects covered by the census. The 2013 Census of Aquaculture Survey will be conducted under the provisions of this section.

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

The Census of Aquaculture provides the only source of comparable, detailed, state-level data descriptive of the aquaculture production sector of the United States economy. It provides data on number of operations, freshwater and saltwater acreage used for aquaculture production, water sources used for production, methods of production, total production, sales outlets, value of aquaculture products sold and sales by aquatic species, and products distributed for conservation, recreation, or restoration purposes by species. Farm employment and annual payroll data will NOT be collected in 2013. Census data is used by the Administration, Federal agencies, and Congress to formulate and evaluate national aquaculture policies and programs. State governments use census data to evaluate and formulate appropriate local and State aquaculture programs. Aquaculture organizations and businesses use census data for making marketing decisions and assessing the aquaculture economy. Without the Census of Aquaculture, there would be no reliable source of data consistent for all 50 states. For most species, there would be no data available. The last Census of Aquaculture was conducted in 2005 leaving data users a large gap for analyzing their industry with this valuable benchmark data on aquaculture species produced and sold, total sales, and sales outlets. Current statistics are required to reflect trends and other changes.

Data from the Census of Aquaculture is used by various levels of government and private industry to make decisions. For example: USDA – National Institute of Food and Agriculture uses the information within their agency when looking at

areas of research and issuing grants. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration uses the data to complete their marine fisheries estimates. In the private sector: the Catfish Institute uses aquaculture information in making marketing decisions. The National Aquaculture Association relies on the information collected in the Census of Aquaculture because it is the only source for data for many of the species. This information allows them to see areas of growth or contraction within various species of the industry. We received this comment from the Director of the Office of Aquaculture at the NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] Fisheries Service.

*“Thank you for the opportunity to allow NOAA to provide comments on the 2013 USDA Census of Aquaculture questionnaire. We require this information to track trends and support the industry, to provide a longer horizon (numbers of eggs and fingerlings provides a projection of the industry two years out, important due to large gaps between surveys), and as baseline data as the industry grows into the future.”*

At the request of the Director of the Aquaculture and Fisheries Center at the University of Arkansas and also the USDA-ARS Catfish Genetics Research Unit, we added an inventory question concerning Hybrid Catfish. These comments were included in the request from the Univ. of Ark.

*“The catfish industry is in a highly dynamic state right now. Some information on how many farms have stocked hybrid catfish would be useful. This is critical information to a segment of U.S. aquaculture that is working diligently to re-invent itself in the face of a substantial and on-going crisis.”*

We received several comments from Aquaculture industry representatives concerning the growing industry of aquaponics. The Director of Sustainable Agriculture at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future had these words.

*“Based on our expertise, we believe that key data gaps exist in national statistics on commercial aquaponics, a type of re-circulating aquaculture. To begin closing these gaps, we encourage the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to include the questions about aquaponics described below in the 2013 Census of Aquaculture. Farmers, investors, and supporting industries (i.e. feed companies, parts manufacturers, fish suppliers), would use these data to identify trends in production and sales. State regulatory agencies and agriculture extension offices, as well as federal government agencies (NOAA, USDA, FDA), would use survey data to plan efforts around permitting, regulating, and assisting these farms.”*

- 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.**

Electronic data reporting (EDR) will be made available for the 2013 Census of Aquaculture respondents. Considerations for implementing EDR included a reduction in response burden and to provide consistency with the annual catfish and trout surveys conducted by NASS (OMB #0535-0150). All operations that were in either of these surveys and are still in business will be included in the census of aquaculture mail list. We estimate that 7 to 8 percent of operations will respond via the Web.

- 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.**

The 2013 Census of Aquaculture is the only source of comprehensive aquaculture data for each state within the Nation. No other government agency compiles figures for all species across all states. The Census of Aquaculture report form has been designed to account for all information collected on the annual catfish and trout surveys. Therefore, the annual surveys will not be mailed this year. Information collected on the census report form will be used to generate the "Catfish Production" and "Trout Production" publications that are released in February.

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

The 2013 Census of Aquaculture is designed to impose minimal response burden by utilizing skip instructions throughout the census form. An aquaculture production screening section is included on the face page to allow the respondent to skip the content of the questionnaire if the operation has no involvement in aquaculture. The second page screening allows those operations that do not raise aquaculture, but only produce and distribute aquaculture to skip the bulk of the census form. To reduce the number of contacts for catfish and trout operators who are in the annual NASS programs, the census of aquaculture report form has been designed to collect the data necessary for the census of aquaculture and the annual catfish and trout surveys. To further reduce

respondent burden, screening questions have been added at the top of each section to guide the respondent to only the sections pertinent to their situation. The farm employment section has been removed.

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

The Census of Aquaculture is conducted as a follow-on study to the Census of Agriculture, which, by law, is conducted every 5 years. However, due to budget cuts in 2010 the Census of Aquaculture was not conducted that year. It has been 8 years since the last Census of Aquaculture was conducted. Data from the previous aquaculture census is outdated and of limited value to data users. The absence of aquaculture data would hinder Congress and State governments when evaluating and formulating aquaculture policies and programs. Since the last Census of Aquaculture was conducted, many large hurricanes and a large oil spill occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. A measure of the impact of these events on the aquaculture industry is largely unknown.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly; requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;...**

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 5 CFR 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 by the agency in response to these comments.**

The Notice soliciting comments on this information collection was published in the Federal Register, Volume 78, number 57, on March 25, 2013 on pages 17921-17922. No public comments were received for this renewal.

**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 recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

The content of the aquaculture census questionnaire was developed with consultation of the National Aquaculture Association (NAA), the USDA Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES), and USDA. In addition to providing recommendations on the content and forms design, the NAA and CSREES played an active role in soliciting feedback from industry contacts across all sectors of the aquaculture industry. Both the NAA and CSREES have indicated that the information published from the 2005 Census of Aquaculture is outdated and that current data is needed

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 and census follow-on surveys. In March 2012 NASS managers presented an overview of the census and census follow-on surveys to the committee. The committee serves as an advisor to 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 survey report forms, and publicity. The advisory committee provided assistance with prioritizing requests for content changes based on data needs and respondent burden issues.

On August 12, 2009 in the Federal Register (Vol. 74 number 154, pages 40564-40565), NASS published a notice and request for stakeholder input from aquaculture data users. NASS received suggestions from John Hopkins University, the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, Ohio State University, and the National Aquaculture Association. NASS made several adjustments to the questionnaire based on these suggestions.

NASS has met with EPA and FDA on numerous occasions in the past to talk about our survey programs, particularly our Chemical Use Surveys. Both the EPA and FDA have referenced the use of NASS data in their Federal Register Notices.

**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.**

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the 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.

The following CIPSEA Pledge statement will appear on all future NASS questionnaires.

The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection provisions of Title V, Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347 and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed in identifiable form to anyone other than employees or agents. By law, every employee and agent has taken an oath and is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you or your operation.

Minor changes were made to the wording of the pledge so that it would be consistent with NASS procedures.

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

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I. Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.**

The table below shows the total burden calculated for the Census of Aquaculture. The questionnaires will be mailed out in December of 2013 and the data collection will be completed by March, 2014. The total projected burden of 9,904 hours will be a onetime occurrence, rather than an annual average.

In 2005 when the Census of Aquaculture was last conducted NASS achieved a 95.1% response rate. The burden below is based on an overall response rate of 95%.

Cost to the public of completing the questionnaires is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. Reporting time of 6,008 hours are multiplied by \$25 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$150,200. NASS regularly checks the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Occupational Employment Statistics](#). Mean wage rates for bookkeepers, farm managers, and farm supervisors are averaged to obtain the wage for the burden cost. The May, 2012 mean wage for bookkeepers is \$17.62. The mean wage for farm managers is \$35.45. The mean wage for farm supervisors is \$22.31. The mean wage of the three is \$25.13.



## 2013 Census of Aquaculture

Survey	Sample Size	Freq	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours	
			Resp. Count	Freq x Count	Min./ Resp.	Burden Hours	Nonresp Count	Freq. x Count	Min./ Nonr.	Burden Hours		
<b>Questionnaires</b>												
Census of Aquaculture												
First Mailing	8,000	1	2,800	2,800	35	1,633	5,200	5,200	2	173	1,806	
Second Mailing <sup>2/</sup>	5,200	1	1,560	1,560	35	910	3,640	3,640	2	121	1,031	
Phone Follow Up <sup>4/</sup>	3,640	1	2,366	2,366	35	1,380	1,274	1,274	2	42	1,422	
Field Enumeration <sup>4/</sup>	1,274	1	873	873	35	509	401	401	2	13	522	
<b>Sub -Total</b>	<b>8,000</b>		<b>7,599</b>	<b>7,599</b>		<b>4,432</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>10,515</b>		<b>349</b>	<b>4,781</b>	
<b>Publicity Materials for ALL surveys</b>												
Initial Mail Out consists of; cover letter, industry support letter, fact sheet, and EDR access instruction sheet <sup>1/ 2/</sup>	8,000	1.00	2,800	2,800	20	933	5,200	5,200	1	87	1,020	
Follow-up Letter <sup>2/ 3/</sup>	5,200	1.00	1,560	1,560	4	104	3,640	3,640	1	61	165	
<b>Sub -Total</b>	<b>11,600</b>		<b>4,360</b>	<b>4,360</b>		<b>1,037</b>	<b>3,640</b>	<b>8,840</b>		<b>148</b>	<b>1,185</b>	
<b>Quality Control Survey (Telephone Only) - Recontact operators to verify quality of NASDA enumerators.</b>												
Quality Control Questionnaire (phone only)	500	1.00	500	500	5	42	0	0		0	42	
<b>Sub -Total</b>	<b>500</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>42</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7,599</b>	<b>12,459</b>		<b>5,511</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>27,824</b>		<b>497</b>	<b>6,008</b>	

<sup>1/</sup> The initial mailing consists of the questionnaire, cover letter, EDR instruction sheet, instruction booklet, and return envelope.

<sup>2/</sup> The combined response rate for the two mailings is estimated at 55%. The remainder of the completed reports will be obtained by EDR, telephone and field enumeration

<sup>3/</sup> The follow-up mailing consists of the questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope.

The 20 minutes that is allotted for the publicity materials allows time to read the cover letter, the EDR instructions, and to review the questionnaire instruction sheet.

- 13. Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.**

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

- 14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government; provide a description of the method used to estimate cost which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (equipment, overhead, printing, and staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.**

Cost to the Federal Government for the 2013 Census of Aquaculture is included in the Census of Agriculture Program appropriations for fiscal year 2014. The total cost is estimated at \$1,500,000. As is the case for any statistical agency, a majority of the cost associated with data production is staff salaries. It is estimated that a total of 15 full-time equivalent staff will be used in fiscal year 2014. The remaining expenses will be for printing, postage, contractual obligations, and overhead and are based on the project size of the target population.

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

Since the Census of Aquaculture information collection is a reinstatement, there is no current inventory of burden hours. From the calculations in A.12, we estimate that 6,008 respondent burden hours will be needed. Respondent burden for non-response along with attempting multiple contacts 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, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

The initial mail-out of report forms will occur on December 16, 2013. Tabulations will be generated at the State and National levels for all data items on the report

form. The layout of the publication will be similar to the 2005 census publication, which is available on-line at:

<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2002/Aquaculture>.

The 2013 publication will include data from the 2005 publication for items that are comparable.

The following chart provides a timetable for the entire survey process.

**Timetable for the 2013 Census of Aquaculture**

Questionnaire design.....	July - Dec 2012
Systems Development.....	Feb - Dec 2013
Publication Tables Drafted.....	Apr - Dec 2013
Initial Mail-out.....	Mid-Dec 2013
Second Mail-out .....	Early Jan 2014
Telephone, Personal Interviews...	Jan - Feb 2014
Review, Process, Tabulate Data.	Jan - May 2014
Review Tables .....	May - Jun 2014
Prepare Publication and Review.	Jun - Sep 2014
Publish Report .....	Nov 2014

To aid telephone and field follow-up by enumerators, each will receive an Enumerator’s Manual. To aid statisticians in the edit and analysis of reported data, Field Offices will receive a Survey Administration Manual.

- 17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information 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.

June, 2013

Revised September, 2013