

1 Supporting Statement – Part A

AQUACULTURE SURVEYS

OMB No. 0535-0150

TERMS OF CLEARANCE: Prior to the commencement of the Aquaculture Survey revised forms distribution, the National Agricultural Statistics Service shall provide on its Internet site prominent links to directions on how to obtain a set of finalized survey forms, including instructions and cover letters, comparable to those provided for the 2007 Census of Agriculture report forms. The final forms and letters shall reflect any changes in the survey year, OMB number expiration date, and NASS leadership from those submitted for review. 03/02/2011

REPLY: On the NASS web homepage we have placed a link that data users can use to request any NASS questionnaire, publicity material or publication.

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Request_for_Survey_Form/index.php

A. JUSTIFICATION

This is a request for the renewal of this information collection for an additional 3 years. In addition to the national catfish and trout production surveys NASS is requesting approval to conduct 3 state aquaculture surveys that are conducted under reimbursable agreements with the respective states (Florida, Hawaii and Pennsylvania).

- 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's (NASS) primary function is to prepare and issue State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, disposition, and prices, as well as specialty agricultural and environmental statistics. The Aquaculture Surveys described in this docket collects information on trout and catfish inventory, acreage, and sales as well as catfish processed and feed deliveries for catfish in the major producing States. Additionally, some Regional Offices will conduct State specific aquaculture surveys for specialty commodities in their region.

Congress has mandated the collection of basic data for aquaculture and provides funding for these surveys. Public Law 96-362, the National

Aquaculture Act was passed to increase the overall effectiveness and productivity of Federal aquaculture programs by improving coordination and communication among Federal agencies involved in those programs. Congressional hearings on the National Aquaculture Act established:

- Harvest of marine fish exceeds natural propagation, thereby making it difficult to meet the increasing demand for aquatic food,
- That to supply the domestic market for aquatic food the United States imports much of its fish and shellfish and this dependence contributes to the uncertainty of supplies,
- Domestic aquacultural production has the potential for growth,
- Many areas of the United States are suitable for aquaculture but are subject to land-use or water-use management policies that do not adequately consider the potential for aquaculture. Information is needed to measure the growth and importance of domestic aquaculture.

NASS conducted the Census of Aquaculture in January 1999, January 2005, and again in January 2014. These detailed censuses were conducted to supplement the aquaculture data collected from the full Census of Agriculture, conducted every 5 years. The full 2012 Census of *Agriculture* collection includes aquaculture information on the number of farms producing aquaculture products, quantity sold, and value of sales for catfish, trout, other food fish, crawfish, mollusks, ornamental fish, sport fish, and other aquaculture products. The 2013 Census of *Aquaculture* provided detailed information relating to on-farm aquaculture practices, including statistics on size of operation, inventory, method of production, point of first sale, sources of water, aquaculture distribution for restoration or conservation purposes, and production and sales.

The annual catfish and trout surveys are necessary to measure changes that occur within this industry in the years between the more comprehensive censuses. The data collected by the catfish processing and feed delivery surveys is not included in the census data, but is essential to the producers in this industry.

General authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204. This statute specifies that “The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which he can obtain ... by the collection of statistics ... and shall distribute them among agriculturists.”

- 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.**

Trout and catfish grower surveys provide inventory numbers, sales, losses (trout only), and other information needed to accurately evaluate the aquaculture industry. Survey results are used by government agencies in planning farm programs. Data compiled from aquaculture surveys are used by Federal and State government agencies in making important aquaculture policy decisions, thereby reducing dependency on government programs.

The Foreign Agricultural Service uses aquaculture data to evaluate the potential to establish funding requests for Targeted Export Assistance Programs.

Survey results are used by Cooperative Extension Service and Sea Grant College extension professionals who work with aquaculture clientele. The information is extremely useful in analyzing changing trends in the number of commercial operations and production levels by State. The information is used to demonstrate the growing importance of aquaculture to officials of Federal and State government agencies who manage and direct policy for programs in agriculture and natural resources. Extension specialists use the data to demonstrate the impact of educational programs and other Land-Grant University efforts that are directed to assisting and developing economically viable aquaculture operations. The type of information collected and reported provides extension educators and research scientists with data that indicates important areas that require special educational and/or research efforts, such as causes for losses of fish and pond inventories of fish of various sizes.

State specific surveys, such as the Annual Aquaculture Survey being conducted in Hawaii are very important to both State producers and State legislators. Hawaii's tropical climate provides them with the ideal conditions to produce many unique and diverse items. In Hawaii alone, this is a growing multi-million dollar a year industry. In Florida they plan to conduct a State specific survey of aquaculture producers in odd numbered years, referencing the prior year. In Pennsylvania, the State Dept of Agriculture mandates that annual data be collected. They have worked out a cooperative agreement with NASS to collect this data.

- 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 data reporting is available for most of the NASS information collections. A Questionnaire Repository System (QRS) exists at NASS to enable the simultaneous creation of paper and Web survey instruments for each survey.

The Aquaculture surveys are collected first by mail with an Electronic Data Reporting (EDR) option and then by phone. The EDR option allows respondents to choose between paper and web-based reporting. In 2012, 12.2% of the completed Catfish Growers Survey questionnaires were completed by internet. Also in 2012, the trout producers completed 11.8% of their questionnaires on the internet.

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 National Agricultural Statistics Service cooperates with State departments of agriculture and land grant universities to conduct agricultural surveys. They meet both State and Federal needs, thus eliminating duplication and minimizing reporting burden on the agricultural industry. These aquaculture surveys are the only timely and reliable source of information on the aquaculture industry; data collected on this survey are not available from any other source.

NASS also conducts the Census of Aquaculture approximately every five years. The Census of Aquaculture will be conducted in early 2014 with 2013 as the reference year. The annual catfish and trout surveys will not be conducted in January 2014 since the 2013 reference year data will be obtained through the Census of Aquaculture.

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.

Responses to the grower questionnaires can be answered from normal operating records with a minimum of difficulty. Approximately 2,200 operations will be classified as small operations, or 80% of the total sample.

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.

Collecting data less frequently for these aquaculture grower surveys would not appreciably reduce respondent burden since normal operating records are kept on a weekly or monthly basis. In addition, less frequent reporting would significantly reduce the value of the information.

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 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 was published in the Federal Register on October 25, 2013 on pages 63961- 63962. No public comments were received for this data collection docket.

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 elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

State and Regional Directors maintain industry contacts within their respective areas. Government agencies contacted are the Department of Commerce, Foreign Agricultural Service, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Agricultural Marketing Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Other groups contacted to keep a well-rounded perspective of the aquaculture industry are the Catfish Farmers of America, the Catfish Institute, the Interagency Working Group on Aquaculture, the National Aquaculture Association, and the U.S. Trout Farmers Association. This Subcommittee was created in response to P.L. 96-362, the National Aquaculture Act to increase the overall effectiveness and productivity of Federal aquaculture programs by improving coordination and communication among Federal agencies involved in those programs. This Interagency Working Group on Aquaculture is made up of representatives of the Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Interior, Department of Energy, Department of Health and Human Services, Environmental Protection Agency, Army Corps of Engineers, Small Business

Administration, the Farm Credit Administration, the Department of State, and the Smithsonian.

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.

Questionnaires include a statement that individual reports are confidential. U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1905 and Title 7, Section 2276 provide for 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.

NASS does invoke CIPSEA for the state surveys conducted under this information collection in Hawaii, Pennsylvania, and Florida. NASS does not provide any data files to the states or any cooperators. Confidentiality is

protected by following disclosure rules. The only exception is in Hawaii where a large algae producer has signed a disclosure letter so values can be published. These state surveys have historically been completed through cooperator agreements and are now being standardized to improve the transparency of the CIPSEA protection.

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.

Cost to the public of completing the questionnaire is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. The annual, estimated reporting time of 907 hours is multiplied by \$25 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$22,675.

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.

Projected 2014 - 2016 Aquaculture Response Burden Hours (Annual Average)													
Survey	Sample Size	Annual Average Sample Size	Freq	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours	adjust
				Resp. Count ^{1/}	Freq x Count	Min./ Resp.	Burden Hours	Nonresp Count	Freq. x Count	Min./ Nonr.	Burden Hours		
Voluntary Surveys													Resp
Trout Production Survey	600	600	1	528	528	15	132	72	72	2	2	134	-176
Catfish Production Survey - January	750	750	1	660	660	15	165	90	90	2	3	168	-440
Catfish Production Survey - July ^{2/}	450	450	1	396	396	15	99	54	54	2	2	101	-264
Aquaculture Survey Annual - Hawaii	110	110	1	97	97	15	24	13	13	2	1	25	
Aquaculture Survey - Florida ^{3/}	1,000	333	0.33	293	293	15	73	40	40	2	1	74	
Aquaculture Loss Survey ^{4/}	300	300	1	264	264	15	66	36	36	2	1	67	
Catfish Feed Deliveries Report	20	20	12	18	211	10	35	2	29	2	1	36	
Catfish Processing Report	25	25	12	22	264	10	44	3	36	2	1	45	
Subtotal	3,255	2,588		2,277	2,713		638	311	370		12	650	
Mandatory Survey													
Aquaculture Survey Annual - Penn. ^{6/}	150	150	1	132	132	20	44	18	18	2	1	45	-880
Subtotal	150	150		132	132		44	18	18		1	45	
Publicity Materials ^{5/}	3,405	2,738	1	2,409	2,409	5	201	329	329	2	11	212	
Subtotal	3,405	2,738		2,409	2,409		201	329	329		11	212	
Total	3,405	2,738		2,409	2,845		883	329	388		24	907	

^{1/} Response counts are based on recent rates which are nearing 88% completed reports.

^{2/} Three States only, sub-sample of January survey.

^{3/} The Florida survey is conducted only in odd numbered years, so for this approval the survey will only be conducted in 2015.

^{4/} The Aquaculture Loss Survey is included as a precautionary measure, it is not a normally conducted survey.

^{5/} Publicity materials include a cover letter and instructions on how to access the internet and complete a questionnaire on line.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-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 cost to the Federal government; provide a description of the method used to estimate cost which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses, and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

Total annual cost to the Federal government for the grower and processor surveys is \$480,000; these surveys are funded by Congressional appropriation in the NASS budget. Most of the funds are for data collection and analysis personnel, with the remainder going to printing, data processing, postage, and travel.

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).

In this submission, there will be a decrease in total sample size and a reduction in total burden. These changes will involve both program changes as well as agency adjustments. The program changes will involve NASS conducting two additional state funded surveys that will be conducted under cooperative agreements. The Florida survey will be conducted only in odd numbered years. The Pennsylvania survey is a mandatory survey that will be conducted annually and is mandated by the State of Pennsylvania.

NASS has adjusted the estimated sample sizes for the catfish and trout surveys due to a declining number of farm operators.

The estimated average response rate per questionnaire remained the same as previously reported.

Program Changes Due to Agency Discretion		Change in Burden Hours
	Inclusion of Florida Biennial Survey	74
	Inclusion of Pennsylvania Annual Survey	45
Sub-Total		119

Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate		Change in Burden Hours
	Reduction in Sample Sizes	-173
Sub-Total		-173

Total		-54
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- 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 January Trout Production survey is mailed to producers about the 30th of December each year. Survey results are summarized and published in late February in the *Trout Production* report.

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1172>

The January Catfish Production survey is also mailed about the 30th of December in the 9 participating States. Production and inventory results are summarized and published in early February in the *Catfish Production* report. The July catfish grower survey is mailed about the 30th of June in the 3 major producing States and an abridged version of *Catfish Production* is released in late July.

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1016>

The Monthly Farm Raised Catfish Processed survey was discontinued in April of 2013 due to budget cuts. However, historic reports are still available on the NASS website at:

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1015>

The Monthly Catfish Feed Deliveries survey was discontinued in April of 2013 due to budget cuts. However, historic reports are still available on the NASS website at:

<http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1592>

The Annual Aquaculture Survey conducted in Hawaii is directed at all commercial growers of aquatic plants and animals. The publication is released in August for the previous year's data.

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Hawaii/Publications/Miscellaneous/aqua.pdf

The bi-annual Florida Aquaculture survey results can be found at:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Florida/Publications/Aquaculture/Aquaculture2013-FDA.pdf

Release dates for all surveys are published on the NASS Home Page, www.nass.usda.gov. Publications are available on-line immediately after release at http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_Subject/index.asp.

- 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.

December 2013

Revised April 2014

Revised June 2016