



Agricultural Yield Survey

United States Department of Agriculture

National Agricultural Statistics Service

April 2013

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts monthly Agricultural Yield Surveys to measure crop production throughout the growing season. The information collected captures changes in yield that occur due to weather, pests, disease and other factors. NASS publishes the findings each month, May through November, in the monthly *Crop Production* report, and publishes final yield and production data the following January in the *Annual Crop Production* report.

HOW DOES NASS COLLECT THE DATA?

At the beginning of each month from May through November 2013, NASS will mail the Agricultural Yield Survey to farmers in all states except Alaska and Hawaii. Which commodities the survey asks about varies from state to state, but in all cases the initial survey asks farmers how many acres of particular crops they planted, how many acres they intend to harvest, and their expected yield per acre. In subsequent months, the same farms are asked to update their expected yield per acre. Sample sizes for these surveys range from 7,500 to 28,000.

Producers who receive the survey may respond in either of the following ways:

- **Online** – Secure, online reporting is the most timely, cost-effective option. The cover letter includes instructions for this easy option.
- **By mail or fax** – Producers fill out the survey questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided or via fax.

A NASS representative will contact producers who do not respond to conduct a telephone or in-person interview.

WHO USES THE INFORMATION?

All sectors of the agricultural industry rely on NASS yield and production estimates to make sound business decisions. For example:

- Producers use the estimates to develop marketing plans for their operations and to determine what to produce and how and when to sell it.
- Agribusinesses that provide farmers and ranchers with inputs, equipment, and other goods and services use the estimates to develop future marketing strategies.
- Congress relies on current yield and production data in formulating farm legislation.
- USDA agencies use the crop yield data to determine crop insurance and disaster aid payments along with other program benefits.

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.

All reports are available through the NASS website: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.