

Non-substantive Change Request

(0535-0249) Organic Production Survey

For the 2016 survey the emphasis on certified organic production is being made more prominent throughout the entire questionnaire than it was in 2015. With the 2015 questionnaire if a farm operator was not a certified producer, the skip pattern on the front page should have sent the respondent to the end of the questionnaire. Some operators who were transitional or exempt from certification completed the questionnaire when they should have skipped the majority of the questions.

The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA), asked to have several minor changes made to the questionnaire to provide greater detail to some of the commodity data; in exchange we were able to drop several sections of the questionnaire that don't need to be asked on an annual basis.

The following changes are reflected in the new version of the questionnaire.

Sect. 1

- Certified organic pastureland and rangeland were combined into one question.

Sect. 3

- Certified organic grapes were broken into varieties for fresh and wine production,
- Grapes for juice were unchanged,
- Grapes for raisins were broken out to fresh and dry weights,

Sect. 5

- Citrus was broken out to its own category, instead of being included in other fruit

Sect. 6

- Other berries, nuts and fruits were broken into fresh and processing.

Sect. 7

- Organic vegetables grown in the open are broken into fresh and processing
- Organic vegetables grown under protection have been dropped.

Dropped these sections completely

- GMO/GE Presence in Organic Crops Section
- Marketing Practices for Organic Products
- Transitional Acreage
- Operator Characteristics

From testing, the dropped sections vs. the expanded sections, the overall burden for the questionnaire remained constant, averaging approximately 40 minutes to complete.