

FRUIT, NUTS, AND SPECIALTY CROPS

OMB No. 0535-0039

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, there were just under 131,000 farm operators producing fruits, nuts and/or specialty crops in the United States. This is down from the nearly 137,000 reported in 2007 Census of Agriculture. Following the completion of the 2017 Census of Agriculture we will generate a new universe to draw our samples from. Complete enumerations of some fruit, nut, and specialty crop buyers, handlers, processors, shellers, and shippers (depending on the crop) are conducted because of the small number of firms involved and the significant difference in kind and quantity of product handled. Complete enumerations are also attempted of growers for several of the specialty crops such as hops, all commercial mushroom growers, and taro. Orchard and vineyard inventory surveys are also conducted as a complete enumeration in order to obtain control data to use in drawing samples for production forecasts.

The commodities that have a large number of producers (apples, peaches, etc.) will use a stratified random sample of producers (based on area in production). Data collected from these operations will be expanded to represent the population in all target states. Phone and field follow-up contacts for non-respondents are primarily directed at the larger producers. This helps to insure a high level of coverage for each commodity while reducing data collection costs.

Following the Census of Agriculture, conducted by NASS every five years, our Statistics Division reviews all commodities and makes adjustments as to which States are included in the samples each year. States that are no longer a major player in a particular commodity will be dropped from the program for that

commodity. Any specialty commodities that are identified by the Census of Agriculture can also be added to the data collection process. Due to the increase in number of producers of pomegranates, we were asked to add these to our docket in 2010. However, due to lack of State funding it has not begun. The data collection should begin in the next year or two.

Contact rates for 2015 - 2016 are shown in the table below.

For 2015 - 2016 data, NASS calculated the contact rate by dividing the number of total completed contacts by the total number of attempted contacts. The number of contacts was calculated as the sample size times the frequency of contact. The frequency of contact was the number of times contact was required for each survey component.

Pursuant to OMB statistical standards, NASS will calculate response rates for future data collections using the OMB standard response rate method. This method removes entities found to be out of scope for the given survey (ineligible) at the time of contact from the numerator and denominator." NASS may choose to continue to calculate its prior rate with the name "contact rate."

Following the Terms of Clearance NASS received on the Field Crops docket (0535-0002) NASS has been developing a procedure for calculating a weighted response rate (that is, a response rate weighted by contribution of the establishment to the industry of interest, or coverage) for surveys not obtaining an 80% response rate. Many of the surveys included in this docket were administered by the individual Field Offices. NASS is in the process of standardizing these surveys and moving them into a centralized environment so that we will be able to calculate both a weighted and un-weighted response rate for each of the surveys.

The achieved contact rates for each of the surveys conducted are in the following table. NASS will strive to achieve a minimum of 80% response rate and/or a 70% weighted response rate on future surveys.

0535-0039 - Response Rates 2015

Category	Commodity	Sector	Survey Name	Actual Sample Size in 2015	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Average Response Rate	Coverage of Commodity Rate	Reports by Web - %	Reports by Web - #
Non-Citrus Tree Fruits	Apples, Peaches, Pears, Cherries, Plums, Nectarines and Apricots	Mid-Season Indications (Growers)	Fruit Production Inquiry August	5821	1	3356	57.7%	66.6%	3.8%	127
		End of Season Disposition (Growers)	Fruit Production and Disposition Inquiry November	8197	1	4616	56.3%	63.7%	7.2%	333
		End of Season Disposition (Growers)	Fruit Production and Disposition Inquiry May	6320	1	3458	54.7%	67.3%	3.8%	133
		End of Season (Processor)	Fruit Processor Inquiry November & May	534	2	257	48.1%	N/A	2.3%	6
		Forecast (Grower)	Peach Production Inquiry	532	1	260	48.9%	51.6%	3.8%	10
		Forecast (Grower)	Cherry Production Inquiry	1598	1	838	52.4%	60.5%	3.8%	32
		Forecast (Grower)	Apricot Production Inquiry	236	1	143	60.6%	69.0%	2.1%	3
		Grower	Prune Crop Inquiry (California)	294	1	200	68.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Processor	Prune Crop Handler's Report (California)	25	1	25	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0
Citrus	Oranges, Lemmons, Grapefruits, and Mandarines	Growers and Processors	Citrus Survey (Jan, Apr, July, & Oct.)	761	4	487	64.0%	N/A	0.4%	2
		Processor	Citrus Processors Inquiry	26	1	26	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0
			Citrus Price Inquiry	12	9	12	100.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Packinghouse	Citrus Packinghouse Survey	37	1	37	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0

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			Citrus Price Inquiry	12	9	12	100.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Packinghouse	Citrus Packinghouse Survey	37	1	37	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0
		Growers	Citrus Acreage Survey (California)	4304	1	3151	73.2%	N/A	0.0%	0
Category	Commodity	Sector	Survey Name	Actual Sample Size in 2015	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Average Response Rate	Coverage of Commodity Rate	Reports by Web - %	Reports by Web - #
Grapes	Grapes	Mid-Season Indications (Growers)	Grape Inquiry August	5347	1	4121	77.1%	N/A	2.0%	84
		End of Season Disposition (Growers)	Grape Production and Disposition Inquiry December & May	821	2	624	76.0%	N/A	1.8%	11
		End of Season (Processor)	Grape Processing Inquiry December & May	858	2	645	75.2%	N/A	0.3%	2
		Grower	Grape Production and Disposition Inquiry December (New England States)	194	1	155	79.9%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Grower	Missouri Grape Production and Utilization	225	1	173	76.9%	N/A	0.0%	0

		winery	Grape Crush & Purchase Inquiry (California)	2646	1	2566	97.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Raisins	Processor	Raisin Crop Handler's Report (California)	26	1	26	100.0%		0.0%	
Category	Commodity	Sector	Survey Name	Actual Sample Size in 2015	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Average Response Rate	Coverage of Commodity Rate	Reports by Web - %	Reports by Web - #
Tree Nuts	Pecans	Mid-Season Indications (Growers)	Pecan Inquiry October	3868	1	2694	69.6%	78.9	1.3%	35
		Disposition (Growers)	Pecan Production and Disposition Inquiry Jan and Apr	3078	2	2215	72.0%	77.2%	4.2%	92
		End of Season (Processor)	Pecan Shellers and Processors Inquiry	181	1	146	80.7%	79.4	0.0%	0
	Almonds	Handlers	Almond Price Inquiry	150	1	36	24.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Growers	Almond Nursery Survey (California)	10	1	9	90.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Walnuts	Growers	Walnut Nursery Sales Survey (California)	23	1	21	91.3%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Handlers	Walnut Price Inquiry	100	1	46	46.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
			Walnut Crop Handlers Report (California)	90	1	90	100.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Pistachios	Handlers	Pistachio Production and Price Inquiry	10	2	15	150.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Macadamias	Growers	Macadamia Nut Grower Report	750	1	434	57.9%	N/A	1.6%	7
		Processors	Macadamia Nut Processor Report	9	1	8	88.9%	N/A	75.0%	6
Processors		Macadamia Nut Loss Report	10	1	8	80.0%	N/A	50.0%	4	
Mixed	Combined Questionnaire	Growers	Grape, Almond and Walnut Acreage Survey (California)	NEW	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Berries	Assorted Berries	Growers	Berry Production and Disposition Inquiry - Dec & May	4426	2	2833	64.0%	71.4%	8.2%	232
		Processors	Berry Processing Inquiry - Dec. & May	429	2	262	61.1%	N/A	40.8%	107

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Berries	Assorted Berries	Growers	Berry Production and Disposition Inquiry - Dec & May	4426	2	2833	64.0%	71.4%	8.2%	232
		Processors	Berry Processing Inquiry - Dec. & May	429	2	262	61.1%	N/A	40.8%	107
	Cranberries	Growers	Cranberry Production Inquiry - Aug.	414	1	306	73.9%	74.7%	4.2%	13
		Growers	Cranberry Production and Disposition Inquiry - Dec. & May	539	2	401	74.4%	73.5%	2.5%	10
Category	Commodity	Sector	Survey Name	Actual Sample Size in 2015	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Average Response Rate	Coverage of Commodity Rate	Reports by Web - %	Reports by Web - #
	Coffee	Growers	Coffee Production and Disposition Inquiry - Dec & May	353	2	222	62.9%	79.6%	9.5%	21
		Millers	Coffee Milling Inquiry - Dec & May	73	2	46	63.0%	69.2%	15.2%	7
	Dates	Production and Prices	Date Production and Price Inquiry - Nov & May	14	2	8	57.1%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Dried Figs	Processor	Dried Fig Inquiry	15	12	4	26.7%	N/A	50.0%	2
		Growers	Hop Grower Survey - June	69	1	69	100.0%	N/A	0.0%	0

	Hawaii	Growers	Hawaii Tropical Specialties	NEW	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Taro	Growers	Annual Taro Grower Inquiry	150	1	91	60.7%	56.9%	3.3%	3
		Milling	Taro Milling Inquiry	14	1	6	42.9%	66.4%	16.7%	1
Category	Commodity	Sector	Survey Name	Actual Sample Size in 2015	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Average Response Rate	Coverage of Commodity Rate	Reports by Web - %	Reports by Web - #
Specialty Commodities Cont.	Olive	Processors	Olive Utilization and Price Inquiry	65	2	40	61.5%	N/A	0.0%	0
			Olives Received Survey (Monthly & Weekly)	2	24	2	100.0%	N/A	0.0%	0
		Growers	Table Olive Crop Inquiry	337	1	197	58.5%	N/A	0.0%	0
	Maple Syrup	Growers	Maple Syrup Inquiry	2932	1	1998	68.1%	71.5%	2.1%	41
			Maple Syrup Inquiry (French/English version for New England Office)	40	1	26	65.0%	N/A	0.0%	0

2. **Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**
- **statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
 - **estimation procedure,**
 - **degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
 - **unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures**

Overview – As with all NASS surveys, the goal is to collect data from at least 80% of the records sampled and more importantly, achieve a weighted unit response rate of at least 70% of the production data or production area. We utilize mail, phone, internet and personal interviews to collect data. In our ongoing effort to collect quality data in a timely and economic manner, NASS utilizes the mail and/or internet as the first method of data collection with selected phone or personal interview follow up for non-response. With limited funds for extensive data collection, phone and field enumeration is targeted for the larger operations that will help achieve the 70% weighted response rate.

Low Response Rates - With surveys that have persistently low response rates, NASS looks for alternative ways of collecting the data; particularly sources of administrative data. In instances where these data provide sufficient coverage and accuracy, we consider the opportunity to discontinue collections and reduce burden.

Sampling The target population for these survey are all agricultural establishments with positive control data for the targeted crop on the NASS list frame. The list frame includes all known agricultural establishments. A profile, known as control data, of each establishment is maintained on the list frame to allow NASS to define list frame sampling populations for specific surveys and to employ efficient sampling designs. Most of the surveys use a hierarchical stratified sampling design with strata defined by the acres for the target crop or a multivariate probability proportional to size design. Sample size formulas using administrative and/or survey data are used to derive proper sample sizes.

3. **Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

Regional Office staff routinely visit producers and industry organizations to promote the programs and importance of cooperating. NASS maintains a presence at National industry meetings, often setting up promotional booths at trade shows. Occasionally, letters of endorsement are obtained from industry leaders. Most States conduct a full non-response follow up.

Some of the specialty surveys may have only a few respondents who account for a majority of the data for that given commodity. State Field Offices, in their efforts to reduce respondent burden as well as reduce the costs of data collection will concentrate their data collection efforts on the major producers for each of the commodities. Questionnaires are mailed out to the smaller respondents with minimal follow up. The information received in the mail is used to update control data as well as help States to establish the number of growers for each of the commodities. However, in most cases the total production, prices, area in production, etc. are estimated from data received from the larger operations. More importantly than getting the 80% good response rate for each survey, States strive to get greater than 80% coverage of data for all surveys.

As mentioned in the Supporting Statement Part A, justification, NASS is undertaking several new initiatives to improve all aspects of the NASS mission statement. This will include the continued development and improvement of Electronic Data Reporting (EDR) tools. This will give farm operators the flexibility to respond whenever it is convenient for them and should result in higher response rates in the future.

In addition to the increased availability of the EDR system NASS relies on multiple modes for collecting data. The questionnaires are mailed to the respondents who can either return them by postage paid envelope, email, fax, or telephone. If we have not received a response within the allotted time, phone and field enumerators will be used to contact the respondents. In order to keep costs to a minimum, NASS will concentrate the face to face and phone interviews on the larger operations.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.

All data collections follow standardized procedures to ensure accurate estimates. Check data are available for most of the crops after the marketing season ends.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Sample sizes for each State are reviewed by the Agency's Sampling, Editing and Imputation Methodology Branch, Methods Division; Branch Chief is Mark Apodaca (202) 720-5805.

Data collection is carried out by NASS Regional Field Offices; Eastern Field Operation's Director is Jay Johnson, (202) 720-3638 and the Western Field Operation's Director is Kevin Barnes (202) 720-8220.

The NASS survey administrators in Headquarters for the Fruit, Nut and Specialty Surveys are in the Commodity Surveys Section of the Survey Administration Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is Gerald Tillman, (202)720-3895. The survey administrators are responsible for coordination of sampling, questionnaires, data collection, training, Interviewer's Manuals, Survey Administration Manuals, data processing, and other Regional Office support.

Estimates are compiled and reviewed by the Agency's Statistics Division, Crops Branch; Branch Chief is Lance Honig, (202)720-2127.

Survey data are collected, reviewed, and summarized by the Regional Field Offices. Publications are released from the Regional Offices and Headquarters. Survey design and methodology are determined by the Summary, Estimation, and Disclosure Methodology Branch, Methods Division; Branch Chief is Jeff Bailey, (202)720-4008.

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