

1 Supporting Statement

STOCKS REPORTS

OMB No. 0535-0007

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.**

The off-farm Grains Stocks Survey is an enumeration of all known commercial grain storage facilities. In December 2014 there were 8,701 facilities in the U.S. with about 10.7 billion bushels of storage capacity. Many of these facilities are operated by parent companies where one respondent will report for multiple facilities. The Potato Stocks Survey is a stratified simple random sample of growers with on-farm storage capacity and a census of off-farm agribusinesses who store, ship or process potatoes. The Peanut Stocks Survey is a census of agribusinesses that store or process peanuts. The off-farm Rice Stocks Survey is a census of mills, port facilities and warehouses. The Rice Stocks – Transport Survey is of the major transporters of rice (includes barge, rail cars, semi-trucks, etc.). The off-farm Hops Stocks Brewery Survey is a complete census of all national and regional breweries. The off-farm Hops Stocks Dealer Survey is a complete census of all dealers and the off-farm Hop Stocks Grower Survey is a census of all large growers.

Response rates for 2014 are in the following table.

Response Rates for Stocks Surveys							
Survey			Sample Size	Waves of Data Collection	Total Responses	Response Rates	Coverage Rates ^{1/}
Voluntary Surveys							
Off-farm Grain and Oilseeds			4,755	4	14,521	76.3%	84.6%
Hops	Brewers	Mar	67	1	55	82.1%	-
		Sept	63	1	54	85.7%	-
	Dealers	Mar	11	1	9	81.8%	-
		Sept	11	1	9	81.8%	-
	Growers	Mar	62	1	51	82.3%	-
		Sept	67	1	57	85.1%	-
Potatoes	Stocks	Quarterly	645	4	1,368	53.0%	63.1%
	Processors	Quarterly	54	4	166	76.9%	76.2%
		Annual	160	1	137	85.6%	-
Rice	Mills, Port Facilities & Warehouses		193	5	879	91.1%	-
	Rice Transport		2	5	9	90.0%	-
Subtotal for Voluntary Surveys			6,090		17,306	74.5%	
Mandatory Surveys							
Peanuts	Peanut Stocks & Processing - Report A (Shellers)		28	12	288	85.7%	-
	Peanut Stocks & Processing - Report CB (Blanchers)		4	12	48	100.0%	-
	Peanut Stocks & Processing - Report CP (Processors)		113	12	1,100	81.1%	-
	Peanut Stocks & Processing - Report B (Warehousers)		14	12	144	85.7%	-
Subtotal for Mandatory Surveys			159		1,580	82.8%	
Total			6,249		18,886	75.1%	

1/ The surveys that are in a centralized editing system and have a response rate below 80%, also have a coverage rate included in the table. The Hops surveys have not been moved to a centralized editing system yet and therefore we do not have coverage rates for these surveys.

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**

Reports of grain and oilseed stock holdings are normally received from operations covering about 85 percent of total capacity. Estimates are made for missing facilities to make the survey complete. Off-farm survey data are reviewed at the State and national levels for reasonableness, consistency with historical estimates, and current crop size. After estimates are made for on-farm and off-farm, the two are combined and evaluated using a balance sheet approach. This method utilizes other sources of data to check the reasonableness of the stocks estimates. Estimates of production, imports, exports, crushings, milling, and all other recorded uses of grain and oilseeds are reviewed to make sure beginning stocks, production, utilization, and ending stocks are within reasonable balance and present the best possible estimate of all stocks. Stocks for the commodities covered by the other voluntary surveys are enumerated in the same manner.

Potatoes are grown in every State in the U.S. with NASS making production estimates in 31 States. Potatoes are harvested throughout the year somewhere in the country. USDA covers annual production in four seasonal groupings: winter, spring, summer, and fall. Most of the large fall crop is stored in temperature- and humidity-controlled cellars to be held for sale through the late fall, winter, and spring months. The Potato Stocks Survey uses information gathered each June from the Agricultural Surveys Program (OMB No. 0535-0213) area frame survey to measure the completeness of the list frame. The names of off-farm storage operators are obtained from potato processors in each State.

For peanuts, survey data are collected from shellers, blanchers, processors, and warehouses directly by NASS headquarters through mail questionnaires and electronic data reporting (EDR). The Peanut Stocks survey is a mandatory survey. Respondent businesses are accustomed to the survey and Headquarters receives complete cooperation.

Hop stocks that are held by growers are only collected in three estimating states Washington, Idaho and Oregon. In 2016 NASS plans to add Michigan to the survey.

Samples of the stocks questionnaires are attached in the ROCIS system.

Survey indications are subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplication, imputation for missing data, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. These errors are not measured directly but they are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

- 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.**

Reports from central accounting offices of large off-farm grain companies account for about two-thirds of total U.S. capacity. Combining the on-farm and off-farm data provides very reliable indications.

The due date that appears on a questionnaire is related to the reference period and the amount of time we are allotted to collect the data. The surveys that are included in this docket vary in frequency from monthly, quarterly, seasonal, to annual. For the more frequent surveys NASS puts more emphasis on the due dates shown on the questionnaires, so that data are received in time to be key-entered, edited, and summarized, and for estimates to be generated and prepared for publishing within the allotted time. As a part of NASS's charter we are required to publish accurate, useful data in a timely manner. In order for these data to be useful to the public it sometimes requires a very frequent survey, due to the speed at which the data can change.

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

Testing of questionnaires is conducted periodically in small focus groups.

- 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), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

The survey design for each State is determined by the Sampling, Editing, and Imputation Methodology Branch, (Branch Chief is Mark Apodaca (202) 720-5805 and Sampling Frame Development Section Head is Peter Quan (202) 720-5269) in conjunction, Sampling works with Summary and Estimation, and Disclosure Methodology Branch, (Branch Chief is Jeff Bailey (202) 720-4008).

Data collection is carried out by NASS Regional Field Offices. The Eastern Field Operations Director is Jay Johnson, (202) 720-3638. The Western Field Operations Director is Kevin Barnes, (202) 720-8220. Survey data are also

reviewed and summarized by the Regional Field Offices. Publications are released from the Regional Offices and Headquarters.

The NASS Survey Administration Branch in Headquarters is responsible for coordination of sampling, questionnaires, data collection, and other Field Office support. Branch Chief is Gerald Tillman, (202) 720-3895.

There are several NASS commodity statisticians in Headquarters Crops Branch, Statistics Division, who work on the stocks surveys. They are responsible for survey administration, support for FO activities, national summary data, and publication (Crops Branch Chief is Lance Honig (202) 720-2127).

November 2015