1Supporting Statement - Part A

AGRICULTURAL PRICES

A. JUSTIFICATION

This submission is a request to revise a currently approved collection. There are some changes to both, prices paid and prices received. The prices paid changes are in response to cognitive testing that was conducted by NASS on the questionnaires. The changes to the prices received surveys are in response to an increase in the Congressional funding to expand the feed cost surveys and estimates. There are no changes to the survey methodology or procedures previously approved.

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.

Estimates of prices received by farmers and prices paid by farmers for production goods and services are needed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the following purposes:

- computing Parity Prices in accordance with requirements of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 as amended;
- estimating value of production, inventory values, and cash receipts from farming;
- determining the level for farmer-owned reserves;
- providing guidelines for Risk Management Agency price selection options;
- determining Federal disaster prices to be paid;
- input into agricultures contribution to the national income and product accounts (NIPA);
- use in agricultures contribution to national gross domestic product (GDP)
- establishing USDA’s net farm income projections by the Economic Research Service; and
- determining the grazing fee on Federal lands.

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 agriculturalists."

See ATTACHMENT Federal Code of Regulations, Title 7, Subtitle A, Part 5 (May 2016) beginning on page 16.

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.

NASS needs commodity prices for both prices received and prices paid by farmers and ranchers to publish parity prices. Parity prices are used to establish and maintain Federal Market Orders and formulate farm policy. Calculation of parity prices under provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act mentioned above are as follows:

(A) The "parity price" for any agricultural commodity, as of any date, shall be determined by multiplying the adjusted base price of such commodity as of such date by the parity index as of such date.

(B) The "adjusted base price" of any agricultural commodity, as of any date, shall be

(C) (i) the average of the prices received by farmers for such commodity . . . divided by
(ii) the ratio of the general level of prices received by farmers for agricultural commodities during each period to the general level of prices received by farmers for agricultural commodities . . .

(C) The "parity index," as of any date, shall be the ratio of
(i) the general level of prices for articles and services that farmers buy, wages paid hired farm labor, interest on farm indebtedness secured by farm real estate, and taxes on farm real estate, for the calendar month ending last before such date to
(ii) the general level of such prices, wages, rates, and taxes during the period January 1910 to December 1914, inclusive.

(D) The prices and indices provided for herein, and the data used in computing them, shall be determined by the Secretary, whose determination shall be final.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) uses data from these forms in the national income and product accounts (NIPAs) and the regional economic accounts. Data on unit prices received and paid by farmers and the related price indices constructed from the data collected are used to prepare estimates of government consumption expenditures, personal consumption expenditures, and farm inventory components of gross domestic product (GDP). They are also used to prepare estimates of gross farm product, the contribution to GDP of the farm sector, and state and county farm income. In addition, BEA's estimates of farm

income and product are based on data from USDA's Economic Research Service which depends heavily on NASS price indices.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service computes annual U.S. weighted average prices received by farmers for wheat, barley, corn, oats, grain sorghum, rice, cotton, pulse crops, peanuts, and oilseeds based on monthly sales. The adjusted base price uses 12-month, calendar year average prices for major commodities in the monthly estimating program in accordance with the Act above. The amount of government payments is not included in published monthly or marketing year average prices. However, the effect of this additional income is an adjustment to the "10-year average" commodity price and prices received indices used in computing adjusted base prices.

Estimates for the remaining prices received items are used to compute indices of prices received by farmers. Agricultural price indices are used by many Government agencies. The Economic Research Service and the Federal Reserve Bank, for example, use the prices received indices as a general measure of agricultural commodity price change. The prices are used extensively by the Risk Management Agency for disaster and insurance payments. State and regional level prices received for hay in conjunction with selected farm input indices are used by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in formulas to determine annual grazing fees for the use and occupancy of the public grazing lands in the United States. Some State governments use prices received data for land valuations and land taxation purposes.

Estimates of prices received are used by the National Agricultural Statistics Service to determine the value of agricultural production. These estimates, plus cost of production estimates, are used by the Economic Research Service and Department of Commerce in the computation of net farm income, which is one of the components of the National Income Accounts. NASS price data are essential input for construction of these accounts.

Prices paid data are collected to compute the parity index, a major component required in the calculation of parity prices. Selected component prices paid indices are used to compute a regional index called the Public Rangeland Improvement Act (PRIA). Data for this index are drawn from NASS's Agricultural Resource Management Survey (OMB No. 0535-0218), Farm Labor Survey (OMB No. 0535-0109), and the Prices Paid Surveys for farm machinery, feed, fertilizer and agricultural chemicals, fuels, and seeds. This index is a component in the formula defined by the 1978 Public Rangeland Improvement Act and extended by an Executive Order signed February 14, 1986, to annually determine public land grazing rates by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. Also, an input cost index is constructed for the Forest Service using data from the Prices Paid Survey for Feed in addition to the earlier mentioned surveys. Most recently, the Amendment No. 221, Fiscal Year 1992 Appropriation Bill for the Department

of Interior and Related Agencies, directs the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to update the 1986 Grazing Fee Review and Evaluation Report to Congress. This update requires indices and prices from the stated surveys. The Agricultural Marketing Service uses various State milk marketing orders, prices paid indices, and import prices for determining State or local support milk prices.

Prices Paid Indices are used directly by the Economic Research Service for generating annual cost of production budgets required by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990. The major source of price data for these indices are the price data collected from the farm machinery, feed, retail seeds, fertilizer, agricultural chemicals, and fuel surveys. These data series are essential for reliable and consistent estimates of fixed and variable costs for wheat, feed grains, cotton, tobacco, sugar, and dairy commodities.

Prices received and paid estimates are also used extensively by universities, market research firms, and virtually every other sector of the U.S. economy for economic analysis relating to farm income and alternative marketing policies. These estimates provide the long time series necessary for such studies.

Many companies and agricultural production operations utilize these prices and indices for various purposes such as negotiating contract prices and determining marketing strategies.

NASS provides detailed documentation about recent improvements, data collection and methodology to the public on the Economics Section of the NASS website for both prices received and prices paid at:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide_to_NASS_Surveys/Prices/.

In the future, the NASS Prices Team plans on exploring further improvements to the overall prices program.

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.

Nearly all of NASS information collections have been converted to allow for Web-based data collection, what NASS calls electronic data reporting or EDR. The remaining instruments not being converted are too infrequent or impractical to use that particular mode of data collection. NASS developed a computer software Questionnaire Repository System (QRS) to enable simultaneous creation of matching paper and Web survey instruments from the same parameters. The

major prices received surveys as well as prices paid surveys in this collection are available on the Web; smaller surveys are conducted via mail, telephone, or personal interview at the Field Office's discretion to ensure proper coverage of localized areas and conditions.

The main portal for our on-line surveys is http://www.agcounts.usda.gov. Respondents are mailed an instruction sheet to reach this site along with the survey questionnaire. Once there, the respondents have to enter the valid survey code and their own user ID printed on the label of the questionnaire mailed to them. We do not want anyone other than a selected respondent to access the survey web pages.

The more frequent Prices Received surveys which target agribusinesses such as grain elevators or processors are the better internet responders. On this group of surveys, an overall average response rate is around 11.7% with the best response rate being the weekly peanut price survey, which is sent exclusively to the operators by internet. The prices paid surveys which are done once a year or the surveys which target the growers such as milk and hay producers, have an average internet response rate in the 1% to 5% range. Overall for this group of surveys the internet response rate is approximately 5.0%. The combined average response rate by electronic means is 11.1%.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

NASS cooperates with State Departments of Agriculture and land grant universities to conduct agricultural surveys. These surveys meet both State and Federal needs, thus eliminating duplication and minimizing reporting burden on the agriculture industry. There is no duplication of questions asked of producers in this docket. In addition, respondent lists are carefully compared to ensure there is no overlap. NASS samples are coordinated to ensure that respondent burden is minimized.

In 2010 NASS used a Screener questionnaire to clean-up the Prices Paid list. Many of the agribusinesses that sell farm inputs may qualify for more than one of our surveys (Feed, Fuel, Seeds, Fertilizers, Agricultural Chemicals, etc.). The screener questionnaire is used by NASS Field Offices to improve the sample population of agribusinesses that sell farm production input items directly to farmers and ranchers.

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.

Information requested on the various price surveys can be provided from normal operational records. To relieve individual respondent burden, only a sample of

firms is contacted each month for Prices Received Surveys and annually for Prices Paid Surveys. Samples are rotated periodically. Many operations are specialized and therefore receive a questionnaire that only pertains to their type of operation. Questions for diverse operations are combined on one questionnaire to reduce the number of times the respondent is contacted and reduce the overall burden. The major benefit of sampling agribusinesses is the collection of many price transactions from a single reporting unit.

Prices received data for cattle, hogs, and sheep are collected from administrative data obtained from auction houses, slaughter plants, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Market News reports, and livestock dealers, removing the burden from both the buyer and the livestock producer. AMS reports day-to-day or week-to-week price movement by grade for a variety of classes of commodities. Much of these data are aggregated over time, weighted by class, and used to estimate farm prices received, which reduces the number of contacts needed by NASS.

For the Annual Prices Paid Survey:

Based on Chapter 3 of the NASS Price Methodology Report at:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide_to_NASS_Surveys/Prices/Price_Program_Methodology_v11_03092015.pdf

The target population for the each survey group includes all retail outlets or establishments where producers purchase input items, for their operations. A retail outlet or establishment can be identified for selling items across any of the five survey categories. So, it is possible for a retail outlet or establishment to be identified in all five target populations. If a business operates at multiple locations, or if it is part of a franchise (chain), each individual location is treated as a separate operation eligible for sampling. The list sampling frame (LSF) operations have procedures for handling agribusinesses with multiple locations. The list of agribusinesses is comprised of current establishments used by producers to purchase the targeted survey items. The LSF is reviewed annually in advance to ensure that the list of businesses targeted for the prices paid surveys is complete, accurate, and up-to date.

The Regional Field Offices (RFOs) along with the NASS Frames Maintenance Group in St. Louis, MO, maintains each universe to cover the minimum number of operations required to meet the target sample. Samples are refreshed by 20 percent each year, meaning 20 percent of the sample is replaced. This reduces respondent burden while maintaining sufficient overlap.

Listings of these operations to build and maintain the list frame are obtained from; telephone directories, business directories, regulatory lists, industry wholesalers, and Trade associations. The National Association of State Departments of

Agriculture (NASDA) enumerators, county extension personnel, and other individuals associated with the farming industry also provide sources of information about retailers and other agribusinesses.

Samples are drawn for the five prices paid surveys. The sample design for the Prices Paid program follows a quota sampling scheme. A quota sample is used because NASS does not maintain populations of agribusinesses that sell these commodities. There is an effort to target samples at the state level for each survey group. The sample becomes a non-probability stratified sample with the strata defined as States within a survey group. Each RFO is given a sample size requirement for each of the five surveys. RFOs add retail outlets or establishments to replace the dropped sample units based on the case disposition codes. If the target sample size is greater than the carryover from the previous year, the RFOs search for other establishments to replace the sample units removed from sample.

Each year the data collection timeframe is a three week period around March 15th for the five prices paid commodity groups. Data may be collected by mail, phone, field enumeration, or by internet reporting. The reference date for each survey is March 15th. Other seeds data are also collected in March. Target response rate is 80 percent for the prices paid surveys. Agribusinesses are requested to report both, prices and quantities for the most commonly sold items that meets the general specification on the questionnaire.

Outside of March, when the Prices Paid Survey is conducted as a benchmark, the Prices Paid Index is adjusted monthly using administrative data from a variety of reliable sources, mostly from BLS indices and data from other federal agencies.

For the Prices Received Commodities:

Sampling of producers and buyers varies considerably depending on the structure of the marketing channels. Samples are drawn to reduce respondent burden and to centralize data collection as much as possible. More specifics can be found in Chapter 2 of the NASS Prices Methodology at:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide_to_NASS_Surveys/Prices/Price_Program_Methodology_v11_03092015.pdf

The universe for agricultural commodity prices is all sales from producers to first buyers. Prices for points of first sale can be obtained from either producers or first buyers. Individual producers generally market commodities relatively few times during the year. A single buyer is a more active participant on a continuing basis and can report on many transactions. Buyers, then, are the preferred data collection contacts. Price reporters include independent local buyers like grain elevators and produce dealers, cooperative marketing organizations, Federal milk

market administrators, State fruit boards, other marketing agencies, processors, canneries, slaughtering plants, other Government agencies, and producers or growers. Data furnished by the different types of reporters vary in usefulness, depending on accessibility, timeliness, and completeness. The cost of developing a complete sampling frame of all buyers of farm products far exceeds any available resources. Market channel surveys provide information on major sales localities of major agricultural products. Sample surveys are then concentrated in the market channels accounting for the bulk of commercial sales.

The sampling frames for agricultural commodities are segmented into several commodity areas. Grain price information is obtained from grain elevators and buyers. Hay price indications are gathered from surveys of dealers, hay auctions, and other buyers or other lists such as dairies or cattle feeders. Cotton price information is obtained from contacts to cotton buyers, including cooperatives and private merchants. Peanut price data is gathered from all known peanut buyers. Firms are stratified or grouped according to size or volume of products purchased.

A probability sample proportionate to size is selected from each stratum. This universe and sample process allows NASS to cover a high proportion of products sold at minimum cost. Livestock prices are collected by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Probability sample surveys used to collect price data for most major crops increase accuracy, give greater quality control, provide a method for estimating sampling error and use a smaller but more representative samples. Price surveys for prices received for corn, wheat, soybeans, cotton, and rice are designed to provide a coefficient of variation (CV) of less than one percent at the U.S. level and less than five percent at the State level. State level CVs for major producing States run as low as two to three percent. Non-sampling errors in conducting the surveys may be larger than the sampling errors. Current methods of summarization for nonprobability commodities are not designed to calculate sampling errors. Analytical measures, however, approximate the U.S. relative sampling errors at around five percent. Any non-sampling errors are attributed to obtaining correct data, differences in interpreting questions and definitions, and mistakes in coding or processing the data. Efforts are made at each step in the survey process to minimize non-sampling errors.

Primary sales data used to determine grain prices are obtained from probability samples of some 2,200 mills and elevators. The probability survey procedures ensure that virtually all grain moving into commercial channels has a chance of selection in the survey. Previously, States that were surveyed accounted for 90 percent or more of total U.S. production. Beginning in 2017 the target population was expanded to cover all 50 States. This expansion was in response to additional Congressional funding that was provided to NASS in FY 2017. Livestock prices are obtained from USDA"s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Sales between farms are not included since they represent very small percentages of the total marketing. Grain marketed for seed is also excluded.

Fruit and vegetable prices are obtained from sample surveys and market data from private marketing organizations, State agencies, universities, and from USDA"s AMS. Frame Development The universe for agricultural commodity prices is all sales from producers to first buyers. The universe for Prices Received by producers for commodities sold, therefore, is comprised from various sources. Sample units for frame construction are classified in the following categories: merchants, farm produce dealers at local shipping points, mills, and elevators, Federal Milk Order Administrators, State milk control agencies, milk distribution and manufacturing plants, cooperative marketing organizations, bankers, and farm and ranch operators. The frame development for the following Prices Received commodity groups vary dependent on business type and commodity.

A commodity type is one of the following five groups. Livestock and Livestock Products Poultry and Specialty Commodities, Field Crops, Fruit and Nuts and Commercial Vegetables. When building the frame for all five commodity types, responsibility for universe building is shared between the List Frame Maintenance Group, commodity analysts, and survey statisticians.

Livestock and Livestock Products Poultry and Specialty Commodities

The target population for livestock products such as milk are any entity that is involved with the purchase of livestock products from producers.

- Livestock prices are obtained from AMS; so, a frame for livestock is not needed for the frame development and maintenance of livestock products which includes: Producers in the Quarterly Milk Production Survey, buyers, cooperatives, wool pools, and Farm Service Agency (FSA) records, data from AMS, State Departments of Agriculture, and State universities Poultry and Specialty Commodities.
- NASS collects no price data from producers for the highly integrated poultry industry. A list frame of handlers, slaughtering plants, and packing plants is maintained for surveying when Agricultural Marketing Service / Market News Service (AMS/MNS) price data for chickens and live turkeys are not available. State departments of agriculture, national poultry associations, State poultry improvement associations, extension poultry agents at State universities and county agents provide names of egg handlers.
- A sampling frame of bee and honey producers is developed and maintained.

Field Crops

The target population for field crops includes establishments which sell or purchase field crops directly from the producer. All 50 States are in the monthly program and are sampled on a probability basis. NASS constructs field, oilseed, specialty and other crop Prices Received lists using the following procedures:

- Develop and maintain a list of elevators, dealers, and specialty buyers that purchase grain, oilseeds, rice, peanuts, dry beans, pulse crops or cotton for monthly and probability surveys that purchase directly from farmers. Information captured also includes capacity size and multi-unit status for each operation. Lists are kept current and complete through processing of monthly updates.
- Develop and maintain a list of growers, buyers, ginners, and other agricultural entities for crops surveyed on a nonprobability, non-monthly basis. Updates are processed on a regular basis to keep lists current and complete with priority given to the largest growers and buyers
- Develop and maintain universe lists to conduct supplementary surveys when additional price data are needed to strengthen price indications. Sources of operations, buyers, and other entities for the Prices Received probability and non-probability populations include: - Farm Service Agency, - Agricultural Marketing Service / Market New Service, - State Departments of Agriculture, - Various organizations such as licensing bureaus, grain associations, commodity associations, cooperatives, extension crop specialists at universities, dealers, auction facilities, factories, mills, buyers, feeders, brewers, ginners, processors, distributors and other related organizations.

Fruit and Nuts

The target population for fruits and nuts consists of entities involved with the sale or purchase of fruits and nuts at the first point of sale. NASS constructs fruit and nut Prices Received lists using the following procedures:

- Obtain grower contacts from the following sources: Farm Service Agency (FSA), Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and various organizations like grower associations, marketing associations, cooperatives, dealers, packers, shippers, processors, wineries, exchanges, marketing boards, administrative committees, county extension agents and other related persons or groups.
- Maintain current grower lists and other non-grower lists related to the fruit and nut industries for commodities included in the NASS estimation program.
- Obtain price data from direct purchases from producers by non-grower entities.
- Maintain complete coverage of the largest growers and buyers as no area frame is utilized to supplement the list frame populations.
- Maintain a list of packers, processors, cooperatives, and other related entities purchasing directly from producers. Sources include: AMS, State Departments of Agriculture, Extension fruit specialists at universities, Trade magazines, and States with access to administrative data sources.
- Utilize these sources and do not necessarily maintain a list of other contacts.
- Maintain a list frame to conduct supplementary surveys when additional price data are needed to strengthen price indications.

Commercial Vegetables

The target population for vegetables consists of any entity involved with the sale or purchase of vegetables at point of first sale (POFS). POFS prices reflect the point in the marketing chain where the grower no longer owns the commodity. NASS constructs commercial vegetable contact lists using the following procedures:

- Maintain a list of contacts with knowledge of fresh market prices, to supplement administrative data or when these data are not available.
- The list includes growers, roadside and farmer markets, U-pick sales, grower auctions, dealers, packers, commodity marketing associations, producer co-ops or market orders.
- Other sources include terminal markets and packinghouses.
- Maintain current and complete list frame, to help manage the variability within different vegetable industries and localities. Priority given to maintaining complete coverage of the largest growers and buyers.
- Maintain an up-to-date list of processors to represent plant door pricing.
- Processor sources include canners" and freezers' associations, trade journals, State licensing boards, and health inspection records. Federal/State Market News Service provide sufficient coverage for major producing areas during the primary marketing season.
- Maintain a list frame to conduct a survey when no administrative data and/or when administrative data needs strengthening.

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.

Less frequent data collection eliminates data needed to keep the U.S. Department of Agriculture abreast of changes at the State and national level. Timing and frequency of the various reports have evolved to meet the needs of Department clients, including producers, agribusinesses, and government agencies, yet minimize burden on the reporting public.

Prices Paid surveys are conducted annually. Administrative data (BLS, EIA, ERS, MNS, etc.) provide the necessary data to establish monthly indices between annual survey periods. The annual survey data is used to adjust the monthly indices to provide a truer price change in what farmers and ranchers pay for production input goods and services.

Prices Paid information as currently collected are used by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to determine public land grazing rates as mandated by legislation. Any modifications to current methodology would require a legislative amendment.

NASS reduced the frequency of the monthly Milk Production Survey (0535-0020) to a quarterly survey. The quarterly milk questionnaire is also used to collect hay prices in all States. Using historical information combined with quarterly data, NASS is able to scale the information and estimate for the months that data is not collected.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly; requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;...

Reporting more frequently than quarterly: Monthly commodity prices received by farmers are needed to meet legislative requirements. These prices coupled with monthly marketing weights, result in more precise marketing year average prices. Monthly prices for basic commodities are required per permanent legislation. Non-basic commodities and prices paid data are collected on an annual basis.

Expecting written response in fewer than 30 days: Information needs to be collected and issued as close to the survey date as possible in order for the estimates to be timely.

In September of 2006, NASS began collecting peanut prices on a weekly basis in response to a request by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). The Farm Bill provides for FSA to administer on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) marketing assistance loans and guaranteed crop revenue payments. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) provides weekly shelled peanut market prices that FSA uses along with other information to calculate its National Posted Price (NPP) which is released every Tuesday on the FSA Web site and in local FSA offices. USDA administration has asked NASS to assist in improving the precision and timeliness of the NPP by providing current market data based on purchases from peanut producers.

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 original 60 day Notice soliciting comments was published in the Federal Register on December 1, 2015 on page 75409. NASS received two public comments, one was from Dr. Dennis Fixler at the Bureau of Economic Analysis in support of the survey and the other one was from Jean Public. Since this is a revision of this currently approved docket, a new 60 day notice was not published.

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 recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

NASS frequently consults with USDA's Economic Research Service, Forest Service, Agricultural Marketing Service, and Farm Service Agency, as well as the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Bureau of Labor Statistics to discuss NASS methodology and estimating programs. NASS also conducts regular meetings around the country to obtain feedback from data users.

In 2011, the Price Program Methodology was documented in detail. As part of a NASS requested program review, many statistical organizations on price and price index methodology, including the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and price index methodologies in Canada, Australia, the European Union, and the Food and Agricultural Association of the United Nations were consulted.

Annually, the NASS Data Users Meeting in Chicago provides an open arena where the public is able to provide feedback on all NASS estimate programs, including prices received and paid.

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 kept confidential. U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1905 and U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2276 provide for the 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 these 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 appears on all 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.

All individuals who may access these confidential data for research are also covered under Titles 18 and CIPSEA and must complete a Certification and Restrictions on Use of Unpublished Data (ADM-043) agreement.

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.

This renewal has a sample size of 68,485, a total number of 171,720 responses and a total of 31,975 burden hours.

The following table contains the estimated burden hours for the surveys included in this docket. Cost to the public for completing the questionnaire is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. Average annual reporting time of 31,975 hours is multiplied by $26 per hour for a total annual cost to the public of $831,350.

NASS uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics (most recently published on March 31, 2017 for the previous May) to estimate an hourly wage for the burden cost. The May 2016 mean wage for bookkeepers was $19.34. The mean wage for farm managers was $36.44. The mean wage for farm supervisors was $23.47. The mean wage of the three is $26.42.

Calculation of burden hours is shown in the table below. Response counts are estimated based on a target response rate of 80 percent unless previous rates were higher. Minutes per response shown are average questionnaire completion times for each survey. The adjustment to the burden minutes for the Prices Paid surveys is in response to adjustments to the questionnaires that were cognitively tested in mid-2017.

Prices Paid and Prices Received Projected Sample Sizes and Burden - 2016 - 2018											
Survey	Sample Size	Waves of Data Collection [1/]	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours
			Resp. Count	Waves x Count	Min./ Resp.	Burden Hours	Nonresp Count	Waves x Count	Min./ Nonr.	Burden Hours	
Prices Received											
Crops											
Cotton, Monthly	150	12	120	1,440	20	480	30	360	2	12	492
Grains, Beans and Oilseeds - Monthly	2,200	12	1,760	21,120	10	3,520	440	5,280	2	176	3,696
Peanuts [6/]	75	52	60	3,120	15	780	15	780	2	26	806
Rice	100	12	80	960	10	160	20	240	2	8	168
Operation profiles [4/]	2,525	1	2,020	2,020	10	337	505	505	2	17	354
Sugar	20	2	16	32	10	5	4	8	2	0	5
Hay Prices											
Hay, Monthly Dealers [2]	250	12	200	2,400	10	400	50	600	2	20	420
Hay, Monthly Price Survey (growers)	2,000	12	1,600	19,200	10	3,200	400	4,800	2	160	3,360
Hay, Biennial Prod and Sales [7]	33,000	1	26,400	26,400	20	8,800	6,600	6,600	2	220	9,020
Hay, Quarterly Milk Prod. Quest. [3]	11,000	4	8,800	35,200	9	5,280	2,200	8,800	2	293	5,573
Livestock and Livestock Products											
Milk Price Inquiry - Monthly	40	12	32	384	15	96	8	96	2	3	99
Livestock and Crops - AK [2/]	400	1	320	320	10	53	80	80	2	3	56
Publicity Materials											
Cover Letter [3/]	51,760	1	32,608	32,608	5	2,717	19,152	19,152	2	638	3,355

Operation profiles [4/]	2,525	1	2,020	2,020	10	337	505	505	2	17	354
Sugar	20	2	16	32	10	5	4	8	2	0	5
Hay Prices											
Hay, Monthly Dealers [2]	250	12	200	2,400	10	400	50	600	2	20	420
Hay, Monthly Price Survey (growers)	2,000	12	1,600	19,200	10	3,200	400	4,800	2	160	3,360
Hay, Biennial Prod and Sales [7]	33,000	1	26,400	26,400	20	8,800	6,600	6,600	2	220	9,020
Hay, Quarterly Milk Prod. Quest. [3]	11,000	4	8,800	35,200	9	5,280	2,200	8,800	2	293	5,573
Livestock and Livestock Products											
Milk Price Inquiry - Monthly	40	12	32	384	15	96	8	96	2	3	99
Livestock and Crops - AK [2/]	400	1	320	320	10	53	80	80	2	3	56
Publicity Materials											
Cover Letter [3/]	51,760	1	32,608	32,608	5	2,717	19,152	19,152	2	638	3,355
Advance Letter [5/]	2,525	1	2,020	2,020	5	168	505	505	2	17	185
Subtotal	51,760		41,408	114,616		25,996	10,352	28,654		1,593	27,589

Prices Paid and Prices Received Projected Sample Sizes and Burden - 2016 - 2018

Survey	Sample Size	Waves of Data Collection [1/]	Responses				Non-response				Total Burden Hours
			Resp. Count	Waves x Count	Min./ Resp.	Burden Hours	Nonresp Count	Waves x Count	Min./ Nonr.	Burden Hours	
Prices Paid											
Farm Machinery	1,800	1	1,440	1,440	20	480	360	360	2	12	492
Feed	2,100	1	1,680	1,680	20	560	420	420	2	14	574
Fertilizer and Ag Chem	3,000	1	2,400	2,400	20	800	600	600	2	20	820
Fuels	2,200	1	1,760	1,760	15	440	440	440	2	15	455
Seeds											
Retail Seed Price Inquiry	1,600	1	1,280	1,280	15	320	320	320	2	11	331
Seed Cotton [2/]	200	1	160	160	5	13	40	40	2	1	14
Sunflower Seed [8/]	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Rice Seed [2/]	100	1	80	80	15	20	20	20	2	1	21
Seed Peanut [2/]	25	1	20	20	5	2	5	5	2	0	2
Potato Seed Northwest Region [2/]	500	1	400	400	15	100	100	100	2	3	103

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers 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 (equipment, overhead, printing, and staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The total annual cost to the Federal government for the agricultural price surveys is $5.6 million; virtually all of the costs are staff costs for data collection and analysis. The increase in total price of $1.6 million is the result of additional funding by Congress to expand the feed cost surveys to cover all 50 States.

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).

The following program changes have been made to the Prices Received and Prices Paid surveys:

- The Prices Received surveys for grains, beans and oilseeds has been expanded to include all 50 States. This is a result of additional Congressional funding to expand the program.
- Additional burden hours are added to cover the monthly questionnaires, the annual profiles and the mailing of publicity materials to respondents.

- The Prices Paid surveys for machinery, feed, fertilizer/chemicals, fuels, and seeds were cognitively tested to see what changes could be made to these surveys to make them more user friendly. NASS was able to reduce the number of overall commodities included in the surveys, but we included quantities of items sold with the prices paid by farmers. Thus allowing NASS to be able to generate weighted average prices, instead of straight average prices. In the cognitive interviews the respondents said this would not be hard for them to provide. The burden minutes were adjusted as a result of these changes.
- The Prices Paid for Sunflower Seeds survey was previously done under a cooperative agreement, this survey was discontinued.

The changes are included in the following table.

(growers)	2,000	12	1,600	19,200	10	3,200	400	4,800
Hay, Biennial Prod and Sales [7]	33,000	1	26,400	26,400	20	8,800	6,600	6,600
Hay, Quarterly Milk Prod. Quest. [3]	11,000	4	8,800	35,200	9	5,280	2,200	8,800
Livestock and Livestock Products								
Milk Price Inquiry - Monthly	40	12	32	384	15	96	8	96
Livestock and Crops - AK [2/]	400	1	320	320	10	53	80	80
Publicity Materials								
Cover Letter [3/]	51,760	1	32,608	32,608	5	2,717	19,152	19,152
Advance Letter [5/]	2,525	1	2,020	2,020	5	168	505	505
Subtotal	51,760		41,408	114,616		25,996	10,352	28,654

	Sample	Responses	Non-response	Total

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.

Prices received estimates are published monthly in *Agricultural Prices*, released at 3:00 p.m. ET on the next-to-last or last working day of each month.

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1002.

The last *Agricultural Prices-Annual Summary* was published in July 2009. It contained monthly estimates plus market year average prices for all major crop and livestock items as well as annual prices paid estimates. Historic monthly and annual indices were also included in the summary.

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/AgriPric//2000s/2009/AgriPric-07-31-2009.pdf

Beginning in 2010, the Agricultural Prices Summary was no longer published. All price data series are available from NASS' online Quick Stats database. Quick Stats data are updated monthly by commodity to include any changes, if any, for the past three years.

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/index.php

Peanut prices are published every Friday at 3:00p.m. ET. These publications are available on-line immediately after release at

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1640.

Average price estimates for farm production input items were discontinued with April 2015 ***Agricultural Prices*** report. Only prices paid indices are published.

The historic Prices Paid publications can be obtained from the following site:

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1002.

Price Reactions, After USDA Livestock Reports (are published) -

Description: This report contains price reactions to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Cattle on Feed, Quarterly Hogs and Pigs, and Milk Production reports. This report does not imply that NASS reports are solely responsible for changes to the price level for commodities referenced in the publication. The price level for any commodity can potentially be affected by other information available to the market at that time but ultimately is determined by supply and demand.

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1770

Price Reactions, After USDA Crop Reports (are published) -

Description: This report contains corn, soybean, wheat, and cotton price reactions to the USDA Crop Production and Grain Stocks reports. Each year, estimates of corn, soybean, wheat, and cotton production are published in the monthly Crop Production reports. Corn and soybean estimates are published in the August, September, October, and November Crop Production reports and the January Crop Production Annual Summary. Wheat estimates are published in the May, June, July, and August Crop Production reports, and the September Small Grains Annual Summary. Cotton estimates are included in the August, September, October, November, and December Crop Production reports and the January Crop Production Annual Summary. Estimates of corn, soybean, and wheat stocks are published in the Grain Stocks report issued in March, June, September, and January. This report does not imply that NASS reports are solely responsible for changes to the price level for commodities referenced in the publication. The price level for any commodity can potentially be affected by other information available to the market at that time but ultimately is determined by supply and demand.

http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/MannUsda/viewDocumentInfo.do?documentID=1769

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.

March 2016

Revised July 2016

Revised August 2017