

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 unites, 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 whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

Since conducting its first survey in 1996, FGIS has strived to improve the survey’s response rate to 50 percent or greater. To achieve that end, FGIS is collaborated with a statistician from FGIS’ Technical Service Division (TSD) to provide statistically-based sampling procedures and data analysis. FGIS determined that a representative sampling of approximately 1100 customers should be surveyed. To improve stratification estimates and ensure equal representation for all agencies and offices, FGIS randomly selected the same proportion from each agency and field office. The following table represents the number of customers that were surveyed for each FGIS field office, State official agency, and private official agency:

**Number of Customers Per Office/Agency**

| <b>Name of FGIS Export Office</b>    | <b>No. of Customers</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| League City                          | 27                      |
| New Orleans                          | 26                      |
| Portland                             | 8                       |
| Stuttgart                            | 10                      |
| Toledo                               | 40                      |
| <b>Name of State Official Agency</b> | <b>No. of Customers</b> |
| Alabama                              | 1                       |
| Georgia                              | 14                      |
| Louisiana                            | 4                       |
| Missouri                             | 36                      |
| Montana                              | 1                       |
| North Carolina                       | 1                       |
| North Dakota                         | 338                     |
| South Carolina                       | 1                       |
| Utah                                 | 5                       |
| Virginia                             | 2                       |
| Washington                           | 62                      |

|  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| Wisconsin                              | 1                       |
| <b>Name of Private Official Agency</b> | <b>No. of Customers</b> |
| Aberdeen                               | 4                       |
| Amarillo                               | 6                       |
| Barton                                 | 2                       |
| Cairo                                  | 6                       |
| Central Illinois                       | 1                       |
| Central Iowa                           | 21                      |
| Champaign                              | 86                      |
| Columbus                               | 9                       |
| Decatur                                | 2                       |
| Detroit                                | 2                       |
| East Indiana                           | 2                       |
| Eastern Iowa                           | 7                       |
| Enid                                   | 27                      |
| Farwell                                | 4                       |
| Farwell Southwest                      | 1                       |
| Frankfort                              | 1                       |
| Fremont                                | 4                       |
| Hastings                               | 8                       |
| Idaho                                  | 21                      |
| Indianapolis                           | 3                       |
| Jamestown                              | 12                      |
| Kankakee                               | 5                       |
| Kansas                                 | 218                     |
| Keokuk                                 | 1                       |
| Lewiston                               | 1                       |
| Lincoln                                | 7                       |
| McCrea                                 | 1                       |
| Michigan                               | 2                       |
| Mid-Iowa                               | 7                       |
| Midsouth                               | 7                       |
| Minot                                  | 3                       |
| Northeast Indiana                      | 2                       |
| Northern Plains                        | 9                       |
| Ohio Valley                            | 4                       |
| Omaha                                  | 1                       |
| Plainview                              | 5                       |
| Schaal                                 | 9                       |
| Sioux City                             | 18                      |
| Springfield                            | 2                       |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| State Grain | 5 |
| Titus       | 2 |
| Tri-State   | 3 |

FGIS aimed to achieve a 55—57% percent response rate. Due complications including a lack of response results were inconclusive for previous surveys.

In an effort to reduce costs FGIS has chosen to make the survey solely available electronically. The potential respondent universe thus becomes all visitors to the FGIS Primary and secondary (i.e.; FGIS official Service Providers website, FGIS Online website) websites. Based on previous year's averages these site generate upward of 10,000 unique viewers. With adequate promotion FGIS expects to receive 600+ responses (customer and non- customer) within each year or 55% of the estimated representative sample (1100) of all customers.

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, and
- Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

As mentioned in the above response, FGIS determined that a representative sampling of approximately 1100 customers should be surveyed. FGIS will utilize email, trade publications, agency newsletters, and trade/ stake holder meetings to reach customers of the inspection and weighing system. A link to the survey will be placed in predominate locations on FGIS primary and secondary sites.

In the past FGIS has used Microsoft Office Excel and a customized reporting package built internally to store and analyze survey results. FGIS determined that using electronic transmission techniques improves the quality and response percentage of data and reduces the burden on the public. During the last survey administered by electronic submission only, the response rate was not sufficient to draw conclusions based on a representative sample. In order to encourage participation, FGIS will make available a link to the survey on our primary and secondary websites. FGIS will also request that official agencies and field offices help to direct customers to the survey's link.

By making a link to the survey available on the website FGIS hopes that customers will view the opportunity to share their feedback as convenient. FGIS expects that the greater convenience will increase the response rate. With this submission FGIS is adding a non- customer question to the survey which would

allow FGIS to collect information from entities, such as potential customers or industry representatives; that are not currently utilizing our services without burdening them with questions that do not relate to their current situation. Information collected from Non - Customers will assist FGIS in fully meeting the domestic and international needs of the grain industry as they evolve.

FGIS is seeking a 3-year renewal authority so that it can issue its customer survey over the 3-year period. With this policy, FGIS will be able to establish baselines for customer satisfaction and track progress for key factors. Depending on the survey results, FGIS will determine the manner in which to continue the surveying process as well as the type of OMB approval it will seek.

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.

FGIS will utilize various methods of communication to reach grain inspection and weighing customers. Making the link available on our primary and secondary websites will hopefully ease the burden on potential respondents. FGIS will also request that official agencies and field offices help to direct customers to the survey's link.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

While we are planning to conduct electronic surveys during the approval period of this information collection, no system has yet been designed for testing purposes.

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 of the agency.

FGIS consulted with GIPSA TSD employee, Larry Freeze, Statistician (tel: 816-891-0453). Jennifer Hill, Grain Marketing Specialist (202-690-3929) will oversee all aspects of the surveying process.