



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
National Agricultural Statistics Service



August 27, 2018

Jeff Cesca, Director  
Division of Marketing Services  
California Department of Food and Agriculture

Dear Mr. Cesca,

Thank you for your letter of support and suggestions regarding the reinstatement of the Commercial Floriculture Survey. The NASS has been working to improve the quality and relevance of the data collected from the major floriculture producing States while minimizing respondent burden where possible.

The most significant program change that will be made to the upcoming survey will involve the States that are included in the survey. The 17 States that will be included in the program in this renewal request are: Alaska, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Oregon, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. New to this program are the States of Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Dropped from the federally funded program are Hawaii, Maryland, and South Carolina. However, NASS has been contacted by the States of Arizona, Hawaii and Maryland about doing a reimbursable survey through a cooperative agreement with each State. These three State surveys will be included in the OMB approval request.

Based on the 2014 Census of Horticulture, there have been several changes to the plant materials that are included in the survey.

As to your suggestion of including previously reported data for the respondents to view when submitting current data; NASS has been investigating this approach for surveys. However, the main concern for implementing the use of previously reported data has centered on introducing bias to reported data. NASS will continue to look into this as a possible option for the future.

Your comment regarding the collection of detailed data from operations with less than \$100,000 in sales is a valid point. Following each Census of Horticulture, NASS looks at the data reported by respondents with sales of more than \$10,000 and less than \$100,000 to see if we need to make any program changes to account for these operations.

In regard to your final suggestion about using administrative data from County Agricultural Commissioner reports and the California Department of Food and Agriculture, NASS uses administrative data whenever possible to validate survey data. Occasionally the administrative data may have a different reference period or sampling variance that will allow for some differences in the published data.

We will keep you informed of any future modifications.

Again, many thanks!

Sincerely,

Joseph L. Parsons  
Chairperson, Agricultural Statistics Board  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service