

1 Supporting Statement – Part A

TURFGRASS ECONOMIC SURVEY

OMB No. 0535-NEW

This supporting statement addresses the new data collection effort for the Turfgrass Economic Survey for a period of three years. This project will collect data from a sample of homeowners, golf courses, cemeteries, sod producers, turfgrass service providers, and commercial businesses with turfgrass in the State of New Jersey. The reference period will be the previous calendar year. The survey will be conducted annually if funding allows. This data collection is voluntary.

Data collected under this docket are for a cooperative agreement between the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Rutgers University. The purpose of this survey is to collect economic information from a sample of homeowners, golf courses, cemeteries, sod producers, turfgrass service providers, and commercial businesses with turfgrass in New Jersey. Data collected will reference the previous calendar year. The summarized data will be used by the New Jersey State Department of Agriculture and Land Grant University to: (1) evaluate the magnitude of the New Jersey turfgrass industry in terms of number of acres maintained, number of workers, turf related expenses, and its total contribution to the New Jersey economy, and (2) to characterize the nature of New Jersey's turfgrass industry (i.e., species of turfgrass used, product sales, market distribution channels, and maintenance practices).

A. JUSTIFICATION

This data collection is being conducted through a cooperative agreement with Rutgers University under a full-cost recovery basis. NASS has cooperative agreements with State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities to fulfill its mission of providing timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to United States agriculture. These cooperators often seek NASS's assistance to provide statistics beneficial to agriculture, but are not covered by NASS's annual Congressional appropriation. General authority for conducting cooperative projects is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 450a which states that USDA officials may, "enter into agreements with and receive funds...for the purpose of conducting cooperative research projects..."

NASS benefits from these cooperative agreements by: (1) obtaining additional data to update its list of farm operators; (2) encouraging both parties to coordinate Federal survey activities and activities funded under a cooperative agreement to reduce the need for overlapping data collection and/or spread out respondent burden; and (3) facilitating additional promotion of NASS surveys and statistical reports funded by annual Congressional appropriations.

Respondents benefit from these cooperative agreements by: (1) having their reported data protected by Federal Law (U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1905; U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2276; and Public Law 107-347, Title V (CIPSEA)); (2) having data collection activities for Federal and Cooperative surveys coordinated to minimize respondent burden; and (3) having high-quality agricultural data that are important to a state or region be collected and published.

- 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.**

The primary function of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue current official State and national estimates of crop and livestock production, value, disposition, and resource use.

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 agriculturists."

- 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 will conduct a survey of entities in select sectors with turfgrass in New Jersey. According to the report "The New Jersey Turfgrass Industry Economic Survey", (February 2007) by Rutgers University, about 880,000 acres (or 18 percent of New Jersey's total land area) is covered with turfgrass. Each selected entity will be asked to provide turfgrass-related data on acreage, economic, and management practices during the past calendar year.

The turfgrass-related information that will be summarized and published will include the acreage, expenditure, and economic impact. It is hoped that enough data will be collected to allow publishing by this data by sector (household, golf courses, cemeteries, sod producers, turfgrass service providers, and commercial businesses).

- 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.**

During this data collection, NASS will mail out a paper questionnaire along with a cover letter and return envelope. There will be two mailings. There will be instructions to respond via Computer Aided Self Interviewing (CASI), if there is funding for an instrument. Operators who do not respond to this mailing or by CASI will be contacted by an interviewer using Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI). Data will be collected by a trained National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) enumerator.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

NASS cooperates with State departments of agriculture, Land Grant universities, and other State and Federal agencies to conduct surveys. Wherever possible, surveys meet both State and Federal needs, thus eliminating duplication and minimizing reporting burden on the agricultural industry.

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.

This information collection will not have a significant economic impact on small entities. Out of the estimated sample size of 1,400, approximately 85% or 1,191 are estimated to be classified as small operations.

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.

The summarized data will be used by the New Jersey State Department of Agriculture and Land Grant University to: (1) evaluate the magnitude of the New Jersey turfgrass industry in terms of number of acres maintained, number of workers, turf related expenses and its' total contribution to the New Jersey economy, and (2) to characterize the nature of New Jersey's turfgrass industry (i.e., species of turfgrass used, product sales, market distribution channels, and maintenance practices).

According to the report, "The New Jersey Turfgrass Industry Economic Survey", (February 2007) by Rutgers University, the turfgrass industry contributed \$3.2 billion to the New Jersey economy and provided 53,588 jobs in New Jersey. This survey is the only source of information capable of providing this type of vital information for the turfgrass industry. Collecting economic data will provide stakeholders information for policy making related to the turfgrass industry.

- 7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the general information guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.**

There are no special circumstances associated with this information collection.

- 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 Federal Register Notice soliciting comments was published on November 23, 2018 on pages 59357-59358. One comment was received from Jean Public and did not require a response.

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

NASS requested and received input on the questionnaire from stakeholders. Input was received from Rutgers University, New Jersey Turfgrass Association, and representatives from each sector.

- 9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.**

No payment or gifts will be provided 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 confidential. U.S. Code Title 18, Section 1905; U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2276; and Public Law 107-347, Title V (CIPSEA) provide for 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 the regulations and sign a statement of compliance.

Additionally, NASS employees and NASS contractors comply with the OMB implementation guidance document, "Implementation Guidance for Title V of the E-Government Act, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA)." CIPSEA supports NASS's 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 confidentiality pledge statement will appear on all NASS questionnaires.

The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only. Your responses will be kept confidential and any person who willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about you or your operation is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both. This survey is conducted in accordance with the Confidential Information Protection provisions of Title V, Subtitle A, Public Law 107-347 and other applicable Federal laws. For more information on how we protect your information please visit:

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality>.

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. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I. Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.

Burden hours based on the average completion time per questionnaire are summarized below.

Burden hour calculations are shown below. The minutes-per-response figures come from cognitive interviews. Cost to the public of completing the questionnaire is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. Reporting time of 1,013 hours is multiplied by \$36.66 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$ 37,136.58.

NASS uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Occupational Employment Statistics](#) (most recently published on March 30, 2018 for the previous May) to estimate an hourly wage for the burden cost. The May 2017 mean wage for bookkeepers was \$19.76. The mean wage for farm managers was \$38.62. The mean wage for farm supervisors was \$24.11. The mean wage of the three is \$27.50. To calculate the fully loaded wage rate (includes allowances for Social Security, insurance, etc.) NASS will be adding an additional 33% for a total of \$36.66 per hour.

Estimated Sample Size and Respondent Burden for the 2019-2021 surveys:

0535-NEW - Projected Respondent Burden for 2019 - 2021														
Commodity	Sector	State	Sample Size	Waves of Data Collection	Resp. Count	Waves X Count	Min. / Resp	Burden Hours	Non-Resp Count	Waves X Count	Min / Non Resp.	Burden Hours	Total Burden Hours	
Turfgrass	First Mailing													
	Homeowners	New Jersey	250	1	88	88	45	66	163	163	2	5		
	Golf Courses	New Jersey	200	1	70	70	45	53	130	130	2	4		
	Service Providers	New Jersey	250	1	88	88	45	66	163	163	2	5		
	Cemeteries	New Jersey	200	1	70	70	45	53	130	130	2	4		
	Commercial Businesses	New Jersey	450	1	158	158	45	118	293	293	2	10	10	
	Growers	New Jersey	50	1	18	18	45	13	33	33	2	1		
	Subtotal			1,400		490	490		369	910	910		29	39
	Second Mailing													
		New Jersey		910	1	273	273	45	205	637	637	2	21	21
Subtotal			910		273	273		205	637	637		21	21	
Phone Follow-Up			637	1	350	350	45	263	287	287	2	10	21	
Subtotal			637		350	350		263	287	287		10	21	
Publicity Materials														
Cover Letter and/or EDR Instruction Sheet			2,310		763	763	5	64	1,547	1,547	2	52	10	
TOTALS			1,400		1,113	1,113	-	901	287	1,834	-	112	1,031	

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers 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, and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The projected annual cost to conduct the Turfgrass Economic Survey is approximately \$105,000 for each fiscal year, most of which is staff costs. The costs will be reimbursed by the Rutgers University. There will be no cost to the Federal government.

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).

This is a new request, so there is no current inventory.

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.

The Regional Field Office (RFO) is responsible for manually editing and processing the questionnaires. The RFO creates and provides editing guidelines and estimation documentation to help ensure that all questionnaires are edited and analyzed in a consistent manner. After the data has been key entered and run through computer edits, detailed computer analyses and summaries of the data are provided by the RFO for evaluation and estimation.

In September 2020, estimates of economic impact of the turfgrass industry will be published in a report from Rutgers University.

2018 Survey:

Survey design.....	January-April, 2019
Sample selection.....	May-June, 2019
Questionnaire design.....	July, 2018 - March, 2019
Mail Survey.....	July, 2019
Phone Follow-up.....	August, 2019
End of Data Collection.....	August 30, 2019
Publication.....	September, 2020

- 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.**

No approval is requested for 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.

February, 2019