

## **Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 0535-0261)**

**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Focus Group Interviews for the USDA NASS Census of Agriculture Communications Plan.

### **PURPOSE:**

The project will involve phone or video calls, to conduct in-depth interviews with stakeholders of USDA NASS and the Census of Agriculture. These interviews are designed to measure the satisfaction level of customers of NASS generally and the Agricultural Census specifically. NASS will select the participants for the study. NASS will be using Sage Communications (contractors) to conduct the interviews. The information will be summarized and returned to NASS. The descriptive statistics will be used internally by NASS staff.

### **DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:**

The in-depth interviews will involve approximately 60 contacts identified by NASS as existing Census of Agriculture data users within eight industry sectors across the United States:

- **Associations:** this group consists of national, regional, and / or state agricultural associations and councils. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Community-Based Organizations:** this group consists of community-based organizations representing primarily minority demographics in the agricultural industry. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 20).
- **Small Businesses:** this group consists of family-owned and small-business farms and ranches that represent a variety of agricultural regions / markets. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 10).
- **Corporations:** this group consists of larger businesses who contribute equipment, supplies, and services to the agricultural value chain. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Ag Education:** this group consists of resources such as four-year colleges, two-year colleges, trade schools, and related extensions or satellites. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Federal Government (within USDA):** this group consists of internal stakeholders such as Economic Research Service (ERS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Media:** this group consists of local broadcast, print and digital outlets and commentators. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 10).
- **State and Local Government:** this group consists of state departments of agriculture, district groups and boards. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).

Response rate is estimated at 80 percent.

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** (Check one)

Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software)  
 Focus Group

Small Discussion Group  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**CERTIFICATION:**

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name: David Hancock, NASS OMB Clearance Officer .

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

**Personally Identifiable Information:**

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected?  Yes  No
2. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974?  Yes  No
3. If Applicable, has a System or Records Notice been published?  Yes  No

**Gifts or Payments:**

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants?  Yes  No

**BURDEN HOURS**

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Responses	48	60 minutes	48 hrs.
Non-responses	12	2 minutes	0.4 hr.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48.4 hrs.</b>

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$41,160  
This activity is funded entirely by the USDA NASS.

**If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:**

**The selection of your targeted respondents**

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?  
[X] Yes [ ] No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)? If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

NASS identifies the following customer lists within eight sectors across the United States:

- **Associations:** this group consists of national, regional, and / or state agricultural associations and councils. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Community-Based Organizations:** this group consists of community-based organizations representing primarily minority demographics in the agricultural industry. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 20).
- **Small Businesses:** this group consists of family-owned and small-business farms and ranches that represent a variety of agricultural regions / markets. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 10).
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- **Federal Government (within USDA):** this group consists of internal stakeholders such as NASS, FSA, and NRCS. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 5).
- **Media:** this group consists of local broadcast, print and digital outlets and commentators. Interviews will be scheduled with contacts prioritized by NASS (approximately 10).
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Respondents will be comprised of all customers who receive a form that choose to participate in the in-depth interviews.

#### **Administration of the Instrument**

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
- [ ] Web-based or other forms of Social Media
  - [X ] Telephone
  - [ ] In-person
  - [ ] Mail
  - [ X ] Other, Explain – video call
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [ X ] Yes [ ] No

**Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.**

See attached document for sample interview questions.