

February 1, 2021

Dear Reporter:

I am writing to request your participation in the enclosed Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)/USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) - Maryland Field Office 2020 Pesticide Usage Survey. MDA and NASS have conducted eight similar pesticide surveys between 1985 and 2014. This survey is the only comprehensive measure of pesticide use in Maryland and helps MDA develop the most appropriate programs for Maryland farmers.

With your cooperation, this survey will also provide information necessary for rational decisions regarding pesticide usage, laws and regulations. The survey results provide a reliable, source of public information for all members of our industry, as well as for industry representatives working with policy makers at the State and national levels.

Please complete the enclosed survey and return it to NASS according to the instructions provided. Pesticides are a major input in the production of agricultural commodities; however, to keep the costs of using pesticides from exceeding the benefits, knowledge of the extent of their application is of utmost importance.

If we do not hear from you by XXXX, 2021, we will attempt to contact you to arrange a telephone interview.

Your participation is crucial, and your responses are confidential. We will never share your name or the name of your operation. The results of this survey will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law.

Thank you for your time and your assistance with this important project. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Shareefah Williams at shareefah.williams@usda.gov or 301-347-8179.

Sincerely,