

Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 0503-0021)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:

USDA Farm Loans Customer Journey Mapping Field Research

PURPOSE:

The Customer Experience Center of Excellence (CX CoE) is supporting federal agencies in designing outstanding customer experiences, strengthening the infrastructures needed to deliver them, demonstrate the business value of customer experience as a discipline, and support the adoption of customer-centered approaches across the organization.

In Phase I of this effort we are gathering customer, employee, and program data on USDA’s Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) mission area. During this research activity we will observe USDA staff in performing their tasks, conduct interviews with staff concerning the delivery of services and their understanding of the needs of their constituents, and interview agricultural producers to discover their needs and concerns with respect to USDA services.

Research findings will be used to build customer journey maps to reflect the current state journeys and potential to-be states of farmers, ranchers, and foresters as they interact with USDA programs. The journey maps will provide USDA with a research-based understanding of agricultural producers’ needs and experiences with respect to USDA services. Research outcomes are intended to guide program development and decision making to improve the customer experience, and to help operationalize a customer-centric approach throughout the USDA.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Two categories of participants are being sought for this research:

- USDA field staff - these individuals work with agricultural producers and deliver USDA services directly to customers
- Agricultural producers - farmers, ranchers, foresters, and other producers who come to USDA for services

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

- Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form Customer Satisfaction Survey
 Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software) Small Discussion Group
 Focus Group Other: Field visits with agricultural producers

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: Stacy Surla

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, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? Yes No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) 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
Individuals	30	60	30
Federal government	30	60	30
Totals			

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$51,000

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?
 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?

Two categories of participants are being sought for this research:

- USDA field staff - these individuals work with agricultural producers and deliver USDA services directly to customers
- Agricultural producers - farmers, ranchers, foresters, and other producers who come to USDA for services.

6 USDA field offices have been selected to provide a diversity of respondents for these dimensions:

- Producer farm size (large / small)
- Diversity of number of crops (low / high)
- Diversity of crop types (e.g. soy, corn, livestock, fruit, grass)
- USDA services provided (FSA, Farm Loans, NRCS, RMA)

Respondents will be recruited as follows:

- USDA field staff
 - Representative of FPAC services (FSA, Farm Loans, NRCS, RMA)
- Producers
 - 50% current farm loan recipients, 50% not loan holders (former loan holders and never held loans)
 - Distribution of ownership at each site (1 or more each of full ownership, part ownership, tenant)
 - Distribution of experience (New <= 40, New >=41, Experienced any age)
 - Distribution of relative distance to service center (50% near, 50% far)

Participants will be recruited and interviews and discussions will be scheduled through the Deputy Administrator of Field Offices at USDA headquarters.

Administration of the Instrument

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

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

Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback”

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

PURPOSE: Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

CERTIFICATION: Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

Personally Identifiable Information: Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

Gifts or Payments: If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

BURDEN HOURS:

Category of Respondents: Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.

No. of Respondents: Provide an estimate of the Number of Respondents.

Participation Time: Provide an estimate of the amount of time (in minutes) required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

Burden: Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of Respondents and the Participation Time then divide by 60.

FEDERAL COST: Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

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. Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

Administration of the Instrument: Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.