

## 1 Supporting Statement – Part B

### LOCAL FOOD MARKETING PRACTICES SURVEY

OMB No. 0535-NEW

#### **B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The target population for the Local Food Marketing Practices Survey is any farm that sells its products through one of the four marketing channels: 1) Consumers, 2) Retail Markets, 3) Institutions, and 4) Intermediate Markets. In 1975 the USDA, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Census Bureau agreed on a definition of a farm that is still in use today: “A farm is currently defined, for statistical purposes, as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural goods (crops or livestock) were sold or normally would have been sold during the year under consideration.”

The sample for this survey will total approximately 37,000 farm or ranch operators. These operators will be drawn from NASS’s List Frame which contains historic data collected from the 2017 Census of Agriculture and other NASS surveys. For the 2020 Local Foods Marketing Practices Survey all four marketing channels were identified on the 2017 Census of Agriculture which enhances the frame where for the previous survey we only one the one channel, the direct to consumers. Records will use their coverage adjustment from the 2017 Census of Agriculture (2017 COA). This coverage adjustment methodology is consistent with the coverage adjustment used for Census of Organics and the Census of Horticulture. Response to this survey is mandatory.

- 2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**
  - statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
  - estimation procedure,**
  - degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
  - unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures**

The Local Food Marketing Practices (LF) Sampling Frame comprises operations in all states who reported direct market sales in the 2017 COA or have a NASS List Frame Indicator for direct market sales. The LF Sampling Frame will be stratified by region, state, direct sales type and direct sales value or farmtype-group.

1. Direct Sales Type is defined as:
  - a. Farmers who sell directly to consumers.
  - b. Farmers who sell indirectly to consumers, and
  - c. Unknown sales route.
2. Direct Sales Value is the sales value obtained from the 2017 COA.
3. Farmtype-groups is a particular grouping of NASS defined farmtypes.

The following sample size formula was used to generate state level sample sizes based on 'Total Sales of LF'.

$$n = \frac{1}{\left( \frac{CV_T^2}{CV_{survey}^2 * n_{survey}} \right) \left( 1 - \frac{n_{survey}}{N_{survey}} \right) + \frac{1}{N}}$$

Where,

n is the sample size for the current survey.

n<sub>survey</sub> is the sample size for the previous survey.

N is the current survey population count.

N<sub>survey</sub> is the previous survey population count.

CV<sub>T</sub> is the target CV for 'Total Sales of LF', and

CV<sub>survey</sub> is the previous survey CV for 'Total Sales of LF'.

The results show a sample size of ~37,000 generates national and region level CVs of 6.5% and 15%, respectively. The results also generate published state level CV of 25% for all but three published states (MO, NJ and WI). However, the resulting CV for two states (MO and WI) will produce medium reliability estimates<sup>a</sup>. It is anticipated the actual survey CV results will be lower due to an improved sampling frame and summary process and mandatory reporting.

All data will be analyzed for unusual values. Data from each operation will be compared to historical data (if available), as well as to trends from similar operations. Missing data for an operation will be estimated based on similar operations or historical data. Individual state and aggregated national estimates will be reviewed by NASS's Agricultural Statistics Board for reasonableness, then published (where sufficient data are available). If State-level data cannot be published due to confidentiality rules, the data will be published on either a regional or national level.

### 3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must

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<sup>a</sup> A LF medium reliability estimate has a CV between 15.0% and 29.9%.

**be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

NASS will provide respondents with a variety of modes for completing the survey, including internet, mail, telephone, or personal interview. A customer service phone number is included at the top of the questionnaire in case respondents have any questions.

Initially, a sealed postcard will be mailed to all respondents giving them a secure access code to go on line and complete the survey using our Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI) system. Non-respondents will then be mailed a cover letter with the questionnaire that will again describe the importance of the data and how it will be used, as well as explain that individual data will be kept confidential. Instructions on how to access the CAWI questionnaire will be provided again. After two attempts by mail, NASS will attempt to contact the respondents by phone or personal interviews.

Survey data are subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions and mistakes in reporting and in processing the data. Error is minimized by carefully reviewing all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

#### **4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.**

Eighteen cognitive interviews were conducted across the nation between December 19, 2019 and January 17, 2020 on the 2020 Local Foods Marketing Practices Survey (OMB No. 0535-0248) to assess respondents' understanding of these draft questions in the draft questionnaire, and the potential measurement error associated with them. Specifically, the research goals of the cognitive interviews were to:

- Understand the respondents' comprehension of questions and terminology;
- Understand barriers to the retrieval of information requested on the questionnaire, including any record keeping practices;
- Observe the respondents' judgement and communication of the information requested, and how to align with response to the question/questionnaire's intent; and,
- Glean ways to reduce respondent burden while maximizing overall response strategies.

Highlights from the findings of the cognitive interviews include:

- Confirmation that the new single-construct screening questions, in particular Question 2, reduced measurement error and correctly screened respondents that should be in-scope and out-of-scope;

- Confirmation that the redesigned matrices at the end of Sections 1-4 that use Plain English better measured the intended constructs of fresh and value-added (processed) products; and
- Identification of variables to remove from the questionnaire to reduce respondent burden (e.g., the point question).

**5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

NASS is conducting the Local Food Marketing Practices Survey through its Census and Survey Division. The Census Planning Branch Chief is Donald Buysse, (202) 690-8747.

Sample design is developed by NASS's Sample Design Section. The Branch Chief is Mark Apodaca, (202) 720-2857.

The samples and survey data are reviewed by NASS Summary, Estimation, and Disclosure Methodology Branch, Methodology Division. The Branch Chief is Jeff Bailey, (202)720-4008.

Data collection is normally carried out by NASS Regional Field Offices; Eastern Field Operation's Director is Jay Johnson, (202) 720-3638 and the Western Field Operation's Director is Troy Joshua (202) 720-8220.

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