

Supporting Statement

VEGETABLE SURVEYS

OMB No. 0535-0037

A. JUSTIFICATION

This long-running docket is being submitted for an extension of 3 years. Some improvements are being made to this program from the current approval and are documented here. The most significant change is the removal of the New Mexico Chile Survey as the data will now be collected in the End of Season Vegetable Survey. There are only minimal changes to the other surveys included in this Information Collection Request from what is currently approved.

- 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 objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to publish useful statistics related to agriculture. This includes estimates of crop and livestock production, prices, and disposition; economic and environmental statistics; and conducting the quinquennial Census of Agriculture. The Vegetable Surveys program obtains basic agricultural statistics for fresh market and processing vegetables in major producing states. Vegetable statistics are used by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help administer programs and by growers, processors, and marketers in making production and marketing decisions. Estimates for the fresh market and processing vegetable program consists of 26 selected crops collected and published on an annual basis.

The vegetable program classifies vegetables by utilization; all crops can be used by both the fresh and processed markets, except lettuce which is only fresh.

The vegetable program surveys growers, who are contacted in November and asked to report acres planted and harvested, quantity of vegetables produced, and how much of their crop was sold through fresh markets or for processing along with the correlating prices.

As part of the Agricultural Resource Management, Chemical Use, and Post-harvest Chemical Use Surveys (OMB docket number 0535-0218), NASS maintains databases on agricultural chemical use and related farm practices. The vegetable surveys in this docket provide base information for much of the data collected in that docket.

General authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204 which 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.**

Data reported on vegetable inquiries are used by NASS to estimate acreage planted and harvested, yield/production, price, and utilization for the crops listed below as a part of the Federal vegetable program.

Vegetable Data for Both the Fresh Market and Processors Will be Collected for the Following Crops Under the Federal Program	
Artichokes	Lettuce, leaf
Asparagus	Lettuce, Romaine
Beans, Snap	Onions, Dry (exclude green onions)
Broccoli	Peas, Green (exclude dry peas)
Cabbage (exclude Napa)	Peppers, Bell
Cantaloupes (including muskmelon)	Peppers, Chile (all peppers excluding bell)
Carrots	Pumpkins
Cauliflower	Spinach
Celery	Squash
Corn, Sweet (include baby corn)	Sweet Potatoes
Cucumbers	Tomatoes (excludes tomatillo & greenhouse production)
Garlic	Watermelons
Honeydew Melons	

The following supplemental vegetable and herb data is collected under cooperative agreements with State cooperators. Rather than conduct two separate surveys, the additional data is collected using the same Federal questionnaires. The cooperators reimburse NASS for the additional data collection and processing costs.

Vegetables and Herbs Collected Under External Project Argeement (EPA's) with States	
Vegetables	Herbs
Beets	Parsley
Bittermelon	Other Herbs
Cabbage, Chinese	
Cabbage, Head	
Cabbage, Mustard	
Eggplant	
Escarole/Endive	
Greens, Collard	
Greens, Kale	
Lettuce, All	
Lettuce, Leaf	
Lettuce, Romaine	
Onions, Green/scallions	
Peppers, All (Other than Bell)	Beans, Snap, Bush
Potatoes	Beans, Snap, Pole
Radish, Daikon	Muskmelon
Squash, Italian	Peppers, Other
Squash, Oriental	
Squash, Summer	
Squash, Winter	

These estimates provide vital statistics for growers, processors, and marketers to use in making production and marketing decisions. Private industry forecasters use the data to track production levels for the industry. Federal and State agencies use the annual summary when developing and appraising government programs affecting the vegetable industry. Allied industries such as container manufacturers, chemical manufacturers, and plant breeders use the data in feasibility studies to assess the economic impact of products and define market size and location. Data have been provided to foreign governments interested in U.S. vegetable production and to extension specialists at land grant universities.

Some States have entered into cooperative agreements with NASS to include additional vegetables to the Federal program. These crops are significant to their State's economy. The USDA Farm Service Agency and the Risk Management Agency will use NASS data for administering their programs and this supplemental data is needed to get a complete picture of the vegetable production in these States.

Survey results are used by the Economic Research Service (ERS) for the Vegetables and Pulses *Outlook Report*
<https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/cj82k729x?locale=en>

Vegetable data provides information to assist the Agricultural Marketing Service in the administration of market orders for tomatoes and onions. Another user of NASS data is the office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Executive Office of the President, to help administer their Generalized System of Preferences Program, which determines preferred imports from other countries. The International Trade Commission utilizes vegetable data in its studies of import relief.

- 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.**

Beginning in 2013 NASS expanded its data collection modes for the vegetable surveys to include web-based data reporting. In 2021, just under 12 percent of the respondents completed the survey using the internet.

- 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.**

The National Agricultural Statistics Service cooperates with State Agricultural Departments and universities to conduct agricultural surveys. The surveys meet both State and Federal needs, thus eliminating duplication and minimizing reporting burden on the agricultural industry. These surveys are the only timely and reliable source of information on the vegetable industry at the national level. The statistics published are not available from any other source.

- 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.**

Information from growers can be provided with a minimum of difficulty by the respondent and generally without having to consult their record books. Processors provide the requested information from their normal day-to-day operating records. Of the total sample size of around 11,000 approximately 86% or 9,450 operations have a value of sales less than \$3.25 million. This is from the Small Business Size Standards published in the Federal Register citation 87 FR 18607 pages 18607-18627.

Every five years, NASS completes a review of the vegetable programs across the United States based on the results of the most recent Census of Agriculture. The primary purpose of this review is to ensure that NASS' annual estimation program targets commodities and states that are the most relevant to U.S. agriculture based on the latest information available. The primary source of information used by NASS is the Census of Agriculture, since it is the most comprehensive. NASS analyzes our annual vegetable estimates, and compares them with administrative data from the Farm Services Agency (FSA) before any program changes are made.

When determining which states should be included in any commodity program, NASS selects states that, in aggregate, account for approximately 80-85 percent of the U.S. production. In some cases it would be inefficient to reach this level and therefore coverage could be slightly lower. There have been no changes to the targeted crops have been since the program review after the 2017 Census of Agriculture.

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.

Collecting data less frequently would eliminate data needed to keep the agricultural industry abreast of changes at the State and national level. Timing and frequency of the various reports have evolved to meet the needs of customers and yet minimize the burden on the reporting public.

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 Notice soliciting comments was published in the Federal Register on April 1, 2022 on pages 19066-19067. NASS received one public comment on this renewal request from Andrew Reamer.

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 is in frequent contact with growers and processors to stay informed about the vegetable industry.

Some of the individuals and organizations we have met with include:

Bill Lapp
Advanced Economic Solutions
Bill@aesresearch.com
402-980-1164

John Newton, Ph.D., Chief Economist
American Farm Bureau Federation
202-406-3729 w 502-641-4636 c
www.fb.org
jnewton@fb.org

Mrs. Wilma V. Davis
Agricultural Economist - Vegetables and Pulses Analyst
USDA - Economic Research Service
Market and Trade Economics Division - Crops Branch
Wilma.Davis@usda.gov

No comments were provided from these individuals.

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

There are no payments or gifts 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 the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018, Title III of Pub. L. No. 115-435, codified in 44 U.S.C. Ch. 35 and other applicable Federal laws. 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.

The following CIPSEA Pledge statement will appear on all future 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 and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2018, Title III of Pub. L. No. 115-435, codified in 44 U.S.C. Ch. 35 and other applicable Federal laws. For more information on how we protect your information please visit: <https://www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality>.

All individuals who may access these confidential data for research are also covered under Titles 18 and CIPSEA and must complete a Certification and Restrictions on Use of Unpublished Data (ADM-043) agreement.

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.

This renewal has a sample size of 11,140, a total number of 46,444 responses and a total of 4,998 burden hours.

Average minutes per response for the vegetable surveys are based on the amount of data asked on each questionnaire and the time needed for telephone follow-ups. Total hours of burden are shown in the table below.

The cost to the public of completing a questionnaire is assumed to be comparable to the hourly rate of those requesting the data. Reporting time of 4,998 hours is multiplied by \$37.94 per hour for a total cost to the public of \$189,624.12.

NASS uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' [Occupational Employment Statistics](#) (most recently published on March 31, 2022 for the previous May) to estimate an hourly wage for the burden cost. The May 2021 mean wage for bookkeepers was \$21.70. The mean wage for farm managers was \$37.71. The mean wage for farm supervisors was \$26.18. The mean wage of the three is \$28.53. To calculate the fully loaded wage rate (includes allowances for Social Security, insurance, etc.) NASS will add 33% for a total of \$37.94 per hour.

Specialty/State Surveys												
Chile Grower Survey - Will be combined with End of Season Vegetables		0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tomatoes for Processing Planted Under Contract - May (For County Estimates) - California - Mailing	3980	30	1	15	15	15	4	15	15	2	1	5
Tomatoes for Processing Planted Under Contract - May (For County Estimates) - California - Phone Followup	3980	15	1	15	15	15	4	0	0	2	0	4
Processing Tomatoes - August - California - Mailing	4011	30	1	15	15	10	3	15	15	2	1	4
Processing Tomatoes - August - California - Phone Followup	4011	15	1	15	15	10	3	0	0	2	0	3
Processing Tomatoes - End of Year Production & Upcoming Year Intentions - January - California	5103	30	1	15	15	15	4	15	15	2	1	5
Processing Tomatoes - End of Year Production & Upcoming Year Intentions - January - California	5103	15	1	15	15	15	4	0	0	2	0	4
Specialty/State Surveys - Total		90		90	90		22	0	45		3	25
Publicity Materials												
CASI Cover Letter		11,090	1	8,890	8,890	5	741	2,200	18,752	2	625	1,366
Cognitive Testing												
Questionnaire Testing		50	1	50	50	60	50	0	0	2	0	50
Totals		11,140		8,940	8,940		3,746	2,200	37,504		1,252	4,998

46,444

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 estimated total cost to the Federal government for the vegetable program will remain at \$1.5 million. Approximately \$1,275,000 will go to federal salaries, \$113,000 will go to NASDA enumerators for data collection and \$112,000 will go to printing, postage and other miscellaneous expenses.

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).

There were some changes since the previous approval. The New Mexico Chile Grower Survey will be combined with the End of Season Vegetable Survey. An addition twenty cognitive testing interviews are being requested for this renewal.

The burden decrease on the responses for the vegetable surveys resulted from the removal of the New Mexico Chile Survey (merged with the end of season vegetable survey) as well as separating the data collection plan (number of mailings). There were some burden hours that were shifted from response to the non-response as a result of individually reporting the number of mailings.

The burden increase on the non-response resulted from the explicit data collection methodology including multiple mailings.

	Response Changes		Non-Response Changes		Totals	
	Number of Responses	Burden Hours	Number of Responses	Burden Hours	Number of Responses	Burden Hours
Beginning Balances	9,250	4,541	4,540	151	13,790	4,692
Adjustment Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Program Change Totals	(310)	(795)	32,964	1,101	32,654	4,897
Ending Balances	8,940	3,746	37,504	1,252	46,444	9,589

- 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 vegetable surveys obtain data from the major producing States for all of the major commodities in their State. Samples are selected nationally for each State based on targeting the particular commodity of interest. Vegetable data are collected by the National Operations Division (NOD) and within the Regional Field Offices (RFOs). The data are summarized nationally with all States using the same summary and receiving consistent indications across all States and commodities. All States participate in the vegetable program and data are published for both the fresh market vegetables and the processed vegetables, following the NASS confidentiality rules.

The annual end of season vegetable release contains estimates set for acreage, yield, and total production price for all vegetables in the estimation program.

Below is the link to the Annual release:

<https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/sj139192w?locale=en>

Below is the link to the California Process Tomato Reports:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/California/Publications/Specialty_and_Other_Releases/Tomatoes/index.php

Below is the link to the New Mexico Chile Pepper Reports:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_Mexico/Publications/Special_Interest_Reports/index.php.

Regional, State and Headquarters statisticians use the same Estimation Manual which contains standard analysis and estimation procedures.

- 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.**

There is no request for approval of 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.

July 2022