1Supporting Statement Part B

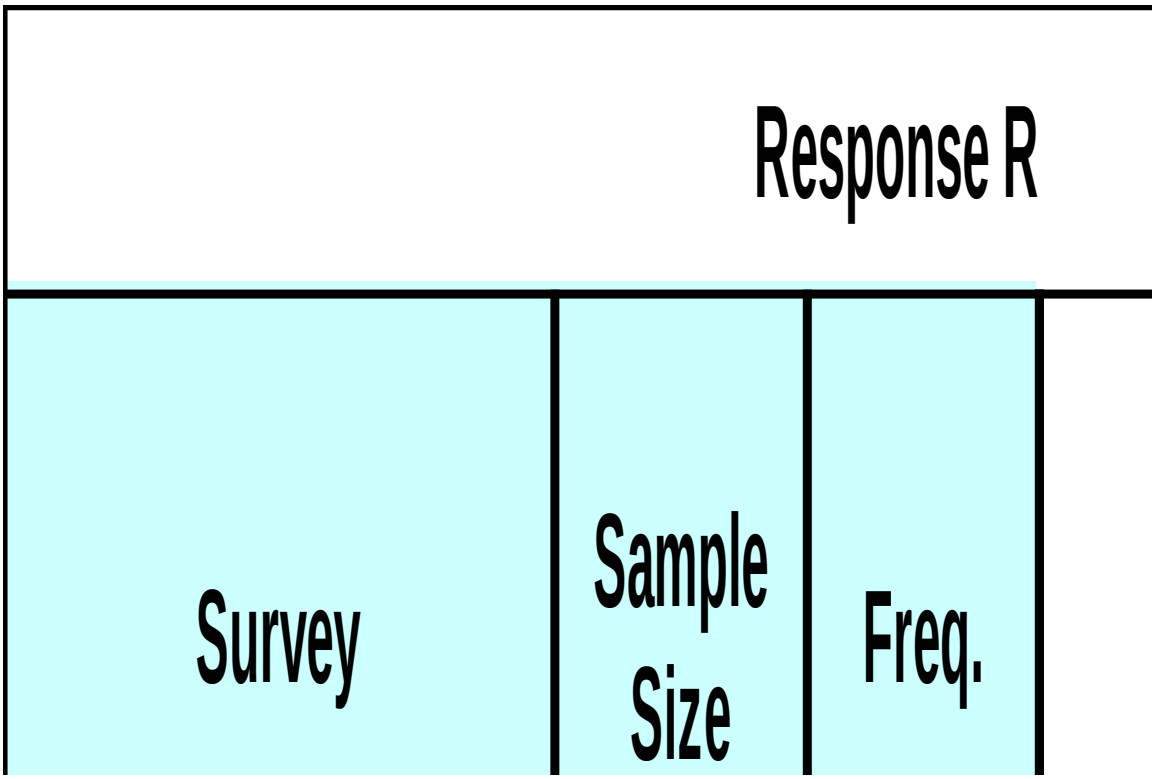
ORGANIC SURVEY
OMB No. 0535 – 0249

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 Organic Survey is all certified organic farms, farms exempt from certification, and transitioning farms. Certified organic farms must meet the qualifications set out by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the USDA and be certified compliant by an approved agent of AMS. Farms employing organic practices but selling less than $5,000 of organic products are exempt from certification. Transitioning farms have filed a plan and begun the process of becoming certified organic. The Organic Survey is a census of all entities that meet the criteria described above.

The estimated sample size for the organic survey is estimated to be less than 27,000 and the target response rate is estimated at 80 percent or higher.



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.**

Data Collection: Extensive efforts will be used to maximize response, and thus reduce the extent of non-response adjustment to the survey. Approximately 27,000 questionnaires will be mailed in December with a second mailing for non-respondents in February. All questionnaires will be keyed from image at the National Operations Center (NOC) in Olivette, Missouri. The initial mailing to respondents will consist of a folded post card that will contain information on how the respondents can go online and complete the questionnaire through our Computer-Aided Self-Administered Interview (CASI) system. This will be followed up with a second mailing to non-respondents which will contain a blank questionnaire, a cover letter, return envelope and an Computer-Aided Self-Administered Interview (CASI) instruction sheet. For non-respondents, the third mailing will be a reminder postcard. The fourth mailing will contain another copy of the questionnaire, a cover letter, and an CASI instruction sheet and a return envelope. E-mail reminders may be used for respondents who opted-in to receiving E-Mail reminders. There will be phone follow up for those who do not

respond to the mail requests. There will also be a limited number of face-to-face interviews conducted.

Stratification: All operations will be stratified based on their organic total value of sales or their organic acres under production. Due to the influence on published totals, extremely large operations will be made “must” records and will be classified in an extreme operator (EO) stratum. Operations in an EO stratum that do not respond to the survey will be estimated by Regional Field Office personnel. Due to the diversity of organic farming operations from state-to-state, the EO definitions will vary by state. Approximately 5% of the total sample size will be targeted for an EO stratum within each State. For all other non-EO strata, there will be a non-response weight applied to the responding operations, in order to account for the non-respondents. This non-response weight will be a simple factor derived by taking the stratum size and dividing by the number of responding operations within the stratum population.

Item Imputation: For individual questions that go un-answered, but are determined to be necessary for a completed report, an imputation algorithm will be utilized. An analyst in a Regional Field Office can trigger imputation by coding a cell value with a “-1”. Single imputation of missing values is done using sequential regression also known as chained equations based on a fully conditionally specified methodology.

Weighting: For non-EO strata’s each record’s weight will include a non-response adjustment and a coverage adjustment. The record’s weight for EO strata’s will include a coverage adjustment. This will become the final weight used to generate all published estimates.

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

A public information campaign will be used by NASS for the Organic Survey. The objective is to make organic producers aware of the survey, its importance to them and the Nation, and to encourage their response. This campaign will work through farm organizations, radio broadcasters, farm press, agribusinesses, and the NASS Regional Field Offices.

To ensure a high response rate and to reduce the non-response bias in the final Organic Survey estimates, NASS will attempt to collect data from non-respondents by telephone. A limited number of interviews will be completed by

personal enumeration. The telephone and personal enumeration activities will begin in May, and extend through much of June.

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

The main validation of current procedures is to remain in contact with organic growers, processors, and industry leaders and solicit their expert advice. Included in this request is an annual fifty interviews for cognitive testing to, as necessary, improve how the respondents provide data.

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.

Sample size for each State is determined by the Sampling Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is Mark Apodaca, (202) 690-8141.

Summary programs are prepared by the Agency's Statistical Methods Branch; Branch Chief is Jeff Bailey, (202) 690-8141.

Data collection operations are carried out by NASS Regional Field Offices; Western Field Operation’s Director is Troy Joshua, (202) 720-8220. Eastern Field Operation’s Director is Jody McDaniel, (202) 720-3638.

The survey will be administered by the Census and Survey Division. The Branch Chief is Donald Buysse (202) 690-8747.

The NASS commodity statisticians in Headquarters in the Crops and Livestock Branches located in the Statistics Division are responsible for reviewing the data and are responsible for looking at the summary and publication. The Crops Branch Chief is Lance Honig (202) 720-2127, the Livestock Branch Chief is Travis Averill (202) 692-0069, and the Environmental, Economics and Demographics Branch Chief is Tony Dorn (202) 720-6146.

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