



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



2025 LOCAL FOOD MARKETING PRACTICES SURVEY

This guide gives information on completing your survey form. If you need more help, call 1-888-424-7828, or email nass@usda.gov. The telephone call is free. Once you have completed your survey, please return it using the postage-paid envelope we have provided.

You may respond online at www.agcounts.usda.gov. This method is fast, easy, and secure.

If you do not return your form by February 18th, a second copy will be mailed. If you still do not return a completed form, we will contact you to arrange a telephone or personal interview.

Why should I report? The information gathered from the Local Food Marketing Practices Survey is vital to the USDA's and the public's understanding of the local foods sector. The survey informs policymaking and program implementation. Section 10016(a) (1) (A) of the 2014 Farm Bill established a directive for the USDA to collect data on "the production and marketing of locally or regionally produced agricultural food products," while Section 10016 (b) (2) requires the USDA to "conduct surveys and analysis and publish reports relating to the production, handling, distribution, retail sales, and trend studies... of or on locally or regionally produced agricultural food products." The 2018 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79) subsequently renewed the 2014 Farm Bill directive. This survey fulfills those requirements.

Who Should Report? A reply is needed from EVERYONE who receives a report form, including persons who operated a farm, ranch or other agricultural operation in 2025 as well as those who were not involved in agriculture. More Local Food Marketing Practices Survey information is on the Internet at <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus>.

If you were a landlord only and rented out all your land, complete the front page of the enclosed report form and return it in the preaddressed envelope. If you were a landlord who operated a farm, ranch, or other agricultural operation on someone else's land, you should complete the entire report form for that land which you operated.

If you had no land, no livestock, and no agricultural operations, return the report form with a note indicating the operation's status on the front of the form below the address label.

Partial Year Operations - If you stopped farming during 2025, complete the report form for the portion of the year that you did farm. Write "Stopped farming during 2025" and the date you stopped farming below the address area. Mail the completed report form in the return envelope. If the person whose name is on the label was deceased during 2025, complete the form for the portion of the year that was farmed, and write a note.

Involved In More Than One Operation - If you made decisions for more than one operation, you may have received a report form for each operation. Provide information for only the operation name on the label.

Partnership Operation - Complete only ONE form for the entire partnership's agricultural operation and include the entire operation on that one form. If you made day-to-day decisions for more than one partnership operation, complete a report form for each separate operation.

Specialty Commodities - Bees, elk, emus, fish, nursery, maple syrup, etc., are an important part of the agriculture industry. Report for all commodities, regardless of the amount of production or sales you had in 2025.

Received More Than One Report Form For the Same Operation - If you received more than one report form for the same operation, complete only ONE form per operation. Write "DUPLICATE" below the address area of each extra form. Return all forms in the same return envelope with your completed form so that we can correct our records.

What does the National Agricultural Statistics Service do with the information you provide?

NASS will publish the results of 2025 Local Food Marketing Practices survey in the Winter of 2026 to provide valuable insight on trends in local food sales in the agricultural economy. Results will be available on the NASS website, www.nass.usda.gov. Only aggregate level data will be published, so that no individual reports or farm operator information will be disclosed in the summary data. The information will be available to everyone from the general public to government, business, and non-profit leaders for their use.

How was this address selected?

Your address was scientifically selected to represent other local food producers in your community. As part of a sample, you represent many other people. Food producers from all 50 States have been selected to participate in this very important survey.

Is it safe to provide my information over the Internet?

Yes. The 2025 Local Food Marketing Practices survey is encrypted at all times. Our secure servers ensure the encrypted transmission of data between your browser and the National Agricultural Statistics Service. This means your browser and our server encode or scramble all data using a security key.

What do these terms in the survey mean?

Operation:	A farm or ranch, a piece of land, or a structure where production takes place and an agricultural product is grown or raised.
Produced and Sold:	An agricultural product that is grown or raised by an operation and is also sold by that same operation.
Food:	Edible agricultural products for humans to eat or drink.
Selling Food Directly:	The first point of sales of the food produced and sold by an operation.
Production Contract:	A verbal or written agreement setting terms, conditions, and fees paid by the contractor to the operation for the production of crops or livestock. The contractor owns the product being grown or raised and often provides inputs.

What are the four Direct to Consumer Markets?

Consumers:	Individuals who purchase your products from farmers' markets, on-farm stores or farm stands, roadside stands or stores, CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), and online marketplaces.
Retail Markets:	Supermarkets, supercenters, restaurants, caterers, independently owned grocery stores, and food cooperatives.
Institutions:	K-12 schools, colleges or universities, hospitals, workplace cafeterias, prisons, and foodbanks.
Intermediate Markets:	Businesses or organizations in the middle of the supply chain that <i>market locally-and/or regionally-branded products</i> , such as distributors, food hubs, brokers, auction houses, wholesale and terminal markets, and food processors.

Instructions by Section

Face Page – Answer the questions about whether you produce agricultural products on your farming/ranching operation, and whether you sell food products directly to consumers, retail establishments, institutions or an intermediate market. If you check “NO” to all questions on the face page, please turn to page 20, the last page, fill out your name and phone number, and return the form in the prepaid envelope provided. If you have any questions about the survey, please call 1-888-424-7828, or email nass@usda.gov. **Exclude crop and livestock production under production contract.**

Section 1-4 Sales – Report the value of edible agricultural products for human consumption this operation produced and sold through the appropriate direct marketing channel. Report only the first point of sale, even if that sale was to another farm or business you also own. Exclude sales of products that were not for human food or drink such as animal feed, wool, nursery and flowers not intended for human consumption. Report sales completed in 2025 regardless of the year the product was harvested or raised. Report the gross value of sales before the deduction of expenses, marketing fees, or taxes. Include as sales your estimate of the value of any crop or livestock bartered directly to consumers for services or other goods. Report in whole dollars only. If you sell in more than one direct-to-consumer marketing channel, please report sales of each marketing channel separately in the tables at the end of sections 1-4. **Exclude crop and livestock production under production contract.**

- **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Sales** - Report the value of fresh fruits and vegetables sold as food for human consumption in 2025 in the appropriate category. Also include crops such as grains, tea, coffee, and any agricultural products that are unprocessed for human consumption in this column. Report the sales in 2025 regardless of the year crops were harvested or raised. Include the value of your landlord's share of the commodities harvested. Report the gross value before the deduction of expenses or fees.
- **Meat, Farmed Seafood, and Egg Sales** - Report the value of meat, farmed seafood and eggs sold by this operation for human consumption in 2025. Include food items sold in their unprocessed state, such as farmed clams, oysters, soft-shelled crabs, and bulk sales of honey. Include livestock sold with the established intent that the animal's carcass will be acquired by a consumer after the producer conducts or arranges for slaughter. Exclude commodities produced under a production contract. Exclude livestock sold at a traditional auction where it is expected they will become livestock on feed.

Some farms offer hunting or fishing for a fee. If this farm sells only whole game animals or fish, those transactions are not included. If this farm raises the game or fish and processes the game or fish into meat, those transactions are included as value added. Fee hunting and fishing operations on farms are in the category of “other direct-to-consumer markets” in Section 1. Include the value of your landlord's share of the commodities produced. Report the gross value before the deduction of expenses or fees.

- **Milk and Dairy Product Sales** - Report the value of milk and dairy products, such as butter, cheese, and yogurt, sold by this operation for human consumption in 2025. Include the value of your landlord's share of the commodities produced. Report the gross value before the deduction of expenses or fees.
- **Other Processed Food Product Sales** – Report the value of products that have been altered before being sold to the consumer. Include canned or preserved vegetables, jam, jelly, wine, juice, cider, and meats. Include only those commodities which the initial agricultural commodity was produced on this operation. For example, if wine was produced from grapes purchased from another operation do not include it. If the grapes were produced on this operation, then the value of sales for wine produced from grapes grown on this operation should be reported.

Section 1, item 6 – Report the distance between the farm operation and the farmer's market. If you sold produce at multiple farmer's markets, choose the location where you sold the most produce.

Section 1, item 8-9 – If you sold produce at an on-farm store/stand you operated where other operations were allowed to sell their produce alongside your own produce, report yes in question 8. In question 9, report how many other operations were at your farm stand. If you operated multiple farm stands, combine them when counting but only count each unique operation once (if the same operation sold produce at two of your stands, count that operation only once).

Section 1, item 12-13 – If you sold produce at a roadside stand not on your operation and other operations also sold their produce at these roadside stands, report yes in question 12. Then for question 13 indicate how many other operations were selling produce at the same roadside stand. Include operations whether they were neighbors or you helped sell their produce alongside your own. Do not count the same operator twice if you sold produce together at two or more different roadside stands. Report for all off-farm stores/stands combined in question 13.

Section 1, item 15 – Report the distance between the farm operation and the roadside stand. If you sold produce at multiple roadside stands, choose the location where you sold the most produce.

Section 1, item 16-18 – If you sell to a CSA or multiple CSAs report yes in question 16. If any of these CSAs sell food produced by another operation, report yes in question 17. In question 18, report the number of other operations that sold produce at the CSA's you sold produce at. If the farm sold produce at multiple CSA's, report the total number of other producers for all CSAs combined. not known. Include marketing expenses, which include expenses incurred from value added production. Marketing expenses are also itemized in Section 5, item 10.

Section 1, item 21 – Report yes if you have ownership in any CSA through which you sold food that your operation produced.

Section 1, item 24 – Report yes if you have ownership in any online marketplace through which you sold food that your operation produced.

Section 1, item 28; Section 2, item 8; Section 3, item 10; Section 4, item 6 – Report the first year that this operation started using the marketing practice listed. If there have been any marketing practice gaps, treat the most recent return as the new start date if the gap exceeded five years, otherwise ignore the gap and go with the first time you worked before the gap.

Section 5, item 1 – Report by category the total value of all local food sales reported in Sections 1-4. The total reported should represent the sum of items reported in Section 1, item 29, Section 2, item 9, Section 3, item 11, and Section 4, item 7.

Section 5, item 2 – Report the percentage of all local food sales reported in Sections 1-4 by distance from operation. Items 2a, 2b, and 2c must sum to 100%.

Section 5, items 5-6 – Include all land on this operation, not just the portion used for directly marketed production.

Section 5, item 7 – Check yes or no in columns 1 and 2 to determine whether any of the crop and livestock categories in the leftmost column were produced and sold, regardless of marketing channel. Exclude any crops and/or livestock sold under production contract.

Section 5, item 8 – Check the code that represents your total gross value of sales. Exclude value added sales but include the value of commodities used in value added production.

Section 5, item 9 – Include all farm expenses paid by you and/or your landlord(s) for crops, livestock, or poultry produced on this operation in question 9. Include expenses incurred in 2025 even if they were not paid in 2025. Estimate if exact figures are not known. Include marketing expenses, which include expenses incurred from value added production. Marketing expenses are also itemized in item 10.

Sections 6 and 7 – Report practices used, particularly program participation, certifications by the USDA or other organizations, and food safety audits/plans used by the whole operation.

Section 6, Item 8 – Report if this operation is a member of a cooperative enterprise where they own, use, and control their business democratically along with other member-owners.

Section 8 – Report in this section the characteristics of the persons who make the day-to-day decisions for your farm or ranch. In item 2, report the total number of persons making day to day decisions, including both the men and women. Do not report as operators minor-aged children who work on the farm. In item 3, answer questions about those people for up to 4 operators. If there are more than 4 operators, answer for the 4 that make most of the day-to-day decisions for the operation. For number of years farming, include only years over the age of 16.