

1 Supporting Statement

STOCKS REPORTS

OMB No. 0535-0007

In an effort to increase the transparency of NASS's survey processes and provide information on the quality of its estimates, NASS publishes Methodology and Quality Measures Reports for some commodities. The Methodology and Quality Measures Reports are published at the same time or shortly after estimates are released.

This supporting statement incorporates data and methodology from the NASS 2024 Grain Stocks Methodology and Quality Measures Publication located at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Methodology_and_Data_Quality/Grain_Stocks/02_2024/gsq0224.pdf.

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 Off-Farm Grain Stocks surveys provide detailed estimates of grains, oilseeds, and pulse crops stored in any commercial facility off the farm.

Off-farm stocks surveys are potentially conducted in every State for barley, canola, chickpeas, corn, dry edible peas, flaxseed, lentils, mustard seed, oats, rapeseed, rye, safflower, sorghum, soybeans, sunflowers, and wheat. Grain stocks frequently move to areas other than where produced, thus requiring coverage by all States to fully account for all off-farm stocks. The target population is all commercial grain storage operations, including grain and oilseed processing plants, terminals, and any other facilities that store grains, oilseeds, and pulse crops (excluding peanuts and rice) that would not be classified as a farm. Separate rice stocks surveys are conducted in Arkansas, California, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Texas. Peanut stocks are estimated for the U.S. only.

The off-farm stocks survey is an enumeration of all known commercial grain storage facilities. In December 2024 there were 7,644 facilities with approximately 11.9 billion bushels of storage capacity. An effort is made to obtain a report from all facilities. Reports of stock holdings are normally received from operations covering about 80 percent of the capacity. Estimates are made for missing responses to make the survey complete. Many of these facilities are operated by parent companies where one respondent will report for multiple facilities.

The Potato Stocks Survey is a stratified simple random sample of growers with on-farm storage capacity and a census of off-farm agribusinesses who store, ship or process potatoes. The Peanut Stocks Survey is a census of agribusinesses that store or process peanuts. The off-farm Rice Stocks Survey is a census of mills, port facilities and warehouses. The Rice Stocks – Transport Survey is of the major transporters of rice (includes barges, rail cars, semi-trucks, etc.). The Hop Brewer Stocks Survey is a complete census of all large national and regional breweries. This includes large (ie, major) national and regional brewers. The Hops Dealer and Grower Stocks Survey is a complete census of all growers and dealers that store hops.

Response rates for 2023 are summarized below:

Off-farm Grain Stocks

The overall response rate for the four 2023 surveys is estimated at 70.0 percent. Quality metrics is documented in the publication “Grain Stocks Methodology and Quality Measures” report available at the link:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Methodology_and_Data_Quality/Grain_Stocks/02_2024/gsq0224.pdf.

The report indicates “The metrics table below describe the performance data for all surveys contributing to the publication. The accuracy of data products may be evaluated through sampling and nonsampling error. There is no sampling error present for the OFGS survey since it is a census of all known grain storage entities. The Agricultural Survey CVs measure the error due to sampling as well as some nonsampling error. Nonsampling error is also evaluated by examining response rates and the weighted item response rates.”

The Weighted Item Response Rate is the ratio of reported survey data expanded by the original sampling weight compared to final nonresponse adjusted summary totals. It is being used in lieu of coverage rates.

Quality Metrics from Off Farm Grain Stocks Survey by Crop and Date - United States: 2022 and 2023

Date	Weighted Item Response Rate		Coefficient of Variation	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Corn Stocks				
March 1	85.0	82.8	0.3	0.2
June 1	81.9	80.6	0.2	0.2
September 1	80.8	78.3	0.5	0.4
December 1	82.5	81.2	0.2	0.2
Soybeans Stocks				
March 1	89.5	86.0	0.3	0.2
June 1	85.2	80.0	0.3	0.3
September 1	83.9	80.8	0.3	0.5
December 1	85.8	83.7	0.3	0.2
All Wheat Stocks				
March 1	81.6	83.1	0.6	0.5
June 1	74.4	75.8	0.8	0.8
September 1	80.2	73.4	0.4	0.3
December 1	76.9	78.4	0.9	0.4

Response rates for the other surveys in this information collection request is summarized in the below table.

Response Rates

Survey

Sample Size

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**

Reports of grain and oilseed stock holdings are normally received from operations covering about 90 percent of total capacity. Estimates are made for missing facilities to make the survey complete. Off-farm survey data are reviewed at the State and national levels for reasonableness, consistency with historical estimates, and current crop size. After estimates are made for on-farm and off-

farm, the two are combined and evaluated using a balance sheet approach. This method utilizes other sources of data to check the reasonableness of the stocks estimates. Estimates of production, imports, exports, crushings, milling, and all other recorded uses of grain and oilseeds are reviewed to make sure beginning stocks, production, utilization, and ending stocks are within reasonable balance and present the best possible estimate of all stocks. Stocks for the commodities covered by the other voluntary surveys are enumerated in the same manner.

Potatoes are grown in every State in the U.S. with NASS making production estimates in 13 States. Potatoes are harvested throughout the year somewhere in the country. USDA covers total annual production. Most of the crop is stored in temperature- and humidity-controlled cellars to be held for sale through the late fall, winter, and spring months.

For peanuts, survey data are collected from shellers, blanchers, processors, and warehouses directly by NASS headquarters through mail questionnaires and Computer Assisted Self Interview (CASI). The Peanut Stocks survey is a mandatory survey. Respondent businesses are accustomed to the survey and Headquarters receives complete cooperation.

Hop stocks that are held by growers and dealers are only collected in six estimating states Idaho, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Washington.

Samples of the stocks questionnaires are attached in the ROCIS system.

Survey indications are subject to non-sampling errors such as omissions, duplication, imputation for missing data, and mistakes in reporting, recording, and processing the data. These errors are not measured directly but they are minimized through rigid quality controls in the data collection process and a careful review of all reported data for consistency and reasonableness.

- 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.**

Reports from Grain Firms accounting for multiple units account for about 80 percent of total U.S. capacity. Combining the on-farm and off-farm data provides very reliable indications.

The due date that appears on a questionnaire is related to the reference period and the amount of time we are allotted to collect the data. The surveys that are included in this docket vary in frequency from monthly, quarterly, seasonal, to annual. For the more frequent surveys NASS puts more emphasis on the due dates shown on the questionnaires, so that data are received in time to be key

entered, edited, and summarized, and for estimates to be generated and prepared for publishing within the allotted time. As a part of NASS's mission statement, we are required to publish accurate, useful data in a timely manner. In order for these data to be useful to the public it sometimes requires a very frequent survey, due to the speed at which the data can change.

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

NASS conducted a thorough and structured review of the entire process used to collect, edit, estimate, and publish grain stocks data in 2021. Some enhancements to procedures resulted from this review. One of those enhancements is to implement the grain stocks profile survey included in this information collection request.

NASS uses an OMB-approved generic clearance docket (OMB Control # 0535-0248), to conduct testing and evaluation of most NASS questionnaires. In this PRA approval request, NASS is including an allowance to conduct a total of 50 cognitive test interviews (annually) on the various questionnaires included in this request. If a different method of testing is necessary or a larger sample is needed, NASS will submit a request using the Generic Clearance of Survey Improvement Projects Information Collection Request (0535-0248). This generic clearance allows for a variety of testing methods, including cognitive testing, focus groups, split sample field tests, etc., that can be used to test ARMS and other NASS surveys. NASS does not plan to create a cognitive laboratory facility due to the geographic dispersion of farm operators needed for testing. As is typical in establishment surveys, most testing is conducted with video conferencing or onsite visits.

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.

Survey sample sizes are determined by the Sampling and Frame Development Section and reviewed and approved by NASS Survey Teams. The Agency's Sampling, Editing and Imputation Methodology Branch, Methods Division; Branch Chief is Andrew Dau His email is andrew.dau@usda.gov. His phone number is (202) 690-8141.

Survey design and methodology are determined by the Summary, Estimation, and Disclosure Methodology Branch, Methods Division; Branch Chief is Lindsay Drunasky. Her email is lindsay.drunasky@usda.gov. Her phone number is (202) 690-8141.

Data collection is carried out by NASS Regional Field Offices. Survey data are collected, reviewed, and summarized by the Regional Field Offices. Western and acting Eastern Field Operation's Director is King Whetstone. His Email is king.whetstone@usda.gov. His phone number is (202) 720-9567.

The NASS survey administrators in Headquarters of the Survey Administration Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is Suzanne Adams. Her email is suzanne.adams@usda.gov. Her phone number is (202) 720-4028. The survey administrators are responsible for coordination of sampling, questionnaires, data collection, training, Interviewer's Manuals, Survey Administration Manuals, data processing, and other Regional Office support.

Estimates are compiled and reviewed by the Agency's Statistics Division, Crops Branch; Branch Chief is Patrick Boyle, His email is patrick.boyle@usda.gov. His phone number is (202)720-2127.

Publications are released from the Regional Offices and Headquarters.

March 2025