

Overview of the USDA-NASS Statistical Program
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Overview: The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports covering virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture. Production and supplies of food and fiber, prices paid and received by farmers, farm labor and wages, farm finances, chemical use and changes in the demographics of U.S. producers are only a few examples. This session will cover the NASS's statistical program and provide participants a greater understanding of how agricultural statistics support farm programs, universities and other research activities, and State Departments of Agriculture. Highlights from the recently release Census of Agriculture will be shared along with a discussion of how the USDA statistical program fits in the greater United States statistical system.

United States Department of Agriculture: On May 15, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed legislation to establish the United States Department of Agriculture and two and a half years later in his final message to Congress, Lincoln called USDA "The People's Department." Through our work on food, agriculture, economic development, science, natural resource conservation and other issues, USDA has impacted the lives of generations of Americans.

The Research, Education and Economics (REE) mission area is dedicated to the creation of a safe, sustainable, competitive U.S. food and fiber system, as well as strong communities, families, and youth through integrated research, analysis, and education. REE is comprised of 4 agencies (Agricultural Resource Service, Economic Research Service, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service) and the Office of the Chief Scientist.

<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-organization-chart.pdf>

US Federal Statistical System: The U.S. has a highly decentralized statistical system, spanning 125 agencies spread across the Government, all of which are engaged, to some degree, in collecting data and producing statistics. A Federal statistical agency is an agency or organizational unit of the Executive Branch whose activities are predominantly the collection, compilation, processing, or analysis of information for statistical purposes. A substantial portion of our official statistics is produced by the 13 agencies that have statistical work as their principal mission. USDA has two of 13 agencies, ERS and NASS.

https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/infogeg_statpolicy/bb-structure-federal-statistical-system

The Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Evidence Act; Pub.L. 115–435) is a United States law that establishes processes for the federal government to modernize its data management practices and encourage certain uses of data to inform policy decisions. The Evidence Act contains four titles, which address evidence capacity, open data (OPEN

Government Data Act), and data confidentiality (Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act). Guidance for the implementation of this act is still being developed.

National Agricultural Statistics Service: Is the statistical arm of the USDA. NASS is committed to providing timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

https://www.nass.usda.gov/About_NASS/Mission_Statement/index.php

Agricultural Estimates: The Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) publishes reports of State and U.S. production, stocks, inventories, disposition, utilization and prices of agricultural inputs and commodities, other items such as labor, farm numbers and agricultural chemical usage. National reports are issued from the Washington, D.C. Headquarters. Individual State reports are issued from the Field Offices (FOs) following release of the national reports. Printed copies of both ASB and FO reports are available for a fee.

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/catalog.pdf>

Census of Agriculture: The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Even small plots of land - whether rural or urban - growing fruit, vegetables or some food animals count if \$1,000 or more of such products were raised and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year. The Census of Agriculture, taken only once every five years, looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures. For America's farmers and ranchers, the Census of Agriculture is their voice, their future, and their opportunity.

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/index.php>

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/index.php>

NASS "Lockup": The Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) prepares and disseminates hundreds of reports every year providing the official USDA estimates on crops, livestock, and economic indicators for the agricultural industry. Market-sensitive ASB reports are compiled and issued under special security conditions known as Lockup. Each year hundreds of guests visit the Lockup facility to tour the secured area and to learn more about the stringent security and report procedures of the ASB. Browse the links below for more information.

https://www.nass.usda.gov/About_NASS/ASB_and_Lockup/index.php