



New England Agricultural Statistics

*a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture*



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The ink is barely dry on the 2002 Census of Agriculture and already many hours of planning and testing have been expended on the 2007 version of the questionnaire. There are changes in the questionnaire, but no one will get all the new questions they want. Over 85 percent of the Nation's farm operators completed the five-year Census of Agriculture, a tribute to their clear understanding of the need for good data.

We all recognize that change is part of life and work. I would dare say that no region of the United States understands or appreciates the change of seasons like New Englanders. I have decided to contribute to the changing scene by retiring after 17 years as the Director of the New England field office of NASS. Until this happens in early January 2006, it will be business as usual for there is still much to be done.

Our appreciation for the thousands of farm operators across the region who willingly contribute to our estimating program doesn't waver. You **are** the heart and soul of our program for without your cooperation the rest of the story could not be accurately written.

My work has been easier because of the level of cooperation and support extended by the New England Commissioners of Agriculture (CT, ME, MA and NH), the Chief of the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture and Marketing, and the Vermont Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture. Without their financial contribution, this annual bulletin would not be printed.

The real success story is the level of hard work exhibited by the full-time federal staff, and the part-time contract office and field data collectors who are our direct link to farmers. Thank you for many years of dedicated service to a worthy cause.

Sincerely,

Aubrey R. Davis
Director