



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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Two Weeks Remaining to Respond to 2012 Census of Agriculture

USDA Thanks Producers and Provides Helpful Census Tips

WASHINGTON, January 24, 2013—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced that producers have two weeks remaining to respond to the 2012 Census of Agriculture. To date, America's farmers and ranchers are taking action in overwhelming numbers to mail back their completed Agriculture Census forms, submit them online, or call and e-mail for assistance.

“The Census of Agriculture is at its peak and we thank those producers who have completed their survey form. Every response is vitally important,” said Renee Picanso, Census and Survey Division Director of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). “When completed, the Census is a valuable tool and a remarkable achievement for the entire agricultural community.”

NASS has mailed Census of Agriculture forms and reminder postcards to all known and potential agricultural producers in the United States. These should have recently arrived in mailboxes. With the February 4 deadline quickly approaching, many farmers and ranchers are seeking help completing their form and NASS is providing additional information to ease the process.

Respondents are encouraged to visit www.agcensus.usda.gov for quick tips and answers to frequently asked questions about the Census and how to complete the form.

“NASS is receiving a high volume of calls and e-mails, and our staff is striving to answer inquiries as quickly as possible,” said Picanso. “We thank all respondents for their patience during this period of heavy volume. We will respond to every inquiry we receive and want to provide customers with helpful information – be it by phone, email, or the Internet.”

Here are quick answers to the **top five questions** we are currently receiving from Census respondents.

When I go online, why does it say the survey code from my Census form is invalid?

Be sure you are entering the 17-digit ID code from the mailing label of the Census form you received in the mail; this is your unique Census ID code. This code is alphanumeric, and some of the letters and numbers may be difficult to distinguish. Here is a helpful tip to try – the 8th digit should be a letter. If it appears to be the number eight (8) try entering the letter ‘B’, likewise, if it looks like the number zero (0), try entering the letter ‘D’.

Why won't the survey code on the Census postcard I received in the mail work?

If you are trying to complete the Census online, you need your unique Census ID code from the mailing label of the Census form that was mailed to you. It is a series of 17 numbers and letters that appear on the first line of the label, immediately above the bars. The series of numbers on the postcard are not your Census ID code.

Why did I receive a reminder postcard when I already responded to the Census? Didn't you receive my form?

Sometimes due to delays in processing and receiving, forms cross in the mail which results in you receiving a reminder even though you already responded. We apologize for this inconvenience. When this occurs, please ignore the follow-up mailing and allow additional time for NASS to receive and process your completed Census form. For reference, additional mailings are planned for around February 14 and March 20.

What if I have a small operation or do not participate in government farm programs, do I have to fill out a Census form?

The Census of Agriculture is the responsibility of every farmer and rancher, regardless of the size or type of operation. For Census purposes, a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year (2012 this time). Many people who do not think of themselves as a farmer actually meet the definition according to the Census. If you own horses, backyard chickens, large urban gardens, etc., you may qualify as a farmer. If you do not qualify as a farmer, NASS will remove your name and address from the list once we receive your submitted form in the mail or online. If you do not respond in any way, NASS will continue to contact you by mail, phone or in person to obtain a response.

What do I do if the name or address is incorrect on the form?

Make any necessary corrections to the name, address, and ZIP code directly on the front page of the Census form in the mailing label area. This will ensure NASS updates your information when we receive your form.

Additional tips, [frequently asked questions](#) and tools are available online and are updated as new information becomes available. This includes a [Sample Schedule F Guide](#) that shows respondents what information from this form can be used to help complete the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Neither USDA, nor the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) share information that is reported by respondents but this sample Schedule F Guide, prepared by NASS, can be a useful tool to producers. Another helpful tool is the [Census Report Form Guide](#), a complete question-by-question instruction book on how to complete the Census of Agriculture form.

Conducted only once every five years by NASS, the Census of Agriculture provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture. It looks at land use and ownership, production practices, expenditures and other factors that affect the way farmers do business. Decision makers at the local and national levels use Census of Agriculture data to make decisions that directly impact farmers, their operations and their communities – whether the farm is two acres or 2,000 acres.

“Farmers can return their forms online by visiting a secure website, www.agcensus.usda.gov or by mail,” added Picanso. “We are also reminding farmers and ranchers that the Census of Agriculture is your voice, your future, and your responsibility. While Federal law requires all agricultural producers to participate in the Census, the reasons for responding are much greater. If you want to be heard and you want agriculture represented, now is your chance – the Agriculture Census is only once every five years.”

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