

Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS
February 24-25, 2009



U.S. Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

SUMMARY
Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics (ACAS)
February 24-25, 2009
Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport
1999 Jefferson Davis Hwy
Arlington, VA 22202
Attendees at Meeting

Members Present

Mr. James M. Baise	Dr. Frank M. Howell
Mr. John G. Baugh	Mr. Douglas A. Huebsch
Dr. Beth Carroll	Dr. Karen M. Klonsky
Ms. Rosalee K. Coleman	Ms. Doris E. Mold
Mrs. Janice I. Gengenbach	Dr. A. Gene Nelson
Dr. Barry K. Goodwin	Mr. Charles E. O'Brien
Mr. John J. Hays	Dr. Ronald L. Plain
Mr. Elvin L. Hollon	Mr. James G. Robb
Mr. C. Harvey Monk Jr.	Mr. John R. Kort

Members Absent

Mr. Brent W. Blauch	Mr. W. Wade Ross
Mr. Carl W. Brothers	Mr. Kent G. Schescke
Mr. Peter T. Daniel	

NASS Personnel Participating:

Dr. Katherine Smith, Acting Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics
Dr. Cynthia Clark, NASS Administrator
Joe Reilly, Committee Executive Director
Carol House, Deputy Administrator for Programs and Products
Joseph Prusacki, Director of Statistics Division
Bob Bass, Director of Census and Survey Division
Chris Messer, Branch Chief of Census Planning Branch
Marshall Dantzler, Deputy Administrator for Field Operations
Hubert Hamer, Associate Deputy Administrator, Eastern Field Operations
Mark Harris, Director of Research and Development Division
Marlo D. Johnson, Committee Secretary
Krissy Young, Marketing Section
Pamela Coleman, Executive Assistant

Special Guest:

Linda Atkinson, Statistician, Economic Research Service (ERS)
Noel Gollehon, Agricultural Economist, Economic Research Service (ERS)
Tim Mulcahy, National Research Opinion Center (NORC)
Mitch Morehart, Agricultural Economist, Economic Research Service (ERS)
David Schimmelpfenning, Economic Research Service (ERS)

Public:

Carrie LitKowski, BEA
Catherine Parker, REEO
Maggie Mitchell, Minor Crop Farmer Alliance

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Day One Summary-February 24, 2009

I. Introduction

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Doris Mold, on Tuesday, February 24, 2009, at 8:00 a.m. Committee Members and NASS staff were asked to introduce themselves. Doris Mold welcomed everyone to the meeting and then asked Acting Under Secretary of Research, Education, and Economics (REE), Dr. Katherine Smith, to provide an update on REE.

II. Welcome

Dr. Katherine Smith started by welcoming the members to Washington, DC. Dr. Smith expressed to the committee how important their input is to guiding our statistical program and priorities. She gave a brief explanation of her background. Dr. Smith also discussed the transition and role of the New REE Office, such as goals and priorities. She discussed how NAREEE and ACAS relate and when and where NAREEE meetings are held.

During the next two days, the members were asked to consider a wide range of topics including:

- 2007 Agricultural Census Results and Issues;
 - The Secretary of Agriculture stated that the Census of Agriculture is a valuable tool that provides the general public with an accurate and comprehensive view of American agriculture. It is also a set of benchmarks against which this Department must measure and demonstrate its performance to agriculture and the taxpayer.
- 2012 Agricultural Census Content;
 - This is important to the Department to identify minimum and socially disadvantaged Farms. Also, NASS is planning and preparing for the next Census of Agriculture.

Dr. Smith also stated that the members would be given an updated presentation on the Data Enclave. The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) – Census Integration Team is working on aligning ARMS with Census. She also thanked the members for their support on the Data Enclave and ARMS.

Dr. Smith expressed to the members how their input is crucial to ensure timely, accurate, and useful data. We count on this Board to ensure that we are doing all we can to provide our stakeholders and customers timely, accurate, and useful data, and remain a cornerstone of our mission area and the Department of Agriculture.

III. 2008 Recommendations and Overview

Joe Reilly, Associate Administrator of NASS, reviewed the Advisory Committee's recommendations from 2008. He also discussed the purpose and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary on the conduct of the periodic census and surveys of agriculture, other related surveys, and the types of agricultural information to obtain from respondents. The committee also prepares recommendations regarding the content of Agricultural reports. It also presents the views and needs for the data of major suppliers and users of Agriculture statistics. The duties of the Committee are solely advisory. Joe also discussed the mission of NASS, which is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

NASS is responsible for administering the USDA's statistical estimating program and the 5-year Census of Agriculture; coordinating Federal/State agricultural statistics needs; conducting statistical research for other Federal/State or private organizations and other countries, and statistical research.

NASS Does Not:

- set policy;
- regulate activities;
- permit influence;
- disclose individual reports; and
- favor any group above others.

2008 Recommendations and Responses:

- The Advisory Committee supports the Enterprise Data Center waiver request, exempting USDA statistical agencies from the Department's Data Center Consolidation initiative. NASS should continue to maintain control of the applications and hardware containing "market-sensitive information," and therefore, be exempt from the Department's Data Center Consolidation initiative. According to the document, Principles and Practices for a Federal Statistical Agency (2005), a widely acknowledged position of independence is necessary for a statistical agency, like NASS, to have credibility and to carry out its function to provide an unbiased flow of useful, high quality information. Without the credibility that comes from a strong degree of independence, data users may lose trust in the accuracy and objectivity of the Agency's data, and data providers may become less willing to cooperate with Agency requests.
 - *The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has exempted NASS's Agricultural Statistics Board Lockup Area from the Department's Data Center Consolidation initiative. NASS servers outside of the Lockup area in Headquarters and the Field Offices are currently not exempt from being relocated to a Department's Data Center. Plans call for the NASS servers in*

Headquarters (excluding the Lockup area) to be moved to a USDA Data Center during 2010.

- The Advisory Committee recommends that NASS create a user forum Website, as soon as it is feasible, that centers on its major products. This would provide customers and producers a way of creating dialogue on NASS programs and products.
 - *NASS has been working diligently this past year on its Quickstats data base in preparation for the 2007 Census of Agriculture data release. Now that this is complete, we will turn our attention on user forums for our customers.*
- The Advisory Committee recommends that USDA determine a way to find funds to reinstate the Chemical Use Program by no later than 2009.
 - *We thank everyone for the volume of support generated for the reinstatement of this important program. We are in current discussions with the Department, OMB, and Congress on both Fiscal 2009 and 2010 appropriations on this topic.*
- The Advisory Committee would like for NASS to continue providing access to ARMS data through National Opinion Research Center (NORC) data enclave. New participants will be accepted under the existing security, training, and project approval procedures with the addition of meeting with NASS State Directors to initiate project planning. Progress will be reported at the 2009 Advisory Board meeting.
 - *The NORC data enclave pilot program is proceeding very well, and the Committee will receive a status update, as well as a proposal for future activities at this meeting.*
- The Advisory Committee recommends supporting the 2007 Census follow-on programs as presented.
 - *2009 Farm and Ranch Irrigation*
 - *2009 Organics*
 - *2010 Horticulture (tentative)*
- The Advisory Committee would like to reverse their recommendation concerning releasing records to the National Archive and Record Administration (NARA) beginning with the 2012 Census, after the change to Title 7 is made. The Advisory Committee would like to recommend that NASS not release Census of Agriculture data to NARA. NASS promotes confidentiality, and the Advisory Committee feels that NASS should stand behind their word. The Committee also feels that response rates will be affected if the producers find out that their data will be released in 75 years starting with the 2012 Census.

- *NASS will proceed as recommended.*

IV. State of NASS

Cynthia Clark, NASS Administrator, welcomed and thanked everyone for taking the time out of their busy schedules to help NASS chart their future. She mentioned the importance of the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics (ACAS).

- Advise the Secretary on conducting of the Census of Agriculture and our on-going annual surveys.
- Advising what other types of agricultural information are needed
- Prepare recommendations regarding the content of reports
- Provide the views and needs for data for major suppliers and users of agriculture statistics. – Remember, you were carefully selected to represent and entire sector of agriculture and I encourage you to take off your personal hat and put on a hat with much broader context.

Cynthia discussed her career history that led to her assuming the NASS Administrator position.

Cynthia discussed her vision for NASS. She was offered a challenge by Dr. Buchanan the REE Undersecretary to raise NASS level of performance. This fits in well with her personal goals. She is looking at ways she can improve NASS. She will also focus on quality improvement, such as:

- Ways to enhance data products and programs,
- Increasing outreach to Small Farms,
- Improving relationships with Federal and State Agencies,
- Strengthening the Research base,
- Improving the computer infrastructure,
- Improving Technical and Management Training,
- Centralizing Field Office LAN Services,
- Implementing electronic devices for data collection to improve quality of data,
- Currently working on a Long Range Planning program.

Cynthia discussed the Farm Bill Implementation

- Reports completed on Organic Agriculture data collection plan and Dairy Product Prices.
 - Organic Ag Follow-on study in 2009
 - Dairy Product Prices reporting error
- County Cash Rental Rates program
 - Required in Title 2 – Conservation
 - Up to 3 estimates in each county
 - Irrigated cropland
 - Non-irrigated cropland

- Pastureland
- FSA will use county cash rents to determine CRP payment levels
- Will release first annual data set in April 2009

Cynthia's outlook on the Budget:

- FY 2009 – Continuing Resolution (CR).
 - Senate Committee Passed Bill at FY 2008 level (minus cyclical census funding of \$15.3 million) plus partial pay costs.
 - No new initiatives passed (energy, program restoration included in President's budget not funded)
 - Currently 4 months into fiscal year
 - Using Senate level for planning purposes
 - The increases in cost of doing business and only partial pay costs continue to erode the operating budget
 - CR ends March 6 – we anticipate a budget prior to that point
- FY 2010 – President to release high level budget in late February
 - Agency details will be provided to Congress in April
 - Working with new Administration to discuss common threads with their priorities
 - Hope to have Congressionally passed appropriations on time (by October 1)

Cynthia's vision for the Advisory Committee:

- Open, honest, candid
- Represent entire sector, not just employer
- Provide constructive feedback with possible improvements/solutions

Cynthia thanked the committee for their time and how she is looking forward to getting to know them during their visit to Washington, DC.

V. Update on Data Enclave

Tim Mulcahy is a representative from the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). Currently there are 13 academics enrolled in the enclave working on projects and there are 6 sponsors. The sponsors are DOC – NIST-TIP, USDA-NASS/ERS, Rayburn Foundation, Energy, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and National Science Foundation. Tim discussed the Portfolio Approach to Secure Data Access. This consists of the following:

- Legal
 - Agreement signed annually
 - Confidentiality training
 - Security briefing
- Educational / Training
 - Onsite

- Remote / Web-based
- Conference
- Statistical
 - Per data set, per Agency
 - ARMS data with noise added
 - Disclosure Review – remove identifiers
- Operational / Technological
 - Virtual Private Network (VPN) encrypted connection
 - Static or Pre-defined IP address
 - All applications and data run on the server at the data enclave.
 - Prevents users from transferring any data from data enclave to a local computer.
 - Data files cannot be downloaded from the remote server to the user’s local PC.
 - User cannot use the “cut and paste” feature in Windows to move data from the Citrix session.
 - Users are prevented from printing the data on a local computer.
 - Audit logs and audit trails

Next steps that Tim has planned for the data enclave include:

- Continue to apply practical lessons learned / feedback for continuous improvement
- Continue to innovate
- Implement USDA researcher scholarship & collaboration incentive program
- Identify and implement new collaboratory functionality
- Continue to pilot test remote training
- Explore possibilities for regional data enclave research centers for graduate students

On November 18, 2009, there will be an Enclave Researcher Workshop at USDA. This 1 day event will be hosted by the Economic Research Service (ERS). ERS is located at 1800 M. Street NW Washington, D.C. 20036. The objectives for the workshop include:

- Provide opportunity for enclave researchers to network, collaborate, and generate ideas
- Provide opportunity for collaborative research and/or sharing of contextual data for researchers using different datasets
- Forum for input into enclave structure, processes

Public website and quarterly newsletters can be found at: www.norc.org/dataenclave

VI. 2007 Agricultural Census Results and Issues

Donald Buysse, Section Head of Census Program Administration Section (CPAS), discussed the 2007 Census Results and Issues. NASS was able to bring on 71 Partnering Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to complete the Census Survey. NASS held 188 Census Day Events to help promote the Census of Agriculture and to assist Farmers who needed help completing their questionnaire. NASS went the extra mile, which helped to contribute to an overall increase in coverage of minority farm operations. NASS also made 30,000 contacts with the American Indians. Lessons learned:

1. Start early to increase involvement or maintain level of interactivity
2. Better “Census Days” events coordination to achieve greater operation efficiency
3. More closely monitor events implementing guidelines on uses of budgeted monies

The presentation illustrated some of the processing activities associated with the large volume data set. Additionally, the presentation highlighted some of the results from the 2007 Census of Agriculture data collection. These included:

1. Results of the first data collection for the Ag Census that utilized electronic data reporting
2. 85.2 % overall response rate.
3. Graphics showing the variability of response rates for each state.
4. Internet products, especially, maps punctuating the diversity of American agriculture
5. Internet usage data
6. Farm number and samples of operation characteristic data

Reference to NASS’s census products website

VII. 2012 Census of Agriculture Content Team

Mark Miller, Section Head of the Environmental and Demographics Section (EDS) discussed the purpose of the 2012 Census of Agriculture Content Team. The Census of Agriculture Content Team is tasked with identifying content for the 2012 Census of Agriculture (COA) and working in conjunction with the Data Collection Testing Team. The Content Team will inform all interested parties that NASS is accepting input for the 2012 COA.

- Avenues of Outreach
 - Federal Register Notice
 - Commodity Groups
 - State Departments of Agriculture
 - Universities
 - USDA Agencies
 - Other Federal Agencies

It is the responsibility of the Content Team to establish criteria for including items on the 2012 Census of Agriculture Report form. List below is the decision criteria that the Content Team has established.

- Mandated by Congress
- Required by other Federal agencies to meet legislative needs
- Needed by Federal agencies to evaluate existing programs
- Data that if omitted would result in additional burden on other surveys for other agencies
- Data required for classification of farms into groups historically depicted
- Quantifiable measure of agricultural importance
- Data on current issues
- Likelihood of being able to publish the data

The Content Team will receive requests by fliers/mailers available at industry and data users meetings, On-line, and NASS internal requests. The Content Team is seeking information on new data items; Data items needing refinement; and Data items no longer needed. The Content Team will accept input for the 2012 Census of Agriculture through **August 28, 2009**.

VIII. 2012 Agricultural Census Data Collection Team

Jaki McCarthy, Chief Cognitive Research Methodologist, discussed the purpose of the 2012 Census of Agriculture Data Collection Testing Team (DCT). The DCT is a companion team to the Content Team and has several objectives. These include:

- Improving the quality of the Census data collected,
- Determining the best way to collect new items,
- Increasing response rates (including via the Internet), and
- A dry run of procedures, generation of test data.

The team is working under the assumptions that the Census of Agriculture is a stable on-going program and will not include any major changes to the forms or procedures. Any new or altered content will be provided by the Content Team. The DCT team will begin by analyzing how the 2007 forms and data collection procedures worked. Areas for improvement will be identified based on staff input, review of the reported data, analysis of calls to the toll free help line and other research.

The team anticipates developing and testing changes to the paper forms, improvements in the data collection procedures and improvements in the Internet questionnaires. Initial background work will be completed in 2009; a first test mail out will be made in early 2010. After analysis of this test, a second test mail out will be conducted in early 2011. This second mailout will primarily be a dry run of procedures and a test of systems with finalized form content. All forms and data collection plans will be finalized in 2011. This schedule begins a full year prior to the census content testing which preceded the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Day Two Summary-February 25, 2009

IX. Status of Programs

Carol House, Deputy Administrator Programs and Products, discussed how NASS has had an eventful year. The year ended with the release of the Census of Agriculture. The year began with high commodity prices (corn \$4.83 and soybeans \$11.90) that dropped sharply along with much of the rest of the economy. NASS had to make adjustments due to the Midwest Floods. The June Acreage data collection was ending as water began to go over the levies. In an effort to more accurately determine how many acres producers still intended to harvest for grain, NASS re-interviewed approximately 1,200 farmers on June 23-25 that were located in flood affected areas. As a result, it was determined that U.S. farmers intended to harvest 90.4 percent of their planted acres of corn for grain. This is a change from 92.4 percent as measured during the first 2 weeks of June. U.S. Farmers intend to harvest 96.8 percent of their planted acres of soybeans. Without this additional survey data, historical averages would have indicated 98.7 percent of soybean acres to be harvested.

Carol explained why NASS had to reissue the October Crop Production report. NASS draws upon several data sources, including farmer reported surveys, satellite imagery, and acreage data reported by producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA). After the October 10 Crop Production report released, FSA analysts noted a discrepancy between the acreage numbers in the raw data on the FSA mainframe and the data provided to NASS. Using the definitive source data from the FSA mainframe database, NASS repeated its acreage estimation process for dry edible beans, canola, corn, sorghum, soybeans, and sunflower. As a result, this report was reissued on October 28 to reflect corrected acreage and production estimates. The changes included: corn acres reduced by 1.02 million acres and soybeans acres reduced by 1.105 million acres.

Carol discussed the Price Program Review – Paid and Received / Indices. She talked about the growing importance of the price program and the need to revise indices. She discussed the issues related to potential electronic trading 24 / 7. NASS will be reviewing release times with data users sometime in the future and requests the participation of the Advisory Committee in this endeavor.

Carol mentioned that NASS would be presenting at the Outlook Forum on February 26, 2009 at 1:45 pm in Salon IV. The topic is: The Count That Counts: The Census of Agriculture & Policy Decisions. The clean up speaker is Craig Jagger, House Ag Committee.

X. Returning Chairperson

The nomination committee re-nominated Doris Mold to serve as Chairperson for the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics, beginning with preparation for the 2008 meeting. Doris Mold accepted the nomination and was approved by attending members.

XI. Closing Remarks for the Advisory Committee

Joe Reilly announced that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2010, and it will be held in Washington, D.C. The meeting was adjourned.

XII. Committee Recommendations

1. The Advisory Committee commends NASS for its prompt and positive action in revising the acreage estimates contained in its October 10, 2008 Crop Production Report once it became aware of errors in one of the external data sources used as the basis for the estimates. This unprecedented revision was a bold and appropriate move to maintain the integrity and reputation of NASS as a reliable and timely source of agricultural statistics.
2. The Advisory Committee considers the data enclave pilot project a success. The Committee recommends that NASS continue and expand this process to allow researchers secure and controlled access to appropriate micro data.
3. NASS should review the options available to publish a return over feed cost statistic for the dairy industry that is updated for current production conditions and tailored for significant milk production states. A preliminary report (or final) should be presented to the USDA Data Users session in the Fall of 2009.
4. In order to better inform the public about food production and to provide better data and information to agriculture policy makers, where practical, NASS should publish agricultural commodity production volume by farm size on an annual basis.
5. The Advisory Committee recommends that NASS consider Energy, Land Ownership, and Local Food Systems for follow-on surveys for the 2012 Census.
6. The Advisory Committee recommends NASS consider Field Office surveys for Agricultural Economic Land Ownership Survey (AELOS), Energy and local food systems.
7. The Advisory Committee recommends that NASS fully reinstate the Chemical Use Survey.
8. The Advisory Committee recommends Subcommittee on Timing assist with NASS Data Users' on their website.
9. The Advisory Committee would like for NASS to extend the Enclave for further study by including more surveys.
10. The Advisory Committee would like for NASS to consider looking at some Census demographics for the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey because it is very inclusive and detailed.
11. The Advisory Committee recommends that NASS maintain control of the confidential data collected by a statistical agency.
12. Ask Carol for recommendation that she was going to write down.

Public Comments from the Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics Meeting

Maggi Mitchell–Minor Crop Farmer Alliance

The Minor Crop Farmer Alliance (MCFA) is an alliance of national and regional organizations and individuals representing growers, shippers, packers, handlers, and processors of various agricultural commodities, including food, fiber, nursery, and horticultural products, and organizations involved with public health pesticides. Our members are extremely interested in the development of pest management tools and techniques that are environmentally sound. While our commodities are often called “minor crops,” they are vitally important components in our diets and they contribute to safe and aesthetic surroundings for our homes, schools, and places of business. U.S. farmers grow more than 250 types of fruit, vegetable, tree nut, flower, ornamental nursery, and turfgrass crops in addition to the major bulk commodity crops. Specialty crop production accounts for more than \$45 billion, or greater than 40% of total U.S. crop receipts.

MCFA is urging the U.S. Department of Agriculture to reconsider its decision to discontinue the “Agricultural Chemical Usage” surveys conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). We strongly support reinstatement of these surveys which provide realistic and up-to-date usage data, reflecting the variances in geographical regions, climates, soil conditions and other factors which can and do affect chemical use patterns of agricultural producers from year to year.

For years, MCFA has worked with USDA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to ensure that safe pesticide products are available to growers of specialty crops. Based on our experience, the data collected by NASS from farmers and presented in the Agriculture Chemical Use surveys are at the core of EPA’s evaluation of exposure profiles and risk assessments. It is not sound science and frankly does not make sense to substitute actual chemical use data from the NASS surveys with assumptions concerning potential use. Doing so seems to

represent a step backward in terms of the reliability of government decisions regarding the potential public exposure to agricultural chemical pesticides.

In addition, the surveys include very meaningful data used by USDA in its analysis of the impact of pesticide products on the production of crops. We are aware that the Department relies on the NASS chemical usage data in its IR 4 process both at land grant universities and within USDA's Agriculture Research Service. The data allow the government and others to analyze for trends and shifts in pesticide usage in relation to other factors, such as new regulations, economics, and new products. Such analyses can be critical in determining the efficacy of government measures or the impact of changing pest pressures.

It is a fact of life that the use of agricultural chemicals is important to the production of specialty crops. These products help enhance the production of marketable commodities in a cost efficient manner. Associated, however, with the use of these chemicals is the ability of the government to effectively regulate the safety from exposure to such chemicals. The NASS data are critical to that process and thus critical to the production of specialty crops in the United States.

We strongly believe that moving from actual use data to assumptions about use is unsupportable and contrary to the mission of NASS. We urge that this Advisory Committee recommend full reinstatement of the factual, useful Agricultural Chemical Usage surveys conducted by NASS.

2009 Minor Crop Farmer Alliance Members (MCFA)

American Farm Bureau Federation
American Nursery & Landscape Association
California Specialty Crops Council
California Almond Board
California Avocado Commission
California Citrus Quality Council
California Fig Advisory Board
California Grape & Tree Fruit League
California Processed Onion and Garlic Research Committee

California Dried Plum Board
California Strawberry Commission
California Tree Fruit Agreement
Cherry Marketing Institute, Inc.
Cranberry Institute
Del Monte Foods
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Food Products Association
Idaho Potato Commission
Michigan State Horticultural Society
Michigan Vegetable Council Inc.
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Onion Association
National Potato Council
North Central Washington Fieldman's Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
Produce Marketing Association
Society of American Florists
United Fresh Produce Association
USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council, Inc.
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Hop Industry Plant Protection Committee
Washington Association of Wine and Grape Growers
Washington Hops Commission
Washington State Potato Commission
Western Growers Association
Western Pistachio Association
Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine

Elvin Hollon—Director Fluid Marketing / Economic Analysis

Dairy Farmers of America asked if NASS would consider publishing an additional profit and loss metric to the Milk Feed Price Ratio. That measure has been in place for many years but has lost some relevancy with very high and volatile milk and feed prices. Additionally, the industry feels the need to have a different measure, readily published by NASS for use in national dairy policy deliberations.

Specifically, we asked that NASS publish a return over feed costs statistic. That measure could be developed from existing NASS data but perhaps a better measure might include CME Group price data. DFA offered to work with NASS to develop several alternative measures and present them at the fall Data Users session.

The Committee adopted the request and agreed to review the potential options for possible recommendation next year.

Appendix I - Agenda

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE STATISTICS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport
1999 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, Virginia 22202
February 24–25, 2009

Tuesday, February 24

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic/Activity</u>	<u>Discussion Leader</u>
8:00 a.m.	Call to Order	Doris Mold, Committee Chair
8:05 a.m.	Welcome	Dr. Katherine Smith, Acting Under Secretary, Research, Education, and Economics
8:15 a.m.	Introductions and Overview	Doris Mold
8:30 a.m.	2008 Recommendations and Overview	Joe Reilly, Administrator and Committee Executive Director
9:00 a.m.	Discussion	Doris Mold
9:45 a.m.	Break	
10:00 a.m.	<i>'State of NASS'</i>	Cynthia Clark, NASS Administrator
10:45 a.m.	Discussion	Doris Mold
11:30 a.m.	Lunch	Hotel
12:30 a.m.	Update on Data Enclave	Tim Mulcahy, National Opinion Research Center (NORC)
2:30 p.m.	Break	

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Tuesday, February 24
(Continued)

2:45 p.m.	Discussion	Doris Mold
3:30 p.m.	2012 Agricultural Census Content	Bob Bass
4:15 p.m.	Discussion	Doris Mold
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn	

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Wednesday, February 25

7:30 a.m.	Call to Order and Overview of Day 1	Doris Mold
7:45 a.m.	Status of Programs	Carol House, Chairperson of Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB)
9:15 a.m.	Break	
9:30 a.m.	Public Comments	
10:30 a.m.	Committee Requested Topics and Recommendations	Doris Mold
11:00 a.m.	Discussion and Recommendations	Doris Mold
11:30 a.m.	Present Recommendations	Doris Mold
12:00 p.m.	Lunch	
1:00 p.m.	Agricultural Resource Management Survey Data Users Meeting	Bob Bass, Director of Census and Survey Division (CSD)
5:00 p.m.	Wrap up	