

UŞDA'S National Agricultural Statistics Service October, 2002

#### Statement of Work

Agreement between the Department of Agriculture,
National Agricultural Statistics Service and Southeast AgNet
for

Development and Implementation of a 3-State Region Publicity

Campaign

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) seeks to enter an agreement with Southeast AgNet to cesign and implement a 3-State region publicity campaign to promote the upcoming 2002 Census of Agriculture. This will involve Network radio station announcements during regularly scheduled farm and ranch news programs. The announcements will air between October 2002 and March 2003. The campaign should include 60-second network features, 30-second announcements, and billboard announcements within affiliates in Florida, Georgia, and Alabama.

# L Background - About the Census of Agriculture

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is the primary collector of U.S. agricultural data and publishes official statistics as authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). NASS serves the basic agricultural and rural data needs of the country with accurate, timely, and unbiased statistical information and services to the public. The primary sources of data for NASS reports are information provided by farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses. NASS reports are information provided by farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses. NASS reports of Agriculture which is mandated by federal law. Data reported by respondents are confident all and protected from disclosure by federal statute.

NASS has 46 field offices (called State Statistical Offices (SSOs), each headed by a State Statistician), servicing all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Data collection of the Census of Agriculture is conducted by mailout and mail back of report forms.

## NASS has two primary target audiences for Publicity efforts:

#### Data Providers

Much of our current publicity and promotion work is directed toward data providers. Almost all of the information that NASS publishes is generated from reports or data collected from individual agricultural producers or agribusinesses. Without accurate and reasonably high cooperation rates on the surveys, the quality

of the reports cannot be maintained. While data collection of NASS survey reports are voluntary, data collection of the Census of Agriculture is mandatory by law.

While response rates over 80% are not uncommon in the Southeastern region of the United States, response rates have been steadily declining for some time. Past internal research by NASS has indicated that many of the data providers do not ever use the reports or statistics published from the Census of Agriculture directly. This research also showed that producers who are reluctant to provide data fall into two groups. The first are those who do not know what the Census of Agriculture is or how the data is used. The second group knows about the Census of Agriculture, but thank that the reports that we publish are detrimental to producers.

#### Data Users

Data users include a wide variety of people and organizations. These may include government and academia, agricultural communicators (print, broadcast, and television), agricultural analysts, agricultural producer groups (e.g. the Farm Bureau, the Comgrowers Association, National Pork Producers Council, etc.), and agribusinesses who supply, buy from or support agricultural production. Data users may need basic facts about US agriculture or they may need detailed information to use in further analysis. Census of Agriculture statistics may be obtained in a variety of ways. The largest proportion of data is provided either via our web site or by email through the Internet. Hard copies of reports can also be obtained.

## II. Purpose and Goals of the Campaign

NASS had conducted research which gives some insight into the need for a publicity campaign in the Southeast region of the US. Information collected from both respondents and non-respondents to the census of agriculture showed that respondents were more likely to know what the census of agriculture was and to know what we do than non-respondents. In addition, a number of focus groups conducted around the country also showed that producers were more likely to respond to the census when they understood how the data might be used and perceived this to be positive. Research shows that NASS may achieve better exoperation from census respondents if they have higher awareness of the census.

The purpose of the campaign is to increase awareness about the Census of Agriculture and how it may positively impact agricultural producers.

### The chief goals of the 3-state region publicity campaign are:

1. To convince farmers and ranchers to respond to the 2002 Census of Agriculture conducted by NASS/USCA.

2. Fo taise the level of name recognition of the Census of Agriculture and create pointive associations with the data it collects and disseminates.

### III. Deliverables

A 3-State region publicity campaign of the Census of Agriculture to include 60-second radio network features, 30-second radio announcements, and radio billboard announcements to air within all affiliates in the Florida, Georgia, and Alabama between October 2002 and March 2003.

A word about ownership and confidentiality. The NASS will retain the copyright of any published work, including original photography and illustration, if any. All information received by you in the course of working with the NASS is considered confidential and remains the property of the NASS