

United States of America - Census of Agriculture, 2012

National Agricultural Statistics Service

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Overview

Identification

ID NUMBER

USA_2012_CA_v01_EN_M_v01_A_OCS

Overview

ABSTRACT

For 156 years (1840 - 1996), the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census was responsible for collecting census of agriculture data. The 1997 Appropriations Act contained a provision that transferred the responsibility for the census of agriculture from the Bureau of the Census to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The 2007 Census of Agriculture is the 27th Federal census of agriculture and the third conducted by NASS. The first agriculture census was taken in 1840 as part of the sixth decennial census of population. The agriculture census continued to be taken as part of the decennial census through 1950. A separate middecade census of agriculture was conducted in 1925, 1935, and 1945. From 1954 to 1974, the census was taken for the years ending in 4 and 9. In 1976, Congress authorized the census of agriculture to be taken for 1978 and 1982 to adjust the data reference year so that it coincided with other economic censuses. This adjustment in timing established the agriculture census on a 5-year cycle collecting data for years ending in 2 and 7. Agriculture census data are used to:

- Evaluate, change, promote, and formulate farm and rural policies and programs that help agricultural producers;
- Study historical trends, assess current conditions, and plan for the future;
- Formulate market strategies, provide more efficient production and distribution systems, and locate facilities for agricultural communities;
- Make energy projections and forecast needs for agricultural producers and their communities;
- Develop new and improved methods to increase agricultural production and profitability;
- Allocate local and national funds for farm programs, e.g. extension service projects, agricultural research, soil conservation programs, and land-grant colleges and universities;
- Plan for operations during drought and emergency outbreaks of diseases or infestations of pests.
- Analyze and report on the current state of food, fuel, feed, and fiber production in the United States.

KIND OF DATA

Census/enumeration data [cen]

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

Households

Scope

NOTES

The scope of the study includes agriculture (including forestry), livestock, income sources, infrastructure and organization affiliations.

TOPICS

Topic	Vocabulary	URI
Agriculture & Rural Development	FAO	

Forests & Forestry	FAO	
Land (policy, resource management)	FAO	
Livestock	FAO	
Labor	FAO	

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

National coverage

UNIVERSE

The statistical unit for the CA 2012 was the farm, an operating unit defined as any place from which USD 1 000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

Producers and Sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATOR(S)

Name	Affiliation
National Agricultural Statistics Service	United States Department of Agriculture

OTHER PRODUCER(S)

Name	Affiliation	Role
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture		Technical support

Metadata Production

METADATA PRODUCED BY

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Office of Chief Statistician	OCS	Food and Agriculture Organization	Adoption of metadata for FAM
Census team, Statistics Division	ESS	Food and Agriculture Organization	Metadata producer

DDI DOCUMENT VERSION

USA_2012_CA_v01_EN_M_v01_A_OCS_v01

DDI DOCUMENT ID

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Sampling

Sampling Procedure

i. Methodological modality for conducting the census

The classical approach was used in the CA 2012.

ii. Frame

NASS maintains a list of farmers and ranchers from which the CML is compiled.

iii. Complete and/or sample enumeration methods

The CA 2012 was an enumeration of all known agricultural holdings meeting the USDA definition of a farm.

Questionnaires

Overview

Seven regionalized versions of the main report form (questionnaire) were used for the CA 2012. The report form versions were designed to facilitate reporting on the crops most commonly grown within each report form region. Additionally, an American Indian report form was developed to facilitate reporting for operations on reservations in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. All of the forms allowed respondents to write in specific commodities that were not listed on their form.

- Land owned
- Land use
- Irrigation
- Conservation programs and crop insurance
- Field crops
- Bananas, coffee, pineapples and plantain crops
- Hay and forage crops
- Nursery, Greenhouse, Floriculture, Sod and tree seedlings
- Vegetables and melons
- Hydroponic crops
- Fruit
- Root crops
- Cattle and calves
- Poultry
- Hogs and pigs
- Aquaculture
- Other animals and livestock products
- Value of sales
- Organic agriculture
- Federal and commonwealth agricultural program payments
- Income from farm-related sources
- Production expenses
- Farm labour
- Fertilizer and chemicals applied
- Market value of land and buildings
- Machinery, equipment and buildings
- Practices
- Type of organization
- Operator characteristics

The CA 2012 covered all 16 core items recommended to be collected in the WCA 2010. See questionnaire in external materials.

Data Collection

Data Collection Dates

Start	End	Cycle
2012-12	2013-07	N/A

Data Collection Mode

Mail Questionnaire [mail]

Data Collection Notes

Data collection was done primarily through the mail-out/mail-back method; however, this was supplemented with Electronic Data Reporting (EDR) via the Internet, as well as personal enumeration for special classes of records in the census operations. Personal enumeration involved the use of both CATI and CAPI.2 Beginning in March 2013, CATI was used to follow up on nonresponse for NML nonrespondents.

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Data Processing

Data Editing

1. DATA PROCESSING AND ARCHIVING

The completed forms were scanned and Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) was used to retrieve categorical responses and to identify the other answer zones in which some type of mark was present. The edit system determined the best value to impute for reported responses that were deemed unreasonable and for required responses that were absent. The complex edit ensured the full internal consistency of the record. After tabulation and review of the aggregates, a comprehensive disclosure review was conducted. Cell suppression was used to protect the cells that were determined to be sensitive to a disclosure of information.

2. CENSUS DATA QUALITY

NASS conducted an extensive program to follow-up all non-response. NASS also used capture-recapture methodology to adjust for under-coverage, non-response, and misclassification. To implement capture-recapture methods, two independent surveys were required --the 2012 Census of Agriculture (based on the Census Mail List) and the 2012 June Agricultural Survey (based on the area frame). Historically, NASS has been careful to maintain the independence of these two surveys.

Data Appraisal

Other forms of Data Appraisal

The complete data series from the 2012 Census of Agriculture is available from the NASS website free of charge in multiple formats, including Quick Stats 2.0 - an online database to retrieve customized tables with Census data at the national, state and county levels. The 2012 Census of Agriculture provides information on a range of topics, including agricultural practices, conservation, organic production, as well as traditional and specialty crops.