

The Northern Mariana Islands is one of the areas collectively referred to as “U.S. Outlying Areas”. For statistical purposes, it is recorded as a separate entity in the World Census of Agriculture Database (in the Oceania Region). Consequently, results related to the United States of America bear only upon the continental territory of the country.

1. HISTORICAL OUTLINE

The first agricultural census in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) was conducted in 1970, in conjunction with the decennial population census. This practice was continued in 1980 and 1990. However, in 1998, the CNMI carried out the first agriculture census separately from the population census. The self-standing agriculture census was conducted by NASS. The 2002 Census of Agriculture (CA) in the CNMI, the fifth in the series, was synchronized with the quinquennial programme of agricultural censuses followed in the mainland United States of America. The CA 2007 in the CNMI continues the programme on the same five-year cycle used for the main agriculture census of the United States of America.

2. LEGAL BASIS AND ORGANIZATION

Legal framework

The CA is required by law under the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Public Law 105-113 (Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g). The law directs the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a CA every five years, covering the prior year.

The 2007 CA was conducted in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding approved by the Administrator of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Department of Commerce (DC) of the CNMI.

Institutional framework and international collaboration

The USDA/NASS is responsible for conducting the CA 2007, with cooperation and assistance from the DC of the CNMI. The NASS provided technical assistance at various levels, while the DC of the CNMI was responsible for recruiting and training local officers and field staff and supervising local administrative matters. The 2007 CA was funded by the U.S. federal budget.

Census staff

The project manager, crew leaders and enumerators employed for the census in the CNMI received special training in accordance with instructions prepared by the NASS and the DC of the CNMI. The training included practice in interviewing and filling out the report form, in addition to detailed discussion of the enumerator's instructions. One NASS staff was assigned to the CA in the CNMI.

3. REFERENCE DATE AND PERIOD

Reference day: the day of enumeration, for inventory items such as number of livestock, machinery and equipment.

Reference period: the calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December 2007, for other items, such as crop production, crop and livestock sales, expense data and aquaculture.

4. ENUMERATION PERIOD

Data collection was conducted from January to July 2008.

5. SCOPE OF THE CENSUS AND DEFINITION OF THE STATISTICAL UNIT

The **scope of the census** covered only agricultural activities (crop and livestock production).

The **statistical unit** was the farm, 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 calendar year 2007. According to the census definition, a farm is essentially an operating unit, not an ownership tract. All land operated or managed by one person or partnership represents one farm. In the case of tenants, the land assigned to each tenant is considered a separate farm, even though the landlord may consider the entire landholding to be one unit rather than several separate units.

6. GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The census covered the entire territory of the CNMI.

7. CUT-OFF THRESHOLD AND OTHER EXCLUSIONS

The CA 2007 covered “all places from which USD 1 000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the 12-month period between January 1 and December 31, 2007”.

8. METHODOLOGY

Methodological modality for conducting the census

The classical approach was used in the CA 2007.

Frame

The census frame was a list¹ of farm operators compiled by the DC of the CNMI. In addition, the local department of agriculture provided a list of known farmers.

Complete and/or sample enumeration methods

The census was a complete enumeration of all farm operators identified in the frame.

Sample design (if sampling was used)

Not applicable.

Data collection method(s)

Data collection was done by traditional face-to-face interviews using the PAPI method.

Each enumerator was an employee of the DC of the CNMI and had been assigned to a specified names on the list of farm operators.²

Questionnaire(s)

One questionnaire (report form) was used for the CA 2007; it was prepared by the NASS, in cooperation with the DC of the CNMI.³ The questionnaire covered 15 of the 16 core items recommended in the WCA 2010.⁴

9. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

All questionnaires were scanned using OMR. The census results were disseminated online, through the NASS website.

10. DATA PROCESSING AND ARCHIVING

The processing of the CA 2007 was done by the DC of the CNMI. Each report form was reviewed and coded prior to data entry. Reports for individuals or establishments not meeting the census farm definition were excluded. The remaining report forms were examined for accuracy, consistency and completeness. After all report forms had been reviewed and coded, the data were keyed and subjected to a thorough computer edit. The corrected data were then tabulated by the computer and reviewed by analysts.

Prior to publication, tabulated totals were reviewed by analysts in Saipan, with assistance from NASS personnel, to identify inconsistencies and potential coverage problems. Comparisons were made with previous census data, as well as with other available data.

11. CENSUS DATA QUALITY

Quality checks included strict field supervision, clerical screening for farm activity, follow-up on non-respondents, keying and transmission of completed report forms, computerized editing of inconsistent and missing data, review and correction of individual records referred from the computer edit, review and correction of tabulated data, and electronic data processing.

12. DATA DISSEMINATION

The final results of the CA 2007 were released in February 2009. The census report included methodological notes and a questionnaire. The census report and thematic ("special") studies are available on the NASS website.

13. DATA SOURCES

United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2009. *2007 Census of Agriculture: Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth and Island Data. Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Part 56.* (also available at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2007/Full_Report/Outlying_Areas/cnmi.pdf).

14. CONTACTS

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¹ The core of this list was a compilation of all persons having a business license to sell agricultural products.

² If a person on the list did not operate a farm, the enumerator recorded whether the land had been sold or rented to another person and was still being used for agriculture. If so, the enumerator obtained the name of that person and followed up to ensure that he or she was included in the census.

³ The questionnaire allows for collecting specific information on the value and volume of sales, other economic activities of holding and sources of income.

⁴ The exception is the item "Other economic production activities of the holding's enterprise".

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS – CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE 2007 – MAIN RESULTS

NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND AREA, BY LEGAL STATUS		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	256	1 624
Family and individuals	232	n.a.
Partnership	10	n.a.
Cooperation	13	n.a.
Other	1	n.a.

LAND TENURE		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	256	1 624
Owned	146	465
Rented from others	115	1 159

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLDINGS BY LAND SIZE CLASSES		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	256	1 624
Less than 0,4 ha	23	5
0,40–0,80 ha	51	30
0,80–1,60 ha	58	66
1,60–3,20 ha	40	90
3,20–4,00 ha	9	29
4,00–8,00 ha	38	198
8,00–16,00 ha	13	153
16,00–20,00 ha	4	77
20,00 ha and over	20	975

LAND USE		
	Holdings	Area (ha)
Total	256	1 624
Agricultural land	n.a.	1 509
Cropland	213	313
Harvested cropland	208	218
Other cropland	91	95
Permanent meadows and pastures	75	1 196
Wooded land	30	78
Other land	127	38

HOLDERS, BY SEX AND AGE	
	Number
Total	256
Male	226
Female	30
Under 35 years	14
35–44 years	53
45–54 years	79
55–64 years	75
65 years and over	35

LABOUR FORCE OF THE HOLDING	
	Number
Total	676
Unpaid labour force	344
Paid labour force	332

LIVESTOCK		
	Holdings	Head
Total holdings with livestock	n.a.	
Cattle	63	1 395
Goats	19	276
Pigs/swine	62	1 483
Poultry (1 000 head)	n.a.	n.a.
Chickens	n.a.	10
Roosters and pullets	41	1
Fighting roosters	26	1
Ducks	10	0,4
Pigeons	9	0,3

SOURCE OF IRRIGATION WATER		
	Holdings	Area irrigated (ha)
Holdings with irrigated land	165	138
Well or cistern	27	n.a.
River and stream	8	n.a.
Public utility	126	n.a.
Other	4	n.a.

MACHINERY AND EQUIPMENT USED ON THE HOLDING		
	Holdings	Units
Total tractors of all kind	88	99
Other (machine-powered)	n.a.	
Motortrucks	88	99
Automobiles	166	201
Tillers	96	110