

Australia - Agricultural Census 2015/2016

**Treasury Portfolio of the Australian Government, Australian Bureau of Statistics
(ABS)**

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Identification

SURVEY ID NUMBER

AUS_2015_2016_AC_v01_M_v01_A_ESS

TITLE

Agricultural Census 2015/2016

SUBTITLE

AC 2015/2016

COUNTRY

Name	Country code
Australia	AUS

STUDY TYPE

Agricultural Census [ag/census]

SERIES INFORMATION

Australia has collected agricultural commodity data since the 1860s. The Agricultural Census (AC) was conducted annually at the end of March each year, until 1996/1997. From then, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) changed the collection period to 30 June to ensure better alignment with other ABS surveys. The current strategy envisages a five-year interval census with sample surveys in inter-censal years. Subsequent ACs have been conducted on a quinquennial basis since 2000/2001.

The cut-off threshold has been changed since this agricultural census (see Universe), as such the estimates from the AC 2015/2016 onwards will not be directly comparable to the previously published estimates.

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the Agricultural Census (AC) is to provide benchmark information on the agriculture industry for small geographic areas. Furthermore, it is designed to support decision making and analysis by a wide variety of stakeholders across government, industry, the research sector and wider community by providing comprehensive high quality agricultural commodity production and activity data (including area and production for crops and area irrigated, number of livestock and number of producers for each commodity) at low levels of geographic disaggregation. The AC also enables updates to core statistical infrastructure as well as being the major source of commodity data used in the calculation of Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced (VACP), which is used as an input to the Australian National Accounts. Outputs from the AC include statistics on land and water use, crop and horticultural area and production, livestock numbers and farm management and demographic information undertaken by businesses in Australia, while data is produced at national, state, and sub-state levels.

KIND OF DATA

Census/enumeration data [cen]

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Agricultural holdings

Scope

NOTES

The census scope covered agricultural activities (crop and livestock production).

The questionnaire aimed to collect information on several areas:

1. Business Details
2. Land Details
3. Livestock: livestock and poultry inventory
4. Horticulture: vegetables, fruits and/or nuts for sale
5. Nurseries, Cut Flowers, and Cultivated Turf
6. Cereals and Other Crops

7. Water for Agricultural Production (including livestock)
8. Pasture and Crop Cultivation
9. Crop Management
10. Fertilizer
11. Farm Management
12. Future Intentions: pertaining continuing the use of the agricultural property

KEYWORDS

Keyword
Structure of Agriculture
Land use
Crops
Livestock and Poultry
Water for Agricultural Production

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The AC 2015/2016 covered the entire territory of Australia.

UNIVERSE

The statistical unit for the AC 2015/2016, was a "business", identified by its Australian Business Number (ABN), and a geographic split was applied for ABNs operating over multiple locations. Units were identified as undertaking agricultural activity if any of the primary or secondary productive activities of those businesses fall within the Agriculture Subdivision (Subdivision 01), as defined by the 2006 edition of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC).

The coverage of the AC 2015/2016 included all businesses undertaking agricultural activity recorded on the ABS Business Register with size above the cut-off of AUD 40 000. The measure of size was based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimated Value of Agricultural Operations (EVAO). Note that for previous ABS Rural Environment and Agricultural Collections a scope of EVAO of \$5,000 or greater was used. The change in scope better aligns this collection with contemporary definitions of an agricultural business and reduces the overall reporting load for smaller agricultural businesses.

Producers and sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name
Treasury Portfolio of the Australian Government, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

Sampling

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The AC 2015/2016 was conducted through complete enumeration of agricultural businesses listed on the ABS Business Register (ABSBR) that met the cut-off threshold.

The frame used for the AC 2015/2016 was drawn from the ABSBR, which is based on the Australian Business Register (ABR). Businesses and organizations are included on the ABR when they register with the Australian Taxation Office for an Australian Business Number (ABN). The ABSBR has been used for ABS agricultural collections since 2005/2006.

RESPONSE RATE

The response rate achieved for the AC 2015-2016 was 85 percent.

WEIGHTING

The frame used for the census was stratified into businesses by size (EVAO), type of agricultural activity (ANZSIC 2006) and location. The stratification allowed for weighting of strata to compensate for non-response.

Data collection

DATES OF DATA COLLECTION

Start	End
2016-07	2016-11

DATA COLLECTION MODE

Computer Assisted Web Interview (CAWI)

DATA COLLECTION NOTES

The AC 2015/2016 used an online web-based form (e-form) and for respondents unable to access or use this option a traditional mail out/mail back paper collection instrument was dispatched. The computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) method was also used on a limited basis for data collection by telephone. As such, enumerators and/or field staff were not required.

Paper forms were dispatched to all in-scope agricultural businesses. Forms were returned to the ABS using reply-paid (postage paid) envelopes. Included with the form was a cover letter outlining the AC 2015/2016, as well as details that enabled an alternate mode of response to be provided - specifically, via a web form (using Computer-assisted Web Interviewing, or CAWI) with some of the basic information pre-filled.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The accuracy of estimates was assured through coherence between earlier years' estimates and relevant other sources. The main measure of accuracy of estimates from the AC 2015/2016 was indicated by calculating relative standard errors, calculated by dividing the standard error of the estimate by the estimate itself, which were assigned to each estimate produced and released.

Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRES

Data was collected using one single questionnaire. The AC 2015/2016 covered 13 out of the 23 essential items recommended in the WCA 2020.

Data Processing

DATA EDITING

Final estimates from the AC 2015/2016 were not revised as a result of any reconciliation processes.

DATA PROCESSING NOTES

The ABS distributed statistical processing activities across specialist processing and support areas located in a number of Australian state offices of the ABS. Paper questionnaires were processed using optical character recognition (OCR) to extract data. Whereas, direct data capture was ensured by the CAWI method.

A range of SAS-based tools (programs, projects and code) was used to interrogate estimates and identify anomalies, either at the unit (micro) or estimate (macro) level. Editing of unit-level data was undertaken via the Blaise/Editors Tool Kit (ETK). ABS imputation and estimation processes used SAS-based projects (software) with ABS-developed interfaces allowing for setup and operations.

Access policy

CONTACTS

Name	Affiliation	Email	URL
Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)	Treasury Portfolio of the Australian Government	agriculture.statistics@abs.gov.au	Link

ACCESS CONDITIONS

For general inquiries, or inquiries related to microdata access contact ABS:

Call in Australia: 1300 135 070

Outside Australia: +61 2 92 684 909

Fill the form at: <https://www.abs.gov.au/about/general-enquiry-form>

Responsible use of ABS microdata:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/responsible-use-abs-microdata>

Conditions of use of DataLab available at:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/datalab/conditions-use>

****DATA AND METADATA ARCHIVING****

Unit record data (microdata) and metadata are retained for the three most recent ACs in accordance with the ABS' data retention policies. Data and metadata are stored on secured Oracle databases with access limited to officers within the AC workgroup. Unit record data for earlier ACs are deleted with only the aggregated estimates retained indefinitely.

Metadata production

DDI DOCUMENT ID

DDI_AUS_2015_2016_AC_v01_M_v01_A_ESS_FAO

PRODUCERS

Name	Affiliation	Role
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Treasury Portfolio of the Australian Government	Metadata producer
Statistics Division	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Metadata adapted for FAM

Data Dictionary

Data file	Cases	Variables
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