

Mauritius - Census of Agriculture 2024

Statistics Mauritius, Census of Agriculture Unit

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Identification

SURVEY ID NUMBER

MUS_2024_CA_v01_M_v01_A_ESS

TITLE

Census of Agriculture 2024

COUNTRY

Name	Country code
Mauritius	MUS

STUDY TYPE

Agricultural Census [ag/census]

SERIES INFORMATION

The Census of Agriculture 2024 was the fourth census conducted in Mauritius. Previous censuses were carried out in 1930, 1940 and 2014.

ABSTRACT

The Census of Agriculture 2024 collected information on the structure of the agricultural sector, necessary to provide important information on the organisational structure of farms at geographic level for better and informed decision making; to improve estimates on the contribution of agriculture for the economy; and to improve the completeness of existing sampling frame.

KIND OF DATA

Census/enumeration data [cen]

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Agricultural holdings

Scope

NOTES

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

The questionnaire collected information on:

1. Identification of Business
2. Characteristics of Business
3. Agricultural Activities of Business
4. Employment in Agriculture
5. Land Use and Tenure for Agricultural Production
6. Land Owned by Business but Rented to Others
7. Temporary and Permanent Crop Production
8. Type of Farming
9. Agricultural Practices
10. Types of Mechanisation
11. Livestock
12. Marketing Practices
13. Outstanding Agricultural Loans
14. Main Constraints in Your Farming Business

KEYWORDS

Keyword
Structure of Agriculture
Land use

Crops
Livestock and Poultry
Labour in the Agricultural Sector

Coverage

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

The Census of Agriculture 2024 covered the entire area of the Island of Mauritius and Rodrigues.

UNIVERSE

The statistical unit was the agricultural holding, defined as an economic unit of agricultural production under single management, comprising all livestock kept and all land used for agricultural production purposes without regard to title, legal form or size. The census covered holdings in the household sector, which the country referred as "household farms" and "private households", and holdings in the non-household sector, called by the country, "agricultural businesses".

Holdings in the household sector defined as "household farms" and included in Phase II were agricultural holdings which met one or more of the following thresholds:

- 5 perches of cultivated land, on own account, and for commercial production
- 5 perches of kitchen garden
- 5 trees of breadfruit, lychee, mango
- 10 ten trees of lemon, mandarin, coconut, guava, other citrus, mixed fruit trees
- 20 trees of banana, pawpaw
- 5 peaches of pineapple, lychee, vegetables, other fruits or other crops
- Honey producers
- Deer farms
- Livestock and poultry breeders.

The holdings that did not comply with the thresholds were classified as "private households" and were enumerated in Phase III of the census.

Producers and sponsors

PRIMARY INVESTIGATORS

Name
Statistics Mauritius, Census of Agriculture Unit

PRODUCERS

Name
Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries
Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI)

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR

Name
Ministry of Finance

Sampling

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The frame for holdings in the non-household sector, enumerated in Phase I, was a list of agricultural establishments obtained from databases of the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries and the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute for crops, livestock and poultry breeders, supplemented with information from other

administrative sources.

The sampling frame for "household farms", enumerated in Phase II, consisted of a list of agricultural production units obtained from the databases of the Ministry of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries and the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute for livestock and poultry breeders, supplemented with information from other administrative sources such as small farmers registered at Small Farmers Welfare Fund, persons engaged in growing of crops - vegetables, fruits and flowers (including vegetable crops in kitchen gardens and fruit trees in backyard) mainly for sale or own consumption with at least 5 perches of land (identified from the 2022 HPC), etc.

The frame used in Phase III for "private households" was a list of Primary Sampling Units (PSU) obtained from the Cartography unit together with their maps for selected PSU.

A combination of complete and sample enumeration was used. In Phase I, complete enumeration was carried out to collect data from agricultural holdings in the non-household sector, while sample enumeration was used in Phase II and III to enumerate holdings in the household sector.

The Phase II sample was comprised of 10 200 "household farms" (8200 for the Island of Mauritius and 2000 for the Island of Rodrigues) were selected, i.e. 42 percent of the population, which were allocated to the different strata according to disproportionate stratified random sampling. The stratifying variables were agricultural intensity, types of crops/livestock and geographical region. Within the strata, units were selected using systematic random sampling.

In Phase III, a random sample of around 8700 "private households" was selected. The sampling design was a stratified cluster sampling. The clusters or Primary Sampling Units (PSUs), around 1550 for Island of Mauritius and 46 for the Island of Rodrigues, were stratified according to their agricultural intensity. A representative sample of PSUs (50 for Mauritius and 10 for Rodrigues) was drawn. Each "private household" in the selected PSU was interviewed. The sample represented around 3 percent of households in the Island of Mauritius and around 22 percent in the Island of Rodrigues.

Weight adjustments were carried out to minimize non-sampling errors caused by misclassification of units, undercoverage of the frame of "household farms", and non-response. The non-response rate for Phase II was 12 percent, while full response was achieved in Phase III.

Data collection

DATES OF DATA COLLECTION

Start	End	Cycle
2024-08	2024-09	Phase I
2024-07	2024-09	Phase II
2024-10	2024-11	Phase III

DATA COLLECTION MODE

Computer Assisted Personal Interview [capi] Mail questionnaire [mail]

DATA COLLECTION NOTES

The Census of Agriculture unit was set up in December 2023 and was supervised by a Statistician/Senior Statistician and supported by four Statistical Officers/Senior Statistical Officers and three Management Support Officers. As of October 2024, 5 additional Management Support Officers joined the unit to handle editing, coding and validation. Phase I was done by staff of the census unit through post and email. Data collection in Phase II involved 1 chief supervisor, 6 senior supervisors, 40 supervisors and 206 enumerators. In Phase III, the fieldwork employed 1 chief supervisor, 1 senior supervisor, 10 supervisors and 60 enumerators.

Data collection was carried out in three Phases. In Phase I, data was collected from holdings in the non-household sector. Phase II covered holdings in the household sector (named "household farms"). In Phase III, a questionnaire for "private households" was used.

The data collection for the census was carried out using: (i) the mail-out/mail-back method for holdings in the non-household sector; and (ii) the CAPI method for holdings in the household sector. The data on sugar cane and tea was collected from administrative registers, the Sugar Insurance Fund Board and the National Agricultural Product Regulatory Office (former Tea Board), respectively.

In Phase I, questionnaires were sent to around 1500 agricultural businesses in August 2024 with the request that the completed questionnaire be returned by 12 September 2024, contacting by phone all business farms which were in operation to reinforce compliance with deadlines. All undelivered questionnaires were returned to the census unit, which amounts to about 1350 holdings. The possible reasons for the high percentage of undelivered mail were business inactivity, failure to commence business activity and incorrect business address. Statistics Mauritius officers visited the non-respondents to improve the response rate. At the end, there were only 169 completed questionnaires for the non-household sector.

****QUALITY ASSURANCE****

Several actions were undertaken during the census to reduce the effect of different sources of errors: (i) intensive training of field staff who were provided with a detailed instruction manual; (ii) incorporation of validation checks into the tablet to ensure consistency of information provided; (iii) providing supervisory staff with a diary in which they had to fill in their itineraries, problems encountered and solution thereof; (iv) interviewers being accompanied by their supervisors during the first few interviews and also in difficult cases; (v) re-interviews being carried out to clear out queries, if any, and ensure corrections of data collected; and (vi) intensive editing and consistency checks carried out at office where outliers were flagged and reported to supervisory staff for call backs if necessary. Sampling errors were estimated for data from samples in Phases II and III. The Household Questionnaire was used like a "Post Enumeration Survey" to compare the results with the original census data in the Farm questionnaire. The matching was above 95 percent. Data relating to "private households" was also used for census results.

Questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRES

Three questionnaires were used in the census:

- Business Questionnaire (CA1), for holdings in the non-household sector
- Farm Questionnaire (CA2), for "household farms"
- Household Questionnaire (CA3), for "private households".

The last questionnaires (CA2 and CA3) were used for holdings in the household sector. The questionnaires covered 21 out of the 23 essential items recommended in the WCA 2020.

Data Processing

DATA EDITING

CAPI method in Phases II and III ensured direct data capture using tablets with CSPro software. In Phase I, data was manually entered using Excel to capture information from questionnaires sent by mail. Data were processed and validated using STATA software to obtain clean data. Tables were compiled using Microsoft Excel. The editing and coding of completed CA1 and CA2 questionnaires were carried out by staff of the census of agriculture unit. A routine review of the completed CA3 questionnaires was performed. Coding was not necessary for these, as the CAPI program handled that.

This exercise started as scheduled in September 2024 and was completed by the end of November 2024. An editing and coding instruction manual was developed, and it outlines the process of editing and coding to ensure data accuracy, consistency and completeness. This process involves identifying and resolving errors and inconsistencies. Data obtained in Phase II showed that some "household farms" (around two percent) were not properly classified as either small, medium or large based on their actual area of holding or herd size. These farms were reclassified to their appropriate strata and weights were recalculated to obtain better estimates. Weights adjustments were also carried out to minimise non-sampling errors based on coverage issues with the frames used for holdings in the household sector. During data collection, supervisory staff and also the inbuilt CAPI programme ensured completeness of questionnaires. Thus, no imputation was needed.

Access policy

CONTACTS

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Census of Agriculture Unit	Statistics Mauritius	sm_agricensus@govmu.org	Link

ACCESS CONDITIONS

For additional information on data access and use, please contact the Statistics Mauritius.

E-mail: sm_agricensus@govmu.org

Website: <https://statsmauritius.govmu.org>

Metadata production

DDI DOCUMENT ID

DDI_MUS_2024_CA_v01_M_v01_A_ESS_FAO

PRODUCERS

Name	Abbreviation	Affiliation	Role
Census of Agriculture Unit		Statistics Mauritius	Metadata producer
Statistics Division	ESS	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Metadata adapted for FAM

Data Dictionary

Data file	Cases	Variables
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