



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

C-Fare 2007 FALL Board Meeting NASS Update: What's New and What's Changing

NASS Mission Statement: To provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. Agriculture

Crops

A new weekly report, *Peanut Prices*, was issued starting on October 13, 2006. This report includes the weekly price received by farmers for each type of farmer stock peanut (Runners, Spanish, Valencia, and Virginia) along with the quantity marketed. Data for the prior four weeks are also included.

A special corn objective yield report, *Corn Objective Yield Survey Data, 1992-2006*, was issued on May 18, 2007. This report provides information on the types of data collected from the corn objective yield surveys and how they relate to the Agricultural Statistics Board yield estimates. This information was provided to data users to aid in understanding the corn objective yield program and to provide a historical perspective of the changes that have occurred in the objective yield data over the last 15 years.

A special soybean objective yield report, *Soybean Objective Yield Survey Data, 1992-2006*, was issued on July 27, 2007. This report provides information on the types of data collected from the soybean objective yield surveys and how they relate to the Agricultural Statistics Board yield estimates. The information was provided to data users to aid in understanding the soybean objective yield program and to provide a historical perspective of the changes that have occurred in the objective yield data over the last 15 years.

State and U.S. level market year average prices for canola, rapeseed, mustard seed, safflower, and proso millet were published in the November *Agricultural Prices* report. Prior to this year, these prices were not published until the *Crop Values* report was released in February.

Colorado and Kansas were added to the canola estimation program and were published as part of the combined Other States total in the *Crop Production 2006 Summary* report.

In July 2007, NASS began estimating percent of acreage planted to yellow type potatoes. Historically, yellow potatoes have been included with white potatoes. However, white potatoes yield differently and are utilized differently than yellow potatoes, and yellow type potatoes have been an increasing portion of the potato crop over the past few years.

Beginning with the 2007 crop, winter potatoes were combined with spring potatoes in Florida. Florida's winter potato crop continues to decrease in acres and number of growers. Growers in Dade County, which was Florida's major winter potato county, no longer produce potatoes. Winter potato shipments for the previous two years had less than three percent of Florida's total sales.

Beginning in 2007, the percent of major varieties planted for fall potatoes was published in the September *Crop Production* report. Previously, this information was not available until the November *Crop Production* report.

Beginning in March 2007, the *Prospective Plantings* report now includes planting intentions for dry edible peas, chickpeas, Austrian winter peas, and lentils. Previously, the first planted acreage estimates for these crops were not published until the June *Acreage* report.

Beginning in 2007, Mississippi was added to the blueberry estimation program.

In 2007, NASS began estimating and publishing acreage, yield, production, price, and value for Scotch and Native varieties of spearmint in Washington.

Beginning in January 2008, NASS will discontinue estimating and publishing equivalent on-tree returns for fresh peaches in the January *Noncitrus Fruits and Nuts* report. Beginning in January 2008, NASS will publish fresh and processed peach estimates for quantity, price, and value.

Beginning with the 2007 crop year, Florida was dropped from the tobacco estimation program. Florida accounted for less than 1 percent of the U.S. acreage.

Beginning in 2007, the number of States included in the annual Floriculture program was reduced from 36 to 15.

Livestock

A special report, *Overview of the U.S. Sheep and Goat Industry*, was issued September 28, 2007. This report covers a graphic historical look at sheep and goat supplies in the United States for the last 25 years. Historical data on the inventory, operations, sheep, lamb, and wool prices as well as inventories of angora, milk, and meat goats and data on mohair price and production were presented.

A new report, *Ethanol Co-Products Used for Livestock Feed*, was issued June 29, 2007. This report was a joint effort between NASS and the Nebraska Corn Board involving 12 Midwestern States. The report highlights the use of co-products among dairy, cattle on feed, and beef cow operations as well as hog producers. The study also identifies the concerns and barriers that prevented producers from using co-products.

Two new data series, net poults placed and eggs hatched, were added to the monthly *Turkey Hatchery* released in April. Net poults placed replaced the poults placed data series to capture the impact of international trade on the turkey industry. The previous poults placed data series will remain accessible on the Quick Stats web site for analysis purposes, but will no longer be updated. The new data series, net poults, can be found on Quick Stats.

A reliability table was added to the August *Turkey Hatchery* and the August *Turkeys Raised* releases. The reliability tables show how well an estimator of interest performs in estimation. Ten years of data are used to calculate the “Root Mean Square Error” percent that compares the first estimate to the final estimate.

The monthly *Dairy Products* report released in March 2007, contained new cumulative U.S. level tables for lactose (human and animal) and total whey protein concentrate. The table containing ice cream, nonfat, and hard was discontinued. The two new tables continue in subsequent monthly Dairy Products releases.

Beginning with the annual *Dairy Products 2006 Summary* released in April 2007, State level tables for ice cream, regular, total; ice cream, lowfat, hard; and ice cream, lowfat, soft; were discontinued due to confidentiality concerns and data quality issues at the State level. U.S. level estimates are still provided in the Frozen Product tables of this publication.

The monthly *Cold Storage* report released in January 2007 contained modifications to the publication to reduce respondent burden. The following items at the US and regional level were discontinued: other shelled nuts, other in-shell nuts, canned hams, other canned meat, miscellaneous cooler items, and miscellaneous freezer items. Regional publication of pork ribs, pork trimmings, and other pork were discontinued. Consolidation of publication regions occurred for pecans and chicken.

An interim final rule was published in the Federal Register on July 3, 2007 (72 FR 36341), that establishes a Dairy Product Mandatory Reporting Program as required by law. The rule was effective on August 2, 2007. This program will be carried out by NASS and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Beginning with the week ending July 7, 2007, all weekly *Dairy Product Prices* data reported to NASS are subject to verification by AMS.

Environmental, Economics and Demographics

A new U.S. monthly price series was started for canola in the August *Agricultural Prices* report. This series also includes prices each month for Minnesota and North Dakota. Previously, only Market Year Average prices were available from NASS. Canola prices will be used in the calculation of the monthly All Farm Products received index beginning in 2008.

The NASS Quick Stats database available to the public contains the most current month prices paid and received index values. Previously, index revisions were calculated quarterly (January, April, July, and October). The new process allows the public to obtain the most current index values even though not published in a NASS *Agricultural Prices* release.

The *2007 Agricultural Prices Summary* will be released to coincide with July monthly *Agricultural Prices* release. Both reports contain some of the same data, so releasing them on the same day will reduce confusion for data users.

The 2007 January Labor Survey was not conducted due to budget constraints. However, the All Hired, Field & Livestock, and Field annual average wages and number of workers will be published in November for the Regions and U.S., as in the past. State level wages will not be published.

The *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2007 Restricted Use Summary* will be released on May 21, 2008, in conjunction with the *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2007 Field Crops Summary*.

The *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2007 Postharvest Applications Summary* will not be published in March 2008 as planned since the Postharvest Applications survey was not conducted. The Postharvest Applications survey will also not be conducted in 2008.

The *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2007 Fruit Summary* scheduled for July 30, 2008, will not be published since the 2007 Fruit Chemical Usage survey was not conducted in 2007. Apples and organic apples are commodities of interest on the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) Phase II. These data will be included in the *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2007 Field Crops Summary* on May 21, 2008.

An *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2008 Fruit Summary* will not be published. The 2008 Fruit Chemical Usage survey will not be conducted in 2008.

There will be no *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2008 Field Crops Summary* published. The 2008 ARMS Phase II Chemical Usage data will not be collected.

The *Agricultural Chemical Usage 2008 Restricted Use Summary* will not be published due to no chemical usage surveys being conducted.

2007 Census of Agriculture

NASS will mail out Census forms on December 28, 2007 to collect data for the 2007 calendar year. Completed forms are due by February 4, 2008. Producers can return their forms by mail or, for the first time, they have the convenient option of filling out the Census online via a secure web site. Information from the Census will be available in February 2009.

In preparation for the 2007 Census of Agriculture, NASS is undertaking the most comprehensive public outreach campaign in its history. Marketing efforts are aimed at educating producers about the importance of their participation, with a special focus on outreach to small, minority, limited-resource, and non-traditional farmers and ranchers – those who may not have been counted completely in the past. Components of the 2007 Census communications campaign include:

- Partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs), producer groups, agribusinesses, and sister USDA agencies;
- Participation in a wide variety of farm-oriented trade shows and conventions;
- Proactive media relations aimed at securing articles, editorials and other “free” coverage by key publications and broadcast outlets;
- Paid advertising in selected publications and on selected radio networks in areas with high concentrations of minority and limited-resource farmers;
- Public service (donated) advertising, both print and broadcast;
- Point-of-purchase displays (counter stands, tent cards and other materials) at retailers, elevators, banks, local USDA service centers, and other places where farmers conduct business; and
- Creation of a dedicated Census website – www.agcensus.usda.gov.

NASS INTERNET SITE

In December 2005, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) launched it's newly redesigned web site at www.nass.usda.gov.

The site continues to provide comprehensive statistical data on every facet of U.S. Agriculture. The Quick Stats Agricultural Statistics Database offers the ability to search for data by commodity, State(s), and year(s). National, State, and county level data can then be downloaded for easy use in a database or spreadsheet. Technological enhancements include a new Google-powered search engine, a Scalable Vector Graphic (SVG) interactive mapping application, and Rich Site Summary (RSS) news feeds. Data users are encouraged to bookmark the site and visit it often, as it will be frequently updated with new information.

NASS DATA USERS MEETING

The 2007 Data Users Meetings were held in Salt Lake City on May 17 and in Chicago on October 29. Meeting proceedings and summaries are located on the NASS internet site at: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/Meeting/index.asp. The December meeting notes should be posted by the first week of December.