



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service



# News Release

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**Press Release Announcement - December 10, 2007 - For Immediate Release**

## **'TIS THE SEASON TO BE COUNTED Arizona Farmers Give the Gift that Keeps Giving By Participating in 2007 Census**

Phoenix, Arizona – The end of December is typically marked by crowds of people returning holiday gifts that don't fit or won't work, but this year farmers across the country and in Arizona can give themselves a gift that won't be returned and will keep on giving even after the holiday season – a voice for their industry and their community.

By filling out the 2007 Census of Agriculture farmers are investing in the future of rural America. Their responses will provide law makers, government organizations, town planners and individual farm operations with valuable information used to plan for services, facilities and other investments to benefit the industry and local communities.

Conducted every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census covers virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture, providing a complete count of the nation's farms and ranches and the people who operate them.

"The Census can provide valuable information for Arizona agriculture," said Steven Manheimer, director of the NASS Arizona Field Office. "How has the housing growth in Maricopa, Pinal, Pima and Yuma counties affected agriculture? Is the growth of the Arizona dairy industry continuing? Are hay, silage and forage crops still increasing in acreage? Is Arizona agricultural sales still dominated by large family farms? These are just a few of the questions that Census information provides, adds Manheimer. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures and other topics across the country and in Arizona, right down to the county level. 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.

"Participating in the Census of Agriculture is one gift Arizona producers can give themselves and their local communities this holiday season" added Manheimer. "It's a valuable investment into the future and well-being of agriculture and to the local communities here in Arizona."

For more information about the Census, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) or call toll-free (888) 4AG-STAT or (888) 424-7828. The Census is your voice, your future, and your responsibility.

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