



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



News Release

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USDA TO COLLECT DATA ON FARMERS' PLANTING INTENTIONS FOR 2008

[PHOENIX, ARIZONA] – What crops do farmers intend to plant this growing season? Will corn acreage surpass last year's record high? What about cotton, alfalfa and other crops? These are just a few of the critical questions the Arizona Field Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will be asking producers statewide as part of the March Agricultural Survey.

“The March Agricultural Survey is one of the most important surveys conducted each year by NASS,” explained Steven Manheimer, director of the NASS Arizona Field Office. “This survey will provide the first official estimates of U.S. farmers' planting intentions for 2008, providing a glimpse at the upcoming growing season. Stocks of traditional commodities are at record lows so this information is critical in order to forecast supply and demand for 2008.

“Data from the March Agricultural Survey benefit farmers and ranchers by providing timely and accurate information to help them make critical decisions for their operation. When producers finalize their cropping and marketing plans, this survey will be one of the most important sources of information for them,” added Manheimer.

Beginning the end of February, NASS will contact selected Arizona producers by mail or telephone and ask them to provide information on the crop acreage they intend to plant for the 2008 crop year, including planned cotton, alfalfa and corn acreage. NASS will also collect data on quantities of grains and oilseeds stored on-farm. The information will be compiled and analyzed then published in a series of USDA reports, including the annual *Prospective Plantings* report and quarterly *Grain Stocks* report, both to be released on March 31.

As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. “NASS safeguards the privacy of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified,” stated Manheimer.

All reports are available on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Arizona Field Office at 1-800-645-7286.

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