



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NEW ENGLAND FIELD OFFICE
53 Pleasant Street, Room 2100
Concord, NH 03301



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Contact: Rebecca Dubbs
(603) 224-9639

NASS WILL SURVEY USDA CERTIFIED ORGANIC PRODUCERS

Results Will Help Re-evaluate Federal Crop Insurance Programs

[Concord, NH] – What may seem like just another survey in your mailbox is actually a unique and valuable opportunity for USDA certified organic producers to showcase their contributions to agriculture and help ensure the continued growth and economic sustainability of organic farming in the United States. As part of a cooperative agreement between USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA), all known USDA certified organic producers are asked to take part in the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey.

"NASS is conducting the Organic Production Survey to gather detailed production and marketing information on certified organic farming in the United States," said Gary Keough, director of the NASS New England Field Office. "The Risk Management Agency will use the information published from the survey to improve Federal crop insurance programs for organic crops, including helping to determine the numbers and varieties of organic crops insured and developing new insurance approaches."

In 2008, NASS reported that average production expenditures are higher for organic farms (\$171,978) than for all farms nationwide (\$109,359). Collecting this new information will help the USDA re-evaluate Federal crop insurance programs to ensure USDA certified organic producers receive equitable insurance rates and programs for the food and fiber they produce.

"I urge all New England producers who receive a survey to respond," said Keough. "Your response will help shape decisions regarding farm policy, funding allocations, availability of goods and services, community development, and other key issues for the organic community. The information may be used not only to provide better insurance coverage for organic crops, but to enhance programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and potentially expand the Market Access Program and exports of organic agricultural products."

From December 2011 – April 2012, NASS will collect information on certified organic production including acres planted, acres harvested, quantity harvested, quantity sold, value of sale, marketing practices, and more for field crops, vegetables, fruits, tree nuts and berries, livestock, poultry, and livestock products. Producers can respond by mail, Internet, telephone, or personal

enumeration with a NASS representative. Responding online via NASS's secure Web-based response system at www.agcounts.usda.gov saves time and money.

As with all NASS surveys, respondents are guaranteed by law that their individual information is kept confidential. For more information about the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey, contact the NASS New England Field Office at 1-800-754-7607 or visit www.nass.usda.gov.

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