



ORGANIC PRODUCTION SURVEY INITIAL NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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USDA TO CONDUCT FIRST WIDE-SCALE SURVEY OF ORGANIC PRODUCERS

Harrisburg, PA – The 2007 Census of Agriculture counted over 20,000 U.S. farms engaged in organic production. The top 5 states were California, Washington, Oregon, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Ranking 5th, Pennsylvania farms recorded \$58.3 million dollars in sales of organic products. To learn more about how the growth of organic farming is changing the face of U.S. agriculture, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will soon conduct its first wide-scale survey of organic agricultural producers and producers in transition to organic agriculture.

"The Organic Production Survey comes in direct response to the growing interest in organics among consumers, farmers, businesses and others," said Daniel Capstick, Deputy Director of the NASS-Pennsylvania Field Office. "This is an opportunity for organic producers to share their voices and help ensure the continued growth and sustainability of organic production in the United States."

The survey will look at many aspects of organic agriculture during the 2008 calendar year – from production and marketing practices, to income and expenses.

"The results will help shape future decisions regarding farm policy, funding allocations, availability of goods and services, community development and other key issues," Capstick noted. "In addition, the information can help organic producers make informed decisions about the future of their own farming operations."

NASS mailed the Organic Production Survey in early May to all known organic producers in the United States. They are required to respond by June 17. Results are expected to be available in winter 2009.

"Participants can mail back their forms, but we encourage them to complete the survey online at www.agcensus.usda.gov. It's convenient, it's secure, and it saves the government money on return postage and data entry," Capstick said.

Survey participants are guaranteed by law (Title 7, U.S. Code) that their individual information will be kept confidential. NASS uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes data only in tabulated totals.

For more information about the Organic Production Survey, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (800) 727-9540.

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