



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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USDA AND THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION RELEASE 2007 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE LESSON PLANS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4, 2008 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the National FFA Organization today announced the release of classroom-ready lesson plans about the 2007 Census of Agriculture. These resources can be used by junior and senior high school teachers to educate students about the importance of collecting agricultural data, how the data is used, and how to interpret findings in a way that is relevant to their lives.

“Collaborating with FFA on this endeavor is helping to inform and empower students to play an active role in the Census process – a process that benefits them, their families and their entire agricultural communities,” said NASS Acting Administrator Joseph Reilly. “FFA members are respected leaders in their communities and the future of agriculture. As such, their support and partnership in the Census will help ensure a greater understanding and participation across the country.”

Conducted every five years by USDA, the Census is a complete count of the nation’s farms and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census provides valuable information used to help deliver programs and funding in support of agriculture – crucial resources that will benefit the next generation of farmers and the communities they call home.

“We are glad to be assisting with the 2007 Census of Agriculture. These online resources will be valuable products for our teachers as they help educate FFA members,” said Dr. Will Waidelich, senior division director for Research, Development and Sponsored Programs at the National FFA Organization.

“The 2007 Census of Agriculture provides farmers and ranchers with a voice in the futures of their operations and communities,” added Reilly. “As the beneficiaries of Census data, young farmers and ranchers have much to learn from the information that is collected in the Census.”

The Census coursework is aligned with national agricultural education and academic standards. The five lesson plans address such topics as what the Census of Agriculture is, how surveys are conducted, and the importance of civic responsibility and advocacy.

The materials can be accessed for free at the Team Ag Ed Learning Center (TAELC), www.agedlearning.org. TAELC was designed by the National Council for Agricultural Education and the National FFA Organization to create a one-stop shop for electronic instructional resources for agricultural education teachers and their students. For more information about the Census of Agriculture visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

The National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, is a national youth organization of 500,823 student members – all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture – as part of 7,358 local FFA chapters in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The National FFA Organization changed to its present name in 1988, in recognition of the growth and diversity of agriculture and agricultural education. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. Visit www.ffa.org for more information.

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