



News Release

Cooperating with Texas Department of Agriculture

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USDA TO EXAMINE FARMERS' PRODUCTION PRACTICES AND COSTS

Austin, Texas . . . How are local farmers affected by changing agricultural trends and increased input costs? What new production practices are they using to assure a healthy environment and an abundant crop? These and other important questions will be answered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts the 2007 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

"ARMS is USDA's primary source of information on the production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America's farm households," said David Abbe, director of the Texas Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

From September to December, NASS will interview nearly 4,500 farm operators nationwide, including 500 in Texas. They will be asked to provide information on their fertilizer, nutrient and pesticide applications, as well as their pest management and irrigation practices.

"During this phase of ARMS, we focus on production practices and costs. This year, we are looking at cotton," said Mr. Abbe. "In early 2008, we will follow up with some producers to obtain additional economic data."

The importance of this survey cannot be underestimated, according to Mr. Abbe. "Virtually every federal farm program and policy is based on ARMS data," he said. "Conservation programs, price support programs, risk management programs and research programs all rely on information generated through this survey. That's why it's so important that farmers take the time to participate and ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information, straight from the source."

As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. "NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified," stated David Abbe. All reports are available on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Texas Field Office at 1-800-626-3142.