



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
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USDA SURVEY MEASURES ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF FARMERS

[RICHMOND, VIRGINIA] – Farmers will soon have the opportunity to set the record straight about the issues that affect them – and to help ensure that policies and programs are based on accurate, real-world data. This is the goal of the annual Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS), conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

ARMS is USDA’s primary source of information on production practices, resource use and economic well-being of America’s farm households.

“Just about every federal policy and program that affects U.S. farmers and farm families is based on information from ARMS,” said Herman Ellison, Director of the NASS Virginia Field Office. “This information is used not just by USDA and Congress, but also by Virginia Tech, agribusinesses and others who make the decisions that shape the future of Virginia agriculture.”

Between January 1 and April 18, 2008 NASS field offices will contact 33,500 farmers nationwide by mail, phone and/or personal interview to complete the survey. Producers will be asked to provide data on their operating expenditures, production costs and household characteristics.

“All farm operators rely on quality information and sound government policies in order to run a successful business. That’s why participation in ARMS is so important,” Ellison explained. “Producer participation in ARMS ensures that decisions affecting farmers, their families, their businesses and their communities are based on the facts, straight from the source.”

ARMS survey responses will be compiled and NASS will publish the farm economic data in the annual *Farm Production Expenditures* report, to be released on August 7, 2008. As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified. All NASS reports are available online at: www.nass.usda.gov.

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