



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NEW ENGLAND FIELD OFFICE
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NASS Publishes County-Level Cash Rent Data

Concord, NH For the first time, U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is publishing county-level data on cash rental rates for agricultural land.

The information, which was available online as of May 1, includes average rental rates for non-irrigated cropland, irrigated cropland and pastureland during the 2008 calendar year.

"This data will provide an important decision-making tool for farmers, ranchers and other landowners," said Gary Keough, director of the NASS New England Field Office. "In addition, USDA agencies will have these new figures available to help develop and administer important farm programs used by farmers and ranchers."

Since 1997, NASS has published land value and rental rate data at the state level. The agency is providing the county data in response to requests from customers as well the new requirements of the 2008 Farm Bill.

The information is based on data NASS gathered from 700,000 agricultural producers nationwide during the 2008 end-of-year surveys: the biannual cattle survey, the biannual sheep and goats survey, the quarterly crops/stocks survey, the annual acreage and production survey, and the first-ever county-level cash rents survey.

Keough noted that complete data may not be available for all counties. "Some counties did not meet the minimum 20,000 acres of cropland and pastureland requirement. In other counties, we may not have received enough survey responses to publish a reliable estimate. In these instances, the estimated rental values are combined with those of neighboring counties and published as the 'other county total' within the district."

The 2008 county-level cash rental rates data is available online at www.nass.usda.gov under the Economics link. Users can access cash rental rates at the state, county or crop reporting district level.