



USDA Fall Data Users' Meeting  
October 15 & 16, 2024  
Question and Answer Summary

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## Question & Answer Summary

The following is a summary of questions and answers from the Data Users' Meeting. Material is organized based on the order they were answered in both the Open Forum and breakout sessions. Any unanswered questions were reviewed, and the appropriate agency has provided a written response.

**Note:** Questions and answers were lightly edited for readability.

## Open Forum: Question and Answer Summary

**Question:** Joseph Lardy

There is talk about the revision of the export sales system. Can you please please remove the unknown category. I know it's allowed currently but is it possible to change it? It's just common sense to know that a sale is made to a particular country, so why is unknown allowed to be used?

**Answer:** Paul Trupo

The regulations are written so as to allow an exporter to report sales to an unknown destination, if the country of destination is not specified or declared in the sales contract. All that I can say at this time: it is allowed, USDA has documented this concern. We will review the inclusion of this concern and consider its application the next time we update the regulations. We do not have a timeframe for doing so, but we are cognizant of this issue. We have it on the agenda to consider as soon as we get the opportunity to update the regulations.

**Question:** Julie Ingwersen

What day will USDA publish its early-release tables for the next baseline/long term report?

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

November 7th.

**Question:** Hussain Jiwani

Is there any update on corn, soybean county level yield, planted and harvested acres data for 2025? Is USDA going to release this data in 2025?

**Answer:** Troy Joshua

NASS does not yet have an allocated budget for FY 2025. We received markers from the House and Senate for an explanatory note, encouraging us to reinstate July cattle and the county estimate programs. We recognize the critical importance of these programs to our data user community. Consequently, we are taking proactive measures internally to ensure we are prepared to produce these data products. Especially if our budget situation improves. Rest assured, once we receive our budget, we will thoroughly evaluate our options and make well-informed decisions to make sure we meet those expectations of the stakeholders.

**Question:** Haili Zhao

Will it be possible to get Agricultural trading volume into Hawaii from Other States of US?

**Answer:** Paul Trupo

The Global Agricultural Trade System (GATS) available on the FAS website allows state export volumes and values by state. For Hawaii, not being an export destination, we do not have the data available on the system.

**Answer:** Joe DeCampo

The best we have is the Commodity Flow Survey, only published once every five years though.

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

How do I sign up for Charts of Note emails? I seemed to have fallen off this distribution the past 2 years.

**Answer:** Kelly Maguire

The best way is to go to the website ERS.USDA.gov. At the bottom right-hand corner is a subscribe button. It opens up a screen and you can type in an email address where you would want to receive updates. There are a number of items you can also select. You can also opt in to receive charts of note or information on data updates or reports.

**Question:** Mark Feight

This year corn and soy acres were adjusted in August v Sep or Oct in prior years. Disregarding years with late planting, will acre changes in August become std operating procedure?

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

I suspect the question does acknowledge the fact that there could be differences between late planting and reporting to FSA and that could be affected at any particular year. Our goal is to provide the best estimates at the earliest possible time. Yes, August will become a part of the regular rotation, assuming we are confident in the administrative data that we have in at that time.

**Question:** Jessica Spreitzer

Where can I access the historical query for the retail feature data from AMS now that the reports have transitioned to the new pdfs? I can still get to the retail query page from My Market News, but the data is only available in the query through August 30, so I can't pull any of the data from the new pdf formats into excel.

**Answer:** Jason Karwal

All are available on the My Market News site through API. I just checked and it looks like they are all there. There is a data query page there on My Market News, so if you still have any issues, please reach out to us.

**Post meeting follow-up:** Jason Karwal

The links below are direct links to the AMS retail reports and full data set by commodity. These data sets are also available in our API.

AMS Beef Retail Report

- [Beef Report Link](#)
- [Beef Data Link](#)

AMS Chicken Retail Report

- [Chicken Report Link](#)
- [Chicken Data Link](#)

AMS Dairy Retail Report

- [Dairy Report Link](#)
- [Dairy Data Link](#)

AMS Egg Retail Report

- [Egg Report Link](#)
- [Egg Data Link](#)

AMS Goat Retail Report

- [Goat Report Link](#)
- [Goat Data Link](#)

AMS Lamb Retail Report

- [Lamb Report Link](#)
- [Lamb Data Link](#)

AMS Pork Retail Report

- [Pork Report Link](#)
- [Pork Data Link](#)

AMS Specialty Crops Retail Report

- [Specialty Crops Report Link](#)
- [Specialty Crops Data Link](#)

AMS Turkey Retail Report

- [Turkey Report Link](#)
- [Turkey Data Link](#)

AMS Veal Retail Report

- [Veal Report Link](#)
- [Veal Data Link](#)

**Question:** Karen Braun

USDA has Brazil's 2024/25 corn area rising 3.7% on the year, but Conab's estimate shows the area down slightly. Any reason USDA is confident in a higher Brazilian corn area this year?

**Answer:** Mike Jewison

I would attribute the difference probably in our outlook for domestic demand and exports as well as what that implies for internal market in Brazil. It is still early. The first crop planting underway and second crop planning is several months away. Something to keep an eye on.

**Question:** Bevan Everett

What is the difference in survey methods between EIA and NASS for ethanol production that leads to NASS to capture 2% more production than the EIA?

**Answer:** Julie Harris

For EIA we have a monthly survey and ethanol plants are required to file. They give us their production. It's required. We typically get 100% response. We basically just get the production numbers and add up.

**Post meeting follow-up:** Patrick Boyle

NASS conducts monthly surveys in which we ask for previous calendar month data on feedstocks consumed, products and co-products produced. Data are revised the following month based on late reports or corrected data. Final figures are published in the annual summary of the following year using all available information, including data from EIA.

**Question:** Christopher Pudenz

What would it cost to re-instate the USDA-NASS July Cattle report?

**Answer:** Troy Joshua

Approximately \$550,000 to reinstate that program. That's what it would cost us this current year.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

Similar to what Troy shared on the county level estimates, we are in a waiting pattern right now. We certainly have interest in producing July cattle again. We need to take time to see where our budget actually comes in and go from there.

**Question:** Collin Watters

With the current market downturn, it would be wonderful to have a single resource to find aggregated, regional and as up-to-date as possible, farm financial condition data. I know that there are many resources, including the Federal Reserve system, but perhaps Farm Credit System, but can ERS or another agency help compile and share this critical information?

**Answer:** Kelly Maguire

Three times a year we post updated farm household and wealth information that includes a lot of information on the entire farm and farm financial conditions. The next forecast will be released December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Question:** Joe Zhu

When will the WAOB release the WASDE report calendar? I'm particularly interested in knowing the specific date for the January WASDE report.

**Answer:** Mark Jekanowski

January 10th. That is the date for WASDE. And most people know this, but just to clarify, the WASDE is always released on the exact same date and time as the NASS Crop Production Report. Those are the same date. January 10th. We will get the rest of the dates posted on our website as soon as possible.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

I will point out, NASS should have the complete calendar for 2025 out in the next few days as well.

**Post meeting follow-up:** Lance Honig

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Calendar/2025/2025ReleaseCalendar\\_12Months\\_11x17\\_Color.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Calendar/2025/2025ReleaseCalendar_12Months_11x17_Color.pdf)

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

Any plans at EIA to release your monthly data sooner. Is the Denaturing data the reason for the final monthly data being so behind?

**Answer:** Julie Harris

We have no plans to change the schedule. The monthly data are released on the last business day, two months after. We will release the August data on October 31. We have no plans to make any changes to those schedules.

**Question:** Tomasz Sakrejda

Is the CDL (cropland data layer) going to continue to be updated for the foreseeable future? I met someone who claimed otherwise but can't find any evidence of that.

**Answer:** Troy Joshua

The CDL will remain and we will continue publishing. Currently we are planning to publish that at the end of January or beginning of February 2025.

**Question:** Melissa Schelah

Where is the Data Users' booklet? Where is the Crop Explorer? The presenter said it was on FAS's home page, but I don't seem to find it. Two questions regarding the GADAS and Ag Profile Tool. Is it possible to select an entire state instead of just a region? What is the source of the crop calendar and why are only a few crops named and not all crops in the region or are these the only crops known in the region?

**Answer:** Lance Honig

The Data Users' Booklet, for those who registered prior to Friday, you should've received the email with the booklet. For those that registered later, they will be getting a booklet. It will also be posted on the website with all of the other data user materials and recordings.

**Answer:** Paul Trupo

You can locate all of our geospatial tools data on the webpage, FAS.USDA.GOV. Click on data and analysis and then geospatial. It takes three clicks. It's under the data and analysis section.

Is it possible to select an entire state instead of region? Yes. Somewhat. As long as the bounding box is as similar to the state boundary as possible.

The link to Crop Explorer can be found on the FAS webpage under data analysis.

The other question about GADAS Ag Profile Tools, I am unable to answer this question at this time. I guarantee we will provide a written response in the transcript.

Use the Ag Profile tool by drawing a box within a country to learn more about the relevant agricultural variables presented for that country, such as key agricultural commodities, area, production, crop calendar, fertilizer, trade, and GDP data. Most of the variables provide national data; however, the landcover maps, monthly climatology, and percent of the area that are agriculture or irrigated are specific to the AOI drawn by users.

Regarding the crop calendar, we frequently tap into the ministry of agriculture in foreign countries to use their official domestic crop calendars and thus aggregate them on the FAS website and applications for the use of the viewing public.

**Question:** Brick Welch

What is USDA reliance on satellite data vs hard samples vs survey for state level corn and soy yield estimates?

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

Hopefully I interpret correctly, I believe the question might be looking for different weights. With those data, it is hard to do that because each one, we play to the strengths of each of those. It can vary from commodity to commodity and year-over-year. We do not put a specific weight or a formula for each of those particular data sources. That said, the strengths, the reported data from the survey, many times that is the primary data point. There can be issues with that, with coverage or response rates. There could be folks who sometimes believe it or not less than truthful when they report on the survey. We use the other two, satellites and the objective data, to play as a check to the producer reports. Satellite imagery is very fast, and it is easily accessible. Sometimes there are issues with that as well. Clouds. Things like that can be in effect on that. Objective yield, out in the field, those are great. But they are incredibly expensive to capture the data and send that out there every month to take the measurement and collect samples. I hopefully answer the spirit of the question, but all three of those sources of data have their own separate strengths and we use those to balance each other out when we create the estimates.

**Question:** Scott Gerlt

Does the Census Bureau have plans to change product classification for renewable diesel so we can track exports?

**Answer:** Joe DeCampo

Census recently approved new numbers. Based on Customs, ITC, and the Department of Energy getting the wording right; if all things go well, we should have numbers as of January 1.

**Question:** Rachel Rathman

Does NASS have plans to broaden the scope of specialty crop acres surveying? Over the years some states have fallen off the list. I'm wondering if there are plans to make specialty crop acreage data more inclusive like it was historically.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

Every five years after the census, we do a comprehensive evaluation of our programs, we look at trends, expanding the acreage in certain commodities that might be declining. In certain states or areas, we will use those objective metrics to make adjustments to our Federal statistical program. We strive to produce as much high-quality data for all commodities. We know there is more than just corn and soybean out there. We want to make sure we have good available statistics for all commodities across the country. That said, we are dealing with a finite set of resources. We really do have to pick and choose carefully which commodities, the frequency of the estimates, how many states are included, whether it's a national estimate. We do our best, we also hear feedback and forms like this and in many other ways. We have meetings frequently with data users and commodity groups that solicit our help try to gather statistics and create good measures for their industries. If there is something specific, we encourage you to reach out and we would love to hear from you, if there is something specific you are looking for that we are not producing, I won't make promises, but we would love to have a conversation.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

I will mention, last fall, the Data Users' meeting had a breakout session that talked about those details. If you want details about how that works, you can go back and [watch the recording](#).

**Question:** Eli Lehn

Is there a chance that cheese could be added as commodity under the dairy group in quick stats and other reports?

**Answer:** Travis Averill

We publish some cheese items on Quick Stats, most of the .PDF files for dairy products we have the data out there at the US level and also certain cheese items we publish by state level as well. There are various geographical level data available for cheese, but I would like to have more specifics on what cheese you would like to have added to the survey? One that we have not released to the public yet, but good question. If you want to chat about it, you can send me an email or give me a phone call. We can talk more about it as well.



**Question:** Michael Hirtzer

Is there a strict methodology to NOT combine sales to two destinations in the flash sale releases? For example, in the sales announced today, if combined what was sold to Mexico and unknown, it would rank in the top 10.

**Answer:** Amy Harding

Yes, the flash sales are specifically reported by the destination country. Unknown destinations is considered a separate country. We cannot combine with a known flash sales to a particular country because at the time the sale is being announced, the final destination under the unknown category is not known. The top 10 ranking data is based on the country of destination.

**Question:** Christopher Pudenz

Would it be possible to publish a revision history for USDA-ERS Farm Income Forecast statistics?

**Answer:** Kelly Maguire

We are actively discussing the best way to archive the historical analysis, possibly in the form of some type of annual report. We store the historical farm income data on our website here: [USDA ERS - FAQs](#).

**Question:** Brick Welch

With large grain stocks revisions in the past and lower farmer participation rates... what is NASS doing about resolving this

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

We are facing a slow decline, and NASS is not unique in most agencies are seeing this decline in survey participation rates. We can adjust our sample sizes to accommodate, cast a wider net, so to speak. We will do that to adjust and make sure we meet our strict quality measures for all her surveys not just grain stocks. But yes, we have several tools, but the main one would be to cast a wider net.

**Answer:** Troy Joshua

A couple of years ago, we did a program with a breakout session about evaluating the grain stocks program. In our current process, basically, directing our state statisticians as well as directives to have a conversation with those facilities to make sure they are establishing relationships and making sure that we are collecting the information requested. We are making outreach efforts with our facility groups to make sure we collect information that are requested. That is in addition to everything else.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

There are two components of the grain stock program. Troy is actually right, the grain stock profiles, are part of our off farm stock survey. What I was alluding or referring to was the farmer component. The on-farm portion of the grain stocks. Additional clarification.

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

I'm wondering what the percentage of the 10,000 test plots were available to USDA when you were making your updated Oct US corn and soybean yield estimates.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

I assume this is about the objective yield program. I think it's just over 3000 plots within our objective yield program for corn or soybeans this year. 3090.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

I will share that we had about 83% of our corn samples that went into the lab and 55% of the soybeans in they were at the maturity stage far enough along that we are actually able to harvest from the plots and send to the lab in St. Louis.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

One other thing, early in the season we do not go out to all the samples. In September and October, we do go to the entire sample.

**Question:** Joel Blome

To Kelly Maguire - yesterday she said that the new Baseline projections were out ... I checked the website and cannot find them - could she clarify or direct me to the proper website?

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

The early release tables will be released on November 7th. Along with that, we will have an updated baseline visualization, and our baseline database will also be updated at the same time. In early February, we will release additional products come out and this includes USDA projections report. All that will be released ahead of the Ag Outlook Forum. Also, the international baseline data product is expected to be released at about that time.

**Question:** Emily Stearns

Is NASS still available/taking comments on questions for the next census? Federal register said August 2024 deadline.

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

Yes, we did officially close that down. If you have recommendations, you can reach out to me directly and will consider those. One of the things we have to do is set a stop date so we can start doing content testing and to develop and finalize for the questionnaires for 2027. If you have something, please reach out to me directly. We will try to consider it if possible.

**Question:** Julie Broadway

Is NASS still accepting comments for revisions to census questions for the next census? Federal Register had an August 2024 date.

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

Yes, we did officially close that down. If you have recommendations, you can reach out to me directly and will consider those. One of the things we have to do is set a stop date so we can start doing content testing and to develop and finalize for the questionnaires for 2027. If you have something, please reach out to me directly. We will try to consider it if possible.

**Question:** Kelsey Kuhlman

Are there any plans to break out tallow and yellow grease use by fuel type (RD and BD) in the Biofuels Update in the future as this industry expands?

**Answer:** Julie Harris

We are interested in publishing as much detail as possible. Periodically we review disclosure issues with breaking out the data more granularly so we can look at that. If we think we can publish it, we will consider doing so. I will make a note to look into that.

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

This is a hot topic, bioenergy and renewable fuels. We have balance sheets for bioenergy in renewable fuels as part of the US bioenergy statistics data product. The next update is coming out next week, on the 21st. It does not split out by feedstock, but you can trace through a long history of information that draws from EIA. For tallow and lard, we have separate balance sheets for those in a different place. We estimate domestic consumption. The next update is on 3/25. You have to wait a while for information but there is data available on the website that speaks to the information.

**Question:** Melissa Schelah

To add to my question for when more information is released in the transcript, when I asked about crops displayed in the GADAS regions "What is the source of the crop calendar and why are only a few crops named and not all crops in the region or are these the only crops known in the region?" I am only interested in the ones in the U.S.

**Answer:** Lisa Colson

GADAS was developed by the Foreign Agricultural Service. To be honest, we use a lot of global data sets and databases to respond to these questions and build our databases to create information on crop calendars and show what crops are grown in various countries. NASS is the official source for information on the United States. When it comes to customizing a list, we are not necessarily trying to be as comprehensive with the United States in our application. We have the major crops listed because we are responsible for reporting on grains, oilseeds, and cotton crops. When we can easily include a few other agricultural commodities, we are able to do that, but, we do not have the resources to be as comprehensive on the United States as NASS. I hope this helps to better clarify the answer to the question on how the Ag profile tool works and is sourced for GADAS.

**Question:** Brian Carroll

Instead of trying to bring back county level surveys, could USDA simply add summary statistics from FSA acreage and FSA/RMA county yields into Quickstats as a parallel dataset that could be used for those relying on the more granular data?

**Answer:** Lance Honig

NASS only publishes NASS data, there would be confusion if we started to incorporate external data sources on the website. It would be confusing for folks, not knowing what is the NASS estimate and what is coming from another source. We do utilize the data in a lot of the estimates that we set and publish. I do not see that happening anytime in the future. This is to make sure that we keep the identity unique across the USDA agencies.

**Question:** Melissa Schelah

Mr. Paul Trupo mentioned Ag Timelines and Visualizations, what is the direct link for that information?

**Answer:** Paul Trupo

I believe this is in reference to the 2023 Agricultural Export Yearbook published last May. We have a PDF and a visualization of country and commodity data. This is accessible via the website. It is in the Data Users booklet.

Link to Export Yearbook Visualization: <https://fas.usda.gov/data/visualization-2023-us-agricultural-export-yearbook>

**Question:** Luke Byers

Why has the Analysis feature been removed from the CroplandCROS web application and will it be coming back?

**Post meeting follow-up:** Troy Joshua

Followed up with NASS's Research Division: It was removed as it did not meet NASS quality control metrics. We found that the app doesn't always provide accurate calculations. We are working on a fix. For the time being, we're recommending using CropScape as a valid replacement: <https://nassgeodata.gmu.edu/CropScape/>

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

Wow I didn't realize that these on-farm test plots had been cut so dramatically in the past few years from the old test plots before 2020. any specifics on the timing of this decline.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

For some of history, I suspect this is the age-old balance of resources. As I mentioned, these plots are some of the most expensive survey data we collect. It's the balance between the data we need to set the estimates and the resources that we have available. We have made many adjustments over the years to the crops we target for the program and obviously the sample sizes

as well, as our resources and data needs allow. Anything specific around 2020 or prior, I will lean on an expert for the information.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

The last significant change in the yield count came in 2019. That was the prior five-year review. Patrick mentioned we just finished the 2022 census; we implemented changes in 2019. It would've stemmed from the 2017 census. That was a significant reduction. That was the last significant time. For all the reasons Patrick mentioned.

**Question:** Johan Bolle

Will NASS start producing Raisin data again to complete all grape data from California?

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

This was an external project; funding was provided by an assessment of wine grapes plus funding from the California Table Grape Commission and Administrative Raisin Committee. They decided not to fund anymore. I'm not aware of any push to reinstate those estimates in the future.

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

We were very excited to have the data and our specialty crops team use the data that was available to produce an article in the March 2023 Fruit and Tree Nut Outlook report. We have data that accompanies as well in the form of a supply and utilization table for folks to look up the consumption of the numbers.

**Question:** Jamie Boley

Not sure if this has been asked, but does USDA have any plans to adjust the county level data for the state of Connecticut to the new planning regions? If so, when?

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/06/06/2022-12063/change-to-county-equivalents-in-the-state-of-connecticut>

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

We have many census and survey programs across NASS, and we have to align the data series to represent what is going on and the current plan is to initially publish or make the change in August 2028 to represent the 2027 crop year. It would align with the data that would be coming from the 2027 Census of Agriculture. That is the NASS plan or the latest plan we have in that situation.

**Question:** Melissa Schelah

Are there any other publications or tools where I can find crop timelines for the U.S?

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

If this refers to crop development, we have Crop Progress reports, with a lot of information available on the website. Planting through harvesting. We have the development of phases in between. If that is the question, about the crop progress condition report. It is on the [website](#).

**Question:**

RMA County yield data update

**Answer:** Xuan Pham

On our county yield data, you can actually see what counties are grouped together to come up with the yield for the specific county. These are only for our area yield program. They are not the same data that NASS has been publishing, so I want to make sure that is clear. You can find the data by going to RMA Website. Under the tools you will see an option that says RMA Information Data: RIRS. Within that you can find those area yields.

**Question:** Tomasz Sakrejda

Will the cropland data layer continue to be updated in 2026, 2027, etc, assuming funding continues to be adequate?

**Answer:** Troy Joshua

Yes, I love the "Dependent upon budget." It depends upon the budget. We have plans to continue to publish, but this is 2 or 3 years from now. Anything can change.

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

I thought the test plot data which is the most accurate of what's in field vs satellite and the farmer survey had a bigger number. What was the number that occur in 2017 update.

**Post meeting follow-up:** Troy Joshua

September 2017 = 4544 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2018 = 4952 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2019 = 2905 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2020 = 3930 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2021 = 3930 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2022 = 3930 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2023 = 3930 Plots (Corn, Soy, Cotton)

September 2024 = 3090 Plots (Corn, Soy)

**Question:** Joseph Lardy

We get export inspection data on Mondays. We then get inspection data as part of the Thursday export sales data, and then we get monthly census data. 3 versions of the truth so was so many things to choose from when they are all similar but not exactly the same. Which should i use as the best data?

**Answer:** Paul Trupo

From FAS, we do not gather first-hand inspection data. We get this from the primary sources who carry out the inspections. The differences on what is reported compared to the others, is in part due to a time lag. I would refer to the first-hand gatherers and publishers of the inspection data as a preferable source.

**Answer:** Joe DeCampo

From the Census perspective, we only have what people have reported within the customs system.

**Answer:** Mike Jewison

The first caveat that needs to be a part of the response, because you're talking about inspections, you're probably not referring to anything that relates to meat for example, right? My response is it depends on the commodity. For example, in the case of corn, we use the exports published by the US Census Bureau as the official number in the WASDE. There are other sources, as Paul mentions, for example export sales, which could be considered reasonable proxies for said census data until the Census Bureau data is available. The answer, therefore, is that there will be differences by commodity depending on the characteristics of the different types of data and maybe other people might want to weigh in as it relates to their commodities, but that is the answer as it relates to feedgrains and corn specifically.

**Answer:** Michael McConnell

From a livestock perspective, we do not have the grain inspections data for trade, but our official data that we use in the WASDE stems from Census numbers, as well. Any additional sources we use as an indicator or an input to help us for the forecasting. The Census data is effectively the official trade source for meat and livestock balance sheets.

**Answer:** Kent Lanclos

In the case of cotton, we look at the export sales reports. We also look at census data. Also, there are internal sources within APHIS, specifically the phytosanitary certificates. With those pieces of data, we derive our official export forecast in WASDE for cotton. We don't track a single data source these days, it is a combination.

**Answer:** Amy Harding

From export sales, the data that we receive to generate the weekly report, is data that is submitted by the exporters. We do not use necessarily inspection data however we do some comparisons with the inspection data. There is a little bit of a time lag between what is reported

to us and what might be reported within the inspection database. A lot of it has to do with timing, and a lot of it has to do with, specifically what is entered into by the exporters.

**Question:** Melissa Schhelah

For more clarification on my prior question. Is there a tool similar to the FAS GADAS AG Profile tool for the crop calendar in any other site? (for the U.S.)

**Answer:** Ron Frantz

We have crop calendars that we maintain in both the Crop Explorer and GADAS websites. Both the GADAS, Global Agricultural and Disaster Assessment System, as well as the Crop Explorer websites can be accessed via the FAS homepage. You have to do a few clicks in sequence, but if you look under data analytics and click on geospatial data, you get to the links for both of those sites. We keep crop calendars as well as other resources, but it is the various ministries of agriculture that provide the data for those crop calendars.

As far as the question goes, similar to the Ag profile tool, we do not have anything quite like that. GADAS is a web based GIS system, where you can select regions of interest via a polygon or if it happens to be a state level data you want, you can get that too, but NASS is the best source of data for the US. We keep what we can there, but there's nothing quite similar to GADAS. Crops Explorer is more of a push system and GADAS is more of a pull system for GIS users.

**Question:** Jerry Gidel

Given the pace of harvest on Oct 1, the 80 and 60% test plot info being available is quite surprising. Recent 9% elevator bean moisture makes a producer yield lower than 13% seed moisture level. How is the USDA handling this difference.

**Answer:** Patrick Boyle

In order for the sample to be sent to our lab for processing, it has to be the latest stages of maturity. For corn, and drawing a blank on the soybean, very close to harvest to be processed at the lab. As far as the moisture content, we have built into the system, with weight of the grain, we take a moisture test when it comes to the lab to account for the different moisture levels within our calculations, within our procedures. On the agricultural side, I know that is not an exact question, but on the producer survey side, we ask to report. For a standard moisture level of 15% or 15.5%. I do not recall soybeans.

**Answer:** Lance Honig

Yes, we account in the objective yield plots and there is a factor in the formulas that we used to calculate yield to adjust as needed to move it to standard moisture. Standard moisture content, if it is dry, it is adjusted accordingly.



## Written Question & Answer Summary

**Question:** Eleeza Waggoner

Given appropriators in both the House and Senate have included report language to accompany their respective FY25 agriculture bills directing USDA to reinstate the reports canceled in April, what are the Agency's plans to ensure these reports published once again—even if the agency is operating under a continuing resolution?

**Written Answer:** Troy Joshua

NASS currently does not have a budget for FY 2025, but we do have markups from both the House and Senate with explanatory notes encouraging us to bring back the July Cattle and Crops and Livestock County Estimates. Recognizing the importance of these programs to our data user community, we are taking the necessary internal actions to enable us to produce this data if our budget situation changes. We will further evaluate our options once we receive a budget.

**Question:** Bevan Everett

For NASS... Will there be a budget for county corn and soybean yield data collection for 2025?

**Written Answer:** Troy Joshua

NASS currently does not have a budget for FY 2025, but we do have markups from both the House and Senate with explanatory notes encouraging us to bring back the July Cattle and Crops and Livestock County Estimates. Recognizing the importance of these programs to our data user community, we are taking the necessary internal actions to enable us to produce this data if our budget situation changes. We will further evaluate our options once we receive a budget.

**Question:** Mark Feight

In April it was announced due to budget issues county data would no longer be reported. Is there any known change that would allow county data in the future?

**Written Answer:** Troy Joshua

NASS currently does not have a budget for FY 2025, but we do have markups from both the House and Senate with explanatory notes encouraging us to bring back the July Cattle and Crops and Livestock County Estimates. Recognizing the importance of these programs to our data user community, we are taking the necessary internal actions to enable us to produce this data if our budget situation changes. We will further evaluate our options once we receive a budget.

**Question:** Bernt Nelson

USDA has committed to providing better market transparency but discontinued the July Cattle Inventory, country level production data and the objective cotton yield report citing budget constraints: What is USDA/NASS planning to do differently to bring back the July Cattle Inventory

and others that were cut this year? How will these issues be avoided in the future to prevent damaging market transparency?

**Written Answer:** Troy Joshua

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**Question:** Sarah Rosasco

Given appropriators in both the House and Senate have included report language to accompany their respective FY25 agriculture bills directing USDA to reinstate the reports canceled in April, what are the Agency's plans to ensure these reports published once again—even if the agency is operating under a continuing resolution?

**Written Answer:** Troy Joshua

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## Breakout 1: 2022 Census of Agriculture Results

### **Question:**

If you build out a query in Quick Stats and want to come back to it later, can you save that in some form or fashion?

**Answer:** Miste Salmon

Yes, the web address of the query is a unique address for just that data item. You can copy it, for example, and put it into word and then come back to it later. Or, if you would like to email someone or keep it, you can do it that way. Also, if you take out the word “results” and one slash from the web address you can come back to all the Quick Stats query selections that were chosen to select that item. So say it was more important to learn where something is located, you can save that as well as the actual address for those data items.

**Question:** Brian Carroll

Can NASS bring back to search bar functionality in Quickstats? It can be a fast and efficient way to find data within the database. The feature appears to have quietly been turned off. Please bring it back

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

That is something that we are exploring. The server that our Quick Stats was sitting on was old and outdated so we moved that to the cloud. One of the downfalls of doing that is we got a little better technology as far as where to store the data, but we lost some of the functionality of the old server. We have a team working on that to get it back and make it easy for folks. I think several of our data users are looking for the search bar feature to get back on-line because that was a very helpful and efficient way to narrow down the data searches.

**Question:** Saleh Taghvaeian

Thank you for the demo of the NASS tools. Very helpful. Will a recording of this demo be available online?

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

This session is being recorded along with the others and they will be posted to the NASS website.

**Follow-up:** Bryan Combs

There are some videos and other resources on the Quick States landing page in the help section (upper right corner)

<https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/tutorials>

**Question:** Arley Williams

Who can you contact for assistance if your query is not working as you want?

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

The easiest way to find an expert in that area is if you look at the back of any of the publications, it has a listing of contacts. Reach out to them through email. Or give them a phone call they'll be happy to help. I would say don't struggle with these too much, we have many experts to help at NASS and get you directed.

**Question:**

Is there a limit on how much data that you can download at one time from Quick Stats?

**Answer:** Miste Salmon

Yes, there is a limit of 50,000 records. So in the Quick Stats web application there is a limit of 50,000 records. However, more records could be queried with the API functionality of Quick Stats. If you need access to a large amount of data say more than the 50 thousand is there a way to download the full census data set.

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/index.php#highlights>

**Question:** Jason Jenkel

If you save a query as demonstrated, how long is the URL good for? Forever (until next major change in the system) or perhaps until the next Census is released? Basically do those URLs expire?

**Answer:** Miste Salmon

I don't think they expire unless we change the metadata. I think they will continue to work. If you chose something from 2022 or 2017 and use it had later, I believe it would work.

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

That is my understanding too. With any major system change they might no longer work, but until then I think they will still be active.

**Post-meeting follow-up:**

Quick Stats was designed to keep the URLs around forever. If the Quick Stats system was replaced, the URLs may no longer work.

**Question:** Jamie Boley

What is the difference between Quick Stats and Quick Stats Lite?

**Answer:** Miste Salmon

Quick Stats Lite already has some canned queries available. And so there are already views built in.

[https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick\\_Stats/Lite/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/Lite/index.php)

**Question:**

How do we learn more about the API?

**Answer:** Miste Salmon

If you were to go to Quick Stats and then go under Help, there are items for developers or programmers and you can request an API key here. There are also other helpful things in this Help file which includes tutorials. Some of the tutorials are older and some of the features are not there. There are also links to the data sets.

<https://quickstats.nass.usda.gov/tutorials>

**Question:** Bonhee Chung

Do you also have complete census data set for state and county?

**Answer:** Bryan Combs

This file that Miste directed us to in the previous question is where you can get the full download from all the US, state, and county data.

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/datasets/>

## Breakout 2: Livestock Mandatory Reporting Live Cattle Data Dashboard

**Dashboard:** [https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/lmr\\_cattle\\_dashboard](https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/lmr_cattle_dashboard)

**Question:** Roger Cryan

How is the data older than 5 years made available?

**Answer:** Jason Karwal

This data is from the regularly reported LMR live cattle reports and all of that information, even going back further than 5 years is available for download through the data mart site. We have just restricted the type of data coming into this particular dashboard right now. This is all the regular reported data that we have put out for many years and all of it is available there.

## Breakout 3: ERS' Cotton, Wool, and Textile Data: An Overview

**Question:** Michelle Huffman

Are de minimis shipments accounted for in the textile trade data?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

No, they are not accounted for in the trade data because the data that we use comes from the Census Bureau, the Department of Commerce, where the de minimis data are not included.

**Question:**

Hurricane Helene and other natural disasters happen. Can you explain the process of synthesizing the impact of this event or similar events into the balance sheet data? Which ERS data products are most likely to reflect the changes?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

Our tables and our Outlook reports reflect the latest information available. This would be published in WASDE report. Then we take NASS data on production, to be included. Any other information that is available from USDA that goes into WASDE would be funneled into the tables that are presented, particularly the cotton and wool Outlook tables, the monthly tables. Also, in the text of the Outlook report they would be included in each monthly update.

**Question:**

With your 35 years of experience looking at cotton and wool markets, you've certainly seen a lot of change. What are some of the major market trends that are reflected in your data products?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

One of the major trends is the change where cotton is produced and where cotton is consumed, or used, by mills. That is one of the biggest changes. Of course, India, China, the US and now Brazil are large producers. The large consumers are China and India. More recently, I would submit that Brazil's increased production and trade (exports) have provided more competition for other producers, particularly the US in this case on the export side. So, yes, there has been a number of shifts and I am sure it will continue to shift in the future.

**Question:**

What is the process to determine what countries and states are represented and reported on within the cotton and wool Outlook data products and has that shifted much during your time covering these markets?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

As far as the countries listed or included in the data products, I do not believe that has shifted much over time, if any. For the textile trade data, for example, all of the countries that either

import/export products from/to the US are included in the tables. This includes, and will continue to include all the countries with available data.

As far as the cotton and wool yearbook, some countries are shifting position in terms of production or consumption rank, but generally speaking, all of the tables include the same countries that we've had for some time now.

In our data products, we use NASS data. Whatever NASS reports is what is included in our data products as well. That is the only data that we have available on the production side within the US. There might have been some shifts in some of the minor, very minor cotton producing states, but generally speaking, I think they are the same.

**Question:**

For the states, has the mix of the type of cotton grown changed over time? This is talking about extra-long staple versus other types. Have you seen a shift in the US?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

There is a shift in the actual production, but as far as the states, no. It's only able to be grown under certain conditions, desert Southwest conditions for extra-long staple for example. There were a few years when ELS cotton was grown in Mississippi for example. This is no longer the case. The locations, as for the US, are still roughly the same. It is a matter of annual changes in the area and production. It comes out of that as well.

**Question:**

While NASS data is used extensively to develop domestic cotton and wool balance sheets, data collection and reporting in other countries is not always as robust or routine, how does the committee address incomplete data for important foreign cotton producing and/or trading partners?

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

It depends on the country, and we try to locate all of the data that we can, whether it be from FAS sources overseas, individual governments, industry representatives. Cotton Outlook, if you're familiar with the cotton market, is a publication that provides cotton information from around the world. They do have locations and those contacts within individual countries. The international cotton advisory committee is another source of information. We try to gather as much available information as possible. As much data as well. When we include these in the balance sheet for those discussions, we make sure that it makes sense in what we are looking at. We try to make them balance, balance what people are saying about the data, and how it works and fits into the balance sheet.

**Question:**

With the automation project for cotton coming to an end, are there renewed efforts to combine data sets across WASDE the commodities to create a one-stop shop for balance sheet data?



**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

I think it will be, once we are able to get the process automated here. Rice has been looked at more. They are doing automation projects there. I know feed grains; those are more automated as well. I'm not sure how all of that will fit together into one, centralized location. This is to be determined.

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

Yes, a lot of steps to be followed. Before we can get there, I see the utility of doing so in the future. The automation work is helpful.

**Answer:** Leslie Meyer

One of the advantages of the automation project, I would like to mention, we're going into the first round with the yearbook publication, this is coming up next month. I see this as streamlining the process of putting out the publication. With automation there and hopefully as I mentioned in my presentation, resources can be devoted to other areas of work so that we can increase efficiency on the publication side as well.

**Answer:** Jennifer Bond

A lot of the changes are made with stakeholder functionality in mind. I hope these are useful updates.