



# NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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## Historic Agricultural Data Now Online

*NASS Digitizes 77 Years of Agricultural Statistics*

**WASHINGTON, July 30, 2013** – In early July, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) simplified access to historic data by putting 77 years’ worth of agricultural statistics online. In the past, this information, published in the annual bulletin *Agricultural Statistics*, was available in print form only.

“U.S. agriculture continues to progress by learning from our past, which is why it is imperative to have historic data easily available,” said Dr. Cynthia Clark, NASS Administrator. “By publishing this information online we are simplifying the research process and further enhancing access to this important and interesting information.”

NASS and its predecessors at USDA have published *Agricultural Statistics* since 1936. The bulletins are a compilation of data produced by multiple agencies within USDA. Each volume is a one-stop location for annual production, consumption, trade, and price data for all sorts of crops and livestock, as well as farm economics, spending for government programs, and lots of other statistics important to our country’s agricultural system. These volumes detail U.S. farming for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the Dust Bowl and World War II.

While digitizing these past data, NASS statisticians uncovered some fascinating historical facts, including:

- U.S. egg exports skyrocketed from 5 million dozen in 1940 to 153 million dozen in 1941, the same year the Lend-Lease policy was enacted to provide food aid to Britain and other allies during World War II. By 1944, that number was nearly 700 million dozen.
- In 1933, hybrid corn seeds made up only one-tenth of 1 percent of the national crop. Within ten years, that proportion reached 50 percent, and by 1956, more than 90 percent of the national corn crop was from hybrid seeds.
- Iowa harvested 2.36 billion bushels of corn in 2011, more than the entire U.S. corn harvest of 1935.
- Once staples of American farms, horse and mule populations fell from 18.7 million in 1930 to 3.1 million in 1960, after which the statistic was discontinued.

“Whether you need them for research or are just curious about our country’s farming history, these historic volumes are a valuable addition to the official statistical literature available to the public,” added Clark.

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NASS provides accurate, timely, useful and objective statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. We invite you to provide occasional feedback on our products and services. Sign up at <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/subscriptions> and look for “NASS Data User Community.”

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