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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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USDA Reminds Producers to Return their Census of Aquaculture Forms *Industry Partners and USDA Rely on New, Updated Data*

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16, 2014 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting the 2013 Census of Aquaculture and it’s not too late for producers to respond. The Census is the only comprehensive source of data on the aquaculture industry in the United States and each response is a vital piece of new information.

“The aquaculture industry has undergone numerous changes since the last time this information was gathered in 2005,” said Renee Picanso, director of the NASS Census and Survey Division. “The results of the 2013 Census of Aquaculture will help assess the current state of this part of the U.S. economy. The information will serve as the foundation for many decisions involving the sustainability and growth of the aquaculture sector.”

“Your answers to the Aquaculture Census will help shape national and local policies affecting our industry,” said Betsy Hart, executive director of the producer-based National Aquaculture Association (NAA). “Only you can supply the updated information needed to produce a useful and accurate picture of aquaculture in America. Your response and the results of the Census will help organizations like NAA demonstrate the strength of our industry and advocate for your needs. So, please do your part and return your form.”

The Census of Aquaculture collects data on water area, production and sales, point of first sales outlets, and aquaculture distributed for restoration or conservation purposes. This information is used by all those with interests in the aquaculture sector from federal, state and local governments to agribusinesses, trade associations, researchers and producers themselves.

NASS mailed out Aquaculture Census forms in mid-December, to collect data for the 2013 calendar year. Completed forms were due by January 15, 2014. Producers who have not yet responded may receive another form in the mail or a phone call from a NASS representative. Producers are urged to fill out the Census online via a secure website, www.agcensus.usda.gov or return their form by mail.

The Census of Aquaculture is part of the Census of Agriculture Program. Federal law requires all producers who receive a Census report form to respond and requires NASS to keep all individual information confidential. For more information, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

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