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National Agricultural Statistics Service



California Farm News

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USDA SURVEYS TO PROVIDE INSIGHT ON 2011 AGRICULTURE OUTLOOK

SACRAMENTO – With the 2011 growing season now in full swing, USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will spend the first two weeks of June surveying hundreds of agricultural producers across California to get a clear indication of 2011 production and supply of major commodities.

“In March, U.S. farmers reported they planted or intend to plant more acres of corn, wheat and cotton this crop season, and fewer acres of soybeans. With most of the crops now actually in the ground, we are reaching out to growers to learn what they actually planted,” said Vic Tolomeo, director of the USDA-NASS California Field Office.

Through two major mid-year surveys, the June Agricultural Survey, also called the “Crops/Stocks Survey,” and the June Area Survey, NASS will gather data on what crops have been planted and what commodities are in storage. This information will provide a comprehensive picture of how things are shaping up in 2011 for the U.S. agriculture industry.

“For the agricultural survey, we contact producers by mail, phone or personal visit. We ask them to provide information on their total acreage, acres planted to specific commodities – including biotech varieties and quantities of grains and oilseeds stored on-farm,” explained Tolomeo.

“For the area survey, we visit randomly selected tracts of land and interview the operators of any farm or ranch on that land. We collect information on crop acreage – including biotech crops, as well as grain stocks, livestock inventory, cash rents, land values and value of sales.”

Information collected from these surveys is a critical component of several key national reports, including the annual *Acreage* and quarterly *Grain Stocks* reports, both to be released June 30. Survey data also contribute to NASS’ monthly and annual *Crop Production* reports, as well as various other crop and livestock-related publications, including USDA’s *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates*.

“Especially in these challenging economic times, California farmers, as well as the entire agricultural industry, need timely, accurate data on the current state of U.S. agricultural production,” Tolomeo said. “The information collected through our mid-year surveys can help producers, suppliers, traders, buyers, export customers and others make sound, informed business decisions.”

As with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. “NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all responses and publishes only state- and national-level data, thus ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified,” explained Tolomeo.

For more information about NASS surveys and reports, please visit the NASS website at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications.

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