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National Agricultural Statistics Service



California Farm News

Cooperating with the California Department of Food and Agriculture

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USDA GEARS UP FOR 2009 LIVESTOCK SURVEYS

SACRAMENTO, CA, December 17, 2008 – The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is gearing up to collect the first cattle, sheep and goat numbers of 2009. Conducted only twice a year, the Cattle and Sheep & Goat Surveys provide critical inventory and production information about the livestock industry. Approximately 2,400 California livestock producers will be included in a national sample of farmers and ranchers.

"During the first two weeks in January, California producers will be contacted by representatives of the USDA-NASS California Field Office to collect information that will be used to develop State, regional and national estimates of cattle, sheep and goat inventories," said Vic Tolomeo, Director, California Field Office.

"We are asking for the cooperation of California livestock producers so we can ensure that California agriculture is fully represented in the national sample," added Tolomeo. "Timely, accurate information is a critical decision-making tool for the cattle, sheep and goat industries. For example, the data collected helps producers make informed marketing decisions and to plan for inventory expansion or reduction. USDA, livestock associations, the industries and agricultural producers rely on accurate information to make vital decisions on the execution of marketing plans, safety and health measures for U.S. agriculture."

As with all NASS surveys, individual responses are kept strictly confidential and are used only in combination with other responses to report California and U.S. estimates. "This," said Tolomeo, "assures that, regardless of size, no individual operation can be identified when the results of the study are reported."

NASS will publish the biannual *Cattle and Sheep and Goats* reports with State and U.S. inventory numbers, as well as values of livestock, numbers of operations and size group estimates February 1, 2008. The reports will be available on the Internet after noon PST. They may also be viewed on the NASS web site at <http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/>. Other agricultural statistics may be obtained at this web site or by calling 1-800-727-9540.

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