

Idaho Farmers are Responding to the Census of Agriculture

Idaho farmers and ranchers are not missing an opportunity to have their voices heard and their farms represented in the 2012 Census of Agriculture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) reports that 16,000 Census forms were submitted by state farmers, helping ensure Idaho's communities and agricultural industry have a voice in the future. For producers who missed the deadline, NASS is alerting them that it's not too late to be counted.

"Every Idaho farm and ranch is important and needs to be counted in the 2012 Census of Agriculture," said Vince Matthews, Director. "Whether you operate on two acres or 2,000, the information gathered from all producers is important, so it can provide a true picture of U.S. agriculture today and help everyone plan appropriately for tomorrow's needs."

Conducted once every five years by NASS, the Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture at the national, state and county levels. It looks at land use and ownership, production practices, expenditures and other factors that affect the way farmers do business. Decision makers and commodity groups at the local and state level use the Census of Agriculture to make decisions that directly impact Idaho farmers, their businesses and their communities.

The deadline for submitting Census forms was February 4. Those who have not responded will receive a second copy of the form in the mail to give them another opportunity. Farmers can return their forms by mail or online by visiting a secure website, www.agcensus.usda.gov. Federal law requires all agricultural producers to participate in the Census and requires NASS to keep all individual information confidential.

"If you have questions about the Census or need help filling out your form, I encourage you to visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call 1-888-4AG-STAT (1-888-424-7828)," added Matthews. "NASS has helpful tips available and people standing by to provide assistance. We want to help you make the Census a successful and complete count of Idaho's agriculture."