



USDA Gathers Information to Determine Financial Well-Being of Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is collecting data from more than 35,000 farmers and ranchers for its annual Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS). The survey looks at all aspects of U.S. agricultural production, including farm financial well-being, chemical usage, and various characteristics of farms and ranches.

ARMS is a joint effort between NASS and USDA's Economic Research Service. The information farmers and ranchers provide through the survey influences national and state policy-making decisions. In addition, ARMS data are used to calculate the farm sector portion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The survey also collects detailed information on production practices, costs, and returns for 13 principal commodities on a rotating basis.

"The 2018 Farm Bill may introduce important changes in agricultural policy," said Marlo Johnson, director of the NASS Great Lakes Regional Field Office. "Data from the 2017 ARMS will be useful for broadening USDA's understanding of how the current set of farm policies impact the well-being of the sector, as a new set of Farm Bill policies are developed."

The ARMS survey is conducted in three phases from May 2017 through April 2018. The first phase screened participants to make sure they have the principal commodities that are analyzed. During the second phase, NASS collected information on production practices and chemical use for these specific commodities. In the final phase, NASS will survey producers on cost of production, farm income, and production expenditures.

"We strongly encourage every producer contacted for ARMS to participate, as their response represents not just their own farm, but many other similar operations across the country," added Johnson. "To make responding as convenient as possible, the survey can be completed online at <http://agcounts.usda.gov> and NASS representatives are available by phone. Producers can also complete and return the paper form."

The results of this survey will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law. We will publish the survey findings in the annual *Production Expenditures* report on August 2, 2018.

For more information about the 2017 Agricultural Resource Management Survey visit www.nass.usda.gov/go/ARMS or call the Great Lakes Regional Field Office at (800) 453-7501.

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