



PRESS RELEASE



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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Still Time to be Counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS to follow-up with Northwest producers who have not yet responded

Olympia, WA – March 6, 2018 – Northwest farmers and ranchers still have time to be counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Although the first deadline has just passed, NASS will continue to accept Census information through the spring to get a complete and accurate picture of American agriculture that represents all farmers and ranchers.

“We thank everyone who has completed their Census to date. Of the nearly 174,000 questionnaires mailed last December to Northwest producers (WA, ID, OR, AK), Idaho currently has a return rate of 52 percent followed by Oregon, 49 percent; Washington, 43 percent; and Alaska 38 percent” said Chris Mertz, director, Northwest Region USDA/NASS. “Northwest agriculture is unique and highly diversified. We need to ensure our producers are accurately accounted for.”

Federal law mandates that everyone who received the 2017 Census of Agriculture questionnaire complete and return it even if not currently farming. NASS will continue to follow-up with producers through the spring with mailings, phone calls, and personal visits. To avoid these additional contacts, farmers and ranchers are encouraged to complete their Census either online at www.agcounts.usda.gov or by mail as soon as possible. Responding online saves time by skipping sections that do not apply and automatically calculating totals. The online questionnaire is accessible on desktops, laptops, and mobile devices. Currently Idaho leads the nation in the percentage returned via online at nearly 20 percent. Oregon is 3rd while Washington is 4th.

Data from the Census of Agriculture are used by all those who serve farmers and rural communities – trade associations, agribusinesses, local, state and federal governments, and many others. “Informed decisions can be made with accurate data” said Mertz.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov. For questions or assistance filling out the Census, call toll-free (888) 424-7828. You can also contact the Northwest Regional field office at (888) 435-5883.

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Editor’s Note: For an image to accompany this press release, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov/Partners/.