



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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USDA NASS remains operational and reports on schedule amid COVID-19 Asks farmers and ranchers to complete surveys online

WASHINGTON – March 20, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) statistical reports remain on schedule amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including the March 26 *Hogs and Pigs* and March 31 *Prospective Plantings* reports. NASS also continues to collect data for all upcoming reports, asking farmers and ranchers to complete their surveys online, if they don’t already respond that way. To protect the health and safety of producers, partners, and employees, NASS has suspended in-person data collection at least until April 3, 2020.

“We are making every effort to produce the U.S. crop, livestock, and economic statistics that the nation counts on,” said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. “But to do that responsibly, we are following guidance to slow the spread of coronavirus and to protect the health and safety of producers and employees. It is now more important than ever for everyone who receives a survey to complete it promptly online and encourage others to do the same.”

Ensuring that responses are returned on time means little or no additional outreach is needed. In addition, online response is faster and more convenient for producers. Returning the completed questionnaire by phone or U.S. mail is acceptable, but mail responses require in-office personnel to open, scan, and check in each form.

"If we are able to collect enough data over the coming weeks, and conditions are such that estimates can be established and released, we will continue to publish these important reports on schedule. The data in the reports are indicators of the nation’s feed and food supply," said Hamer.

To respond online at agcounts.usda.gov, producers will need their unique 17-digit survey code from the questionnaire or letter received in the mail. Both the online questionnaire and phone data collection interviews are secure. All information submitted to NASS is confidential, only used for statistical purposes, and published in aggregate form, as required by federal law so that no individual or farm information can be identified. For more information on how NASS protects information, visit www.nass.usda.gov/confidentiality. For assistance with the online or paper questionnaire, or to submit information by phone, call toll-free 866-294-8560.

NASS continues to evaluate all program operations as the COVID-19 situation evolves. Any changes to the NASS report schedule will be announced to the public on nass.usda.gov and on Twitter @usda_nass.

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NASS is the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture and is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

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