



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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USDA to Measure Financial Well-Being of Southern Farmers and Ranchers

ATHENS, GEORGIA -- In late December, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) began gathering information about farm economics and production practices from farmers and ranchers across the South, as the agency conducts the third and final phase of the 2020 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

"ARMS is the only survey that measures the current financial well-being of Southern producers and their households as a whole," said Anthony Prillaman, Director of the NASS Southern Regional Field Office. "The results of this survey will help inform decisions on local and federal policies and programs that affect Southern farms and farm families."

In an effort to obtain the most accurate data, NASS will reach out to more than 30,000 producers nationwide, including nearly 4,000 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and South Carolina combined, between January and March. The survey asks producers to provide in-depth information about their operating revenues, production costs, and household characteristics. This year the survey includes questions to help measure any impacts of COVID-19 on farms, farm and household finances, and off-farm employment.

To protect the health of producers, partners, and employees, NASS is unable to work with producers in person to complete this survey but will provide support over the phone. "In late January, our interviewers will begin reaching out to those farmers who have not yet responded," said Prillaman. "We appreciate each producer's time to participate. USDA-NASS is here to help farmers and ranchers with the questionnaire so that their information will continue supporting sound agricultural decision-making."

In addition to producing accurate information, NASS has strong safeguards in place to protect the confidentiality of all farmers who respond to its surveys. The agency will only publish data in an aggregate form, ensuring the confidentiality of all responses and that no individual respondent or operation can be identified.

The expense data gathered in ARMS will be published in the annual *Farm Production Expenditures* report on July 30, 2021. That report and others are available at nass.usda.gov/Publications. More reports based on ARMS data and more information about ARMS are available at ers.usda.gov/arms.

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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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