



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NORTHWEST REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE

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USDA NASS Begins Project to Gather Conservation Data Nationwide

OLYMPIA, WA – August 18, 2015. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is contacting farmers and ranchers from now through October 1 as part of a national survey of conservation practices.

During the first phase of the National Resources Inventory (NRI) – Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP), NASS will contact approximately 24,000 farmers and ranchers nationwide to determine if their operations and properties meet eligibility criteria to participate in the survey. Farmers and ranchers deemed eligible may be contacted from October 2015 through February 2016 and asked to participate in the survey, part of a two-year project. The same survey process and schedule will be followed later in 2016 with a different set of operators and producers. Within Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, approximately 1479 farmers and ranchers may be contacted.

“The survey gives farmers and ranchers the power to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the conservation practices they choose to use on their lands and in their operations,” said NASS Northwest Regional Director Chris Mertz. “If contacted, I urge farmers and ranchers to participate; their responses can help leaders focus on the conservation practices that most benefit both the farmer and the natural resources on which we all rely.”

CEAP’s purpose is to measure the environmental benefits associated with implementation and installation of conservation practices on cultivated and non-cultivated agricultural lands, according to USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the lead agency for the project. NASS conducts the survey for CEAP under a cooperative agreement with NRCS.

Data obtained from the project may help NRCS conservationists and partners determine the efficiency and effectiveness of current conservation techniques and help identify best practices. CEAP results may also help:

- Evaluate resources farmers and ranchers may need in the future to further protect soil, water, and habitat;
- Shed light on techniques farmers and ranchers use to conserve healthy agricultural systems and environments;
- Improve and strengthen technical and financial programs that help farmers and ranchers plan and install conservation measures on agricultural land; and
- Support conservation programs that can help farmers and ranchers' profits while also protecting natural resources.

NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by Federal law. Participants' responses cannot be used for the purposes of taxation, investigation or regulation (Title 7, U.S. Code, and CIPSEA, Public Law 107-347).

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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. We invite you to provide feedback on our products and services. Sign up at <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/subscriptions> and look for "NASS Data User Community."

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