



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Wyoming farmers and ranchers: time is running out to complete the 2017 Census of Agriculture *NASS conducting phone and in-person follow-up***

**Cheyenne, Wyoming – May 14, 2018** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is reminding Wyoming farmers, ranchers, land owners, and others involved in agriculture that the window is closing on the opportunity to participate in the 2017 Census of Agriculture. To date, NASS has received back more than 9,200 forms mailed in Wyoming. But the Wyoming return rate, about 60%, is currently lower than at this point in the 2012 Census. NASS is encouraging all that have not returned their completed Census questionnaire to do so as soon as possible.

“NASS is grateful for the great response from Wyoming to date, but it is important that the others who received a Census questionnaire join their neighbors, colleagues, friends, and family in being part of the Census count,” said Wyoming State Statistician Rhonda Brandt.

“If you produced, or normally would have produced, and sold \$1,000 or more of agricultural products in 2017, we need to hear from you,” said Brandt. “If you’re a landowner who leases your land to a producer, we need to hear from you. If you received a census form but do not fit this definition of a farm, please write your status on the form and send it back. No matter how small or large your involvement in agriculture, we need to hear from you.” Brandt noted that NASS has already begun targeted follow up with producers who have not yet completed the questionnaire.

The Census of Agriculture is the only comprehensive source of agriculture data for every state and county in the nation. Census data are used by farmers and ranchers, policymakers, trade associations, researchers, agribusinesses, educators, and many others. Doug Miyamoto, Wyoming Department of Agriculture Director, says “For example, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, the Wyoming Business Council, and many of the State’s trade associations depend on the Census of Agriculture to describe agriculture in Wyoming and to advocate for Wyoming agriculture when negotiating trade opportunities domestically and internationally.”

The Census differs from other NASS surveys. It provides important demographic information and data on certain commodities in Wyoming, such as horses, bison, and dried herbs, that would not otherwise be available. Revisions to the questionnaire in 2017 include new queries about military veteran status, decision-making on the farm, and food marketing practices.

Miyamoto continues, “Without the Census of Agriculture, we would have very little data upon which to base sound policy decisions. It would be almost impossible to plan for Wyoming’s agricultural future without knowing the State’s inventory of farm, ranch and product data supplied by the Census of Agriculture. I can better advocate for Wyoming agriculture if our producers submit their 2017 Census of Agriculture and I encourage all of our farmers and ranchers to please make sure your operation is counted”.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture or for assistance with the questionnaire, visit [www.agcensus.usd.gov](http://www.agcensus.usd.gov) or call toll-free (888) 424-7828.

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