FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Carolina farmers and ranchers: time is running out to complete the 2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS conducting phone and in-person follow-up

Columbia, South Carolina, May 3, 2018 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is reminding South Carolina farmers and ranchers that the window is closing on the opportunity to participate in the 2017 Census of Agriculture.

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

“If you produced and sold $1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2017, or normally would have produced and sold that much, we need to hear from you,” said Wells. “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 return it. It is important for us to receive a response back from you regardless of your status as a farm or ranch operator.” Wells noted that NASS has already begun to follow up with producers who have not yet completed the questionnaire. “As always in the past, we send the questionnaire to many who may not farm or ranch, may have retired, or may consider their farm activity as a hobby and are not be familiar with the Census,” said Wells.

The Census of Agriculture is the most comprehensive source of South Carolina agricultural data at the county level. South Carolina agriculture has changed since the 2012 Census and this is the opportunity to quantify that change.

South Carolina producers can respond to the 2017 Census of Agriculture online at www.agcounts.usda.gov or by mail. The same law, Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113, that requires a response to the Census also requires NASS to keep all information confidential, to use the data only for statistical purposes, and to only publish data when the identity of any individual producer or farm operation would not be disclosed. NASS will release Census results in February 2019.

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

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