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## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **National Agricultural Statistics Service**

#### **Notice of Intent to Seek Approval to Revise and Extend a Currently Approved Information Collection**

**AGENCY:** National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request revision and extension of a currently approved information collection, the Agricultural Resources Management Survey and Chemical Use Surveys. A revision to burden hours will be needed due to changes in the size of the target population, sampling design, and/or questionnaire length.

**DATES:** Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration.

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments, identified by docket number 0535-0218, by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: [ombofficer@nass.usda.gov](mailto:ombofficer@nass.usda.gov). Include docket number above in the subject line of the message.
- eFax: (855) 838-6382.

- Mail: Mail any paper, disk, or CD-ROM submissions to: David Hancock, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2024.
- Hand Delivery/Courier: Hand deliver to: David Hancock, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2024.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** R. Renee Picanso, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-4333. Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from David Hancock, NASS - OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 690-2388 or at [ombofficer@nass.usda.gov](mailto:ombofficer@nass.usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Title:** Agricultural Resources Management Survey and Chemical Use Surveys.

**OMB Control Number:** 0535-0218.

**Expiration Date of Current Approval:** October 31, 2015.

**Type of Request:** Intent to revise and extend a currently approved information collection.

**Abstract:** The Agricultural Resource Management Survey(s) (ARMS) are the primary source of information for the U.S. Department of Agriculture on a broad range of issues related to: production practices, costs and returns, pest management, chemical usage, and

contractor expenses. Data is collected on both a whole farm level and on selected commodities.

ARMS is the only source of information available for objective evaluation of many critical issues related to agriculture and the rural economy, such as: whole farm finance data, including data sufficient to construct estimates of income for farms by: type of operation, loan commodities, income for operator households, credit, structure, and organization; marketing information; and other economic data on input usage, production practices, and crop substitution possibilities.

Data from ARMS are used to produce estimates of net farm income by type of commercial producer as required in 7 U.S.C. 7998 as amended and estimates of enterprise production costs as required in 7 U.S.C. 1441(a) as amended. Data from ARMS are also used as weights in the development of the Prices Paid Index, a component of the Parity Index referred to in the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938, as amended. These indexes are used to calculate the annual federal grazing fee rates as described in the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 and Executive Order 12548 and as promulgated in regulations found at 36 CFR 222.51, as amended.

In addition, ARMS is used to produce estimates of sector-wide production expenditures and other components of income that are used in constructing the estimates of income and value-added which are transmitted to the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, by the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) for use in constructing economy-wide estimates of Gross Domestic Product. This transmittal of data, prepared using the ARMS, is undertaken to satisfy a 1956 agreement between the

Office of Management and Budget and the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce that a single set of estimates be published on farm income.

Chemical Use Surveys: Congress has mandated that NASS and ERS build nationally coordinated databases on agricultural chemical use and related farm practices; these databases are the primary vehicles used to produce specified environmental and economic estimates. The surveys will help provide the knowledge and technical means for producers and researchers to address on-farm environmental concerns in a manner that maintains agricultural productivity.

In this approval request, there are three significant program changes. First, the Fruit Chemical Use Survey will be reinstated in rotation with the Vegetable Chemical Use Survey. These two surveys will be conducted in alternating years. Second, starting in October 2015, data on Microbial Food Safety Practices used by farmers will be collected on both the Vegetable and Fruit Chemical Use Surveys. Finally, a new annual survey will be added to collect data on the Microbial Food Safety Practices – Packer Survey.

**Authority:** These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a).

Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents. This Notice is submitted in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (at 44 U.S.C. 3501, et seq.) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320.

NASS also complies with OMB Implementation Guidance, “Implementation Guidance for Title V of the E-Government Act, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical

Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA).” Federal Register, Vol. 72, No. 115, June 15, 2007, p. 33362.

**Estimate of Burden:** Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average approximately 45 minutes per survey.

**Respondents:** Farmers, ranchers, farm managers, farm contractors, and farm households.

**Estimated Number of Respondents:** Approximately 90,000 respondents will be sampled each year. Over half of these respondents will be contacted more than one time in a single year.

**Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents:** Approximately 85,000 hours per year.

**Comments:** Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, technological or other forms of information technology collection methods.

All responses to this notice will become a matter of public record and be summarized in the request for OMB approval.

Signed at Washington, D.C., January 30, 2015.

R. Renee Picanso,

Associate Administrator.

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