

NASS Survey Training
Potato Stocks Inquiry:
December 2022; Feb, April, June 2023
(POTATO STOCKS)



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

NOD – Training Group
October 2022



Survey Overview

- Why the Potato Stocks Inquiry is conducted:
 - Farmers use the reports to decide when to sell their crop.
 - Shippers, processors, and brokers monitor crop movement to help decide when to buy and when to ship.
 - Different aspects of the industry (chipping, fries, dehydrated, etc) need stocks by type to gauge the supply of potatoes suitable for their products.
 - Growers associations use the information to update their marketing plan as the season progresses.
- Generally, about 60-70% of the total potato crop goes into storage

Survey Information

- Project Code: **195 - Potato and Stocks Survey**
- Questionnaires:
 - Mailed out around the 23rd of each preceding month
 - Web reporting option available
- Release:
 - *Potato Stocks*
 - Around the 16th of each month at 3:00pm (EST)

Survey Questions

In December, February, April, and June, we collect:

- Total storage capacity of ALL structures to store potatoes
- Total quantity of **potatoes in storage** on the 1st of each month
- **Quantity lost** ... through 1st of each month:
 - December, February, April, and June
- **Quantity lost** due to shrink, cull, or dumping through 1st of each *previous* month
 - Through 1st of: January, March, May, respectively
 - Only asked in February, April, and June
 - Measuring the *total* loss AND the *monthly* loss
- Note: Only collecting information on potatoes.
 - **Exclude any sweet potatoes**

Survey Questions, cont.

- Percent of potatoes in storage by type:
 - Russet
 - White
 - Yellow
 - Red or Blue
- *The sum of all these must equal 100 percent*

Things to Watch Out For

- Large change in potatoes in storage
- Potatoes in storage exceed total production
- More potatoes stored than storage capacity
- Large amount of loss
 - Includes any lost in storage AND any unusable potatoes harvested and hauled from the field
 - Potatoes are perishable. Quality can decline in storage
 - *Typically* around a couple percent of the total each month in storage
- Sum of percent (by type) exceeds 100%

Reluctant Responses

- Small farmer/operation
 - I'm glad you brought that up. All operations are important big or small. The management practices of a smaller operation are different from the larger ones, and this is your chance to let your voice be heard. Information you provide can help others become aware of the challenges facing small operators.
- “All my potatoes are contracted—what does it matter what I have in storage?”
 - That's a good question. Both farmers and buyers need information about current stocks to determine if there are enough potatoes to fill demands, to accurately price any open market potatoes, and to make future decisions.

Conclusion

- Encounter something odd or unexpected
leave a note
- Know what to watch out for
- Work through some practices on your iPad
- Contact you supervisor/local office for any questions specific to your area
- Thanks for all your hard work