

NASS Survey Training

2023 Ag Yield Surveys



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section
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Ag Yield Overview

- The agricultural industry relies on current NASS yield and production estimates:
 - Helps growers develop marketing plans for their operations
 - Enables the industry to forecast transportation and storage requirements and evaluate export potential.
 - USDA agencies use the information to determine crop insurance and disaster aid payments along with other program benefits.
 - Congress relies on current yield and production data in formulating farm legislation
 - Farm organizations use the information to help form their policy positions.

General Survey Information

- Project Code: **128 – Monthly Ag Yield Survey**
- Questionnaires: Mailed out around 23rd of each month
- Release: *Crop Production*, Around the 10th of each month, 12:00 P.M. (Eastern)

Questions asked

- “Typically”:
 - Acres to be harvested, Expected yield
- BUT that varies by month and commodity, **can also include**:
 - Acres planted
 - Hay production (previous year) and current stocks
 - Irrigated and non-irrigated crops
 - Single and double cropped
 - Harvest complete?

Items of interest

- Depending on state and month:
- **Small Grains** (May – August)
 - Winter Wheat, Durum Wheat, Other Spring Wheat, Barley, Oats
- **Hay Stocks** (May)
- **Tobacco** (July – October)
 - 6 types
- **Row Crops** (August – November)
 - Corn, Pima & Upland Cotton, Dry Edible Beans, Peanuts, Rice, Soybeans, Sorghum, Sugarcane, Canola, Sunflower (oil/non-oil)
- **Dry Hay** (August, October)
 - All Hay, Alfalfa Hay, Other Hay
- **Note: Operators who are sampled for the Ag Yield Small Grains survey will be in the sample every month from May to August**

Things to watch out for

- Low or high yields
- Acres utilized for other than what we are asking
 - Example: asking about corn harvested for grain, and the farmer also reports his silage information
- Acreage not harvested for any purpose (abandoned)
 - What happened to it? (flooded out, dried up??)
- Non-irrigated yields higher than irrigated
- Double cropped yields higher than single cropped
- Big changes month to month



Reluctant Responses

- “Just started to harvest.” or “Not sure what the final yields will be.”
 - At this time we are just looking for your best estimate of expected yields. Is it better or worse than last year’s crop? What was your yield last year?
- “I report all this to my FSA office.”
 - I understand. While we do ask about your acreage, we’re also asking about your expected yields and some crops that you may not report with FSA.

Reluctant Responses

- “It’s too early to tell.” or “Can’t report accurately.”
 - At this time we are just asking for an estimate of expected yields. How does it compare to last year? Is it better or worse? What was your yield last year?
- “I’m still planting my crops, I can’t give you an estimate on my yields yet.”
 - We’re only collecting data on certain crops, would you be able to tell me that information?

Things to Remember

- Ag Yield surveys are conducted monthly during the growing season
- Looking for farmers *current* estimates of expected yield over the course of the growing season
- Commodities of interest vary over the growing season
 - Small Grains, Row Crops, Hay
- Watch out for big changes in acres harvested and/or expected yield, odd situations, etc
 - Leave good notes

...More Things to Remember

- Work through some practice interviews to familiarize yourself with the survey
 - Questions can vary from month to month
 - Different items are asked over the growing season
- Contact your supervisor or Regional Field Office with any questions

Thanks for all your work on the survey!

