March Agricultural Survey Training Materials

Below you will find links to videos, PowerPoint presentations, survey extra information sheets, and practice interviews for NASS’s March Agricultural Survey. The practice interviews can be used to enter data in Blaise or CAPI to get familiar with those data collection instruments.

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March
Agricultural Production Survey (APS)
Overview

United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Four Quarterly Agricultural Surveys

- March (Prospective Plantings Report)
- June (Acreage Report)
- September (Small Grains)
- December (Row Crops)
March Agricultural Survey

• The survey is used to determine what is and what will be planted.

• The March Agricultural Survey release is the *Prospective Plantings* report.
  – In some southern states planting may have started
  – Many parts of the country will still be too cold, too wet or possibly even snow covered
  – Operators may be reluctant to respond because they are still unsure of what they will plant. We need to urge them to make their best estimate as to what they will plant (or intend to plant) as of March 1.
March Agricultural Survey

• The survey is also used to determine what types of grain are stored and how much

• Another release that come from The March Agricultural Survey is the *Grain Stocks* report
  – Grain storage capacity, types of grain stored, and amount of grain stored on the operation is asked to help determine nationwide grain supplies
Who Uses the Data?

• Producers use the information to make critical decisions for their operations and finalize their cropping and marketing plans.

• Commodity markets rely on the *Prospective Plantings* report for early information on the year’s growing season and to establish futures and commodity prices worldwide.

• The agriculture industry uses the information to evaluate export potential and international customers look to the data for assurance that the United States will continue to be a reliable supplier of major commodities.

• Universities, extension agents, private and government economists, the farm media and others use the data to identify and analyze emerging issues and trends.
General Survey Information

• Project Code: **122** - March Crops/Stocks Survey

• Questionnaires:
  – Mails out around February 20
  – Web reporting option available

• Releases:
  – *Prospective Plantings*
  – *Grain Stocks*
    • *Typically released the last few days of March*
    • *On the NASS website: [https://www.nass.usda.gov/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/)*
Additional Survey Information: Interviewer’s Manual

• Chapter 8
  – Completing the interview: screening questions; operation description; changes in operator

• Chapter 9
  – Acres operated; types of land (include/exclude); recording rules for crops; specific crop details

• Chapter 10
  – Grain and oilseeds in storage

• Chapter 17
  – Previously reported data
  – How to handle changes: screening questions; operation description; changes in operator
Front Page and Screening Questions

1. Make any necessary updates to contact info
2. Screening Questions
   - Do they qualify for the survey?
   - If “No” to all, what is the status of the operation?
Operating Arrangement and Who is Involved

3. What is the operating arrangement
4. How many people are involved
5. List all partners (helps to eliminate duplication of data)
Section 1 – Acres Operated

- Total acres operated
  - Includes *ALL* acres
  - Includes *ALL* types of rental arrangements
- How much of the total is CROPLAND
  - Watch the includes and excludes
Acres Operated

• Asks about:
  – Acres owned
  – Acres rented from others or used rent free (+)
  – Acres rented to others (-)

• Total Acres – The math must work!!
  – Acres Owned plus Acres Rented from Others minus Acres Rented to Others must equal Total Acres

• Acres considered cropland
  – Look at page 905 of your Interviewer’s Manual if you have any questions about what is considered cropland
Acres Operated

• Rented acres: can be any type of rental arrangement (several types exist)
  – Cash/acre basis ($/acre)
  – Share renting (sharecropping)
  – Flex/hybrid/conditional leases
    • A set amount paid initially with additional money paid at the end of the season, conditional on yield and price
  – Entire farm lease
    • Renter pays set amount to use all aspects of the farm (cropland, pasture, buildings, grain bins, etc.
  – Acres used free of charge
Specific Item Information

• For most states you will be asking about the following commodities:

**Small Grains**

– Wheat
  • Winter wheat, spring wheat, durum wheat (varies by state)
  • Both planted & harvested in some cases

– Barley

– Oats
Specific Item Information (Varies by State)

Row Crops
- Corn for all purposes
- Sorghum
- Sudan
- Soybeans
- Dry Edible Beans
- Dry Edible Peas
- Upland Cotton
- Pima Cotton
- Peanuts
- Canola
- Flaxseed
- Tobacco
- Sunflowers
- Rice
- Lentils
- Chickpeas

All Dry Hay
Crops

• Typically the first commodity asked will be winter wheat:
  – Acres planted for all purposes
    • Includes to be harvested for grain or seed, cover crop, nurse crop, grazed off, cut for hay/haylage, or abandoned
  – Acres to be harvested for grain or seed
Winter wheat
Crops, cont.

• Other **small grain** questions
  – Acres planted for durum wheat, oats, and barley

• Watch out for **mixtures** of wheat, oats, barley, and/or other grains planted on the same acreage.
  – Mixtures should be excluded because they would not have the possibility to be harvested as grain.
Crops, cont.

• **Row crops** questions
  – Acres planted and to be planted for all purposes
  – Acres harvested and to be harvested is typically not asked in March for row crops

• **Dry hay** to be harvested
  – Acres cut and to be cut for _dry_ hay in 2023
    • Exclude acres which will _only_ be cut for haylage
    • Acres should only be counted once, despite number of cuttings.
Hay Varieties

- Alfalfa and Alfalfa Mixtures
- Grains (Grain Hay)
- Brome grass
- Clover
- Clover and Grass Mixtures
- Red Clover and Clover Mixtures
- Ryegrass
- Fescue
- Tall Fescue
- Grass Hays
- Timothy
- Lespedeza
- Sudan
- Sorghum-Sudan Crosses
- Millet
- Orchard Grass
- Bermuda
- Birds-foot Trefoil
- Other Tame and Wild Hays
Storage Capacity/Crops Stored

• Initial screening questions ask whether the operation had:
  – Storage facilities on the farm (Exclude temporary storage)
  – If they had any grain or oilseeds in storage **ON this operation**
    • Include any *temporary* storage

• First question will ask about Storage Capacity
  – On this operation

• Follow-up questions asks respondent the amounts of whole grains or oilseeds in storage **from any crop year**.
  – On this operation (NOT stored at the “elevator”)

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USDA
Storage Capacity/Crops Stored

- Whole Grain Corn
- Soybeans
- Wheat – all types
- Barley
- Oats

- Sorghum Grain (Milo)
- Rice
  - Long, medium, short grain
- Sunflowers
  - Oil, non-oil
Storage Capacity/Crops Stored

• Sometimes respondents don’t like to answer the stocks section
  – Be prepared for reluctant respondents and have answers ready to address any concerns.
  – If a respondent won’t give you the *amount* stored:
    • See if they would be willing to just tell you *what* commodities are on hand.
    • Record “Don’t know” for the commodities on hand and “Zero” for all others

• ONLY grain stored **on this operation**
Cash Rents

• Will this operation rent or lease any cropland or pasture from others for cash?
  – ONLY cropland or pasture rented/leased for cash. Exclude any:
    • Acres used rent free
    • Land rented on a share basis (sharecropping)
    • Land used per head or on a AUM basis
    • BLM and Forest Service land
    • Acreage rented with buildings/barns
  – ALSO exclude any Flex/Hybrid/Conditional leases*
    • A set amount paid initially with additional money paid at the end of the season, conditional on yield and/or crop price.
Cash Rent Paid

• How many acres of:
  – Non-irrigated cropland
  – Irrigated cropland
  – Permanent pasture, grazing land, or grassland

• Dollars per acre OR total dollars paid.

• Any acres rented/leased for cash from relatives?
  – If Yes, how many acres?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Rental Agreement</th>
<th>Correct Way to Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Op pays $100 an acre up front and will pay an additional amount based upon the yield.</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op pays $10,000 per year for 200 acre of non-irrigated wheat ground.</td>
<td>Include</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op rents irrigated cropland and pastureland for $40,000 per year. It is not broken out by land type in the rental agreement.</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op rents his parents place including the house, barn and grain bin for $8,000 per year.</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op pays $80 per acre for 300 acres of irrigated cropland, $50 per acre for 100 acres of non-irrigated cropland, and $15 per acre for 20 acres of pastureland.</td>
<td>Include</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op pays $20 per acre for irrigated cropland leased from his father.</td>
<td>Include (add a note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op pays $2.50 per head on private land in the summer.</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op has a 60/40 crop share agreement with the landlord. He pays a guaranteed $25 per acre plus 40% of the crop to the landlord.</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Op pays a flat $5,000 for the use of 1,200 acres for summer pasture.</td>
<td>Include</td>
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Things to watch out for

• Large changes in cropland acreage from previous survey
• Large changes in storage capacity
• Winter Wheat acreage different from previously reported.
• Sum of individual acreage more than total cropland
• Dry beans or peas reported? Leave notes about what class/type.
Planting Decisions May be Impacted by:

- Current weather situations
- Crop prices
- Potential precipitation before March 1st
Reluctant Respondents

• “It’s too early to tell.” or “Can’t report accurately.”
  – At this time we are just asking for your best estimate of expected acres to be planted. Is it more or less than last year’s crop? How many acres were planted last year?

• “I’m not telling you what or how many bushels I have in storage.”
  – We rely on information from farmers across the country to accurately estimate grain in storage. That in turn can help you make well-informed marketing decisions. But even if you can’t provide an amount, could you tell us what commodities you have in storage?
Things to Remember:

• Be sure to leave ample notes to explain any questionable situations with the farming operation.

• Become familiar with the questions by going through the survey before conducting interviews.

• If concerns are expressed:
  – Listen, assess and address THAT concern
  – Have most common responses down

• Contact your supervisor with any questions or concerns.
The “day to day decisions” question and partner information is very important. Correct information here is key to accurately summarizing the data.

Remember, this is our “planting intentions” survey. Many areas of the country will still be too cold or the soils too wet for any planting to have actually occurred. We are focused on what the respondent intends to do this crop year.

Collecting crop data on:
• Acres planted and to be planted for all purposes
• Acres to be harvested for grain or seed is asked for winter wheat (also asked for other wheat types in a few states)

Commodities asked varies by state

For hay crops we are looking for:
• Acres to be cut for dry hay

You may encounter growers with none of the survey commodities—that’s OK. A “zero” is still a valid report and useful information.

Watch out for “beans” and make sure you know whether they are soybeans or various types of dry edible beans and that the information is recorded correctly.
Record hay acres only once regardless of number of cuttings expected. Exclude any acres to be harvested *only* for haylage. Don’t confuse small grain hay with straw.

Exclude any storage capacity/grain stored in rented or leased space in **commercial elevators**. Make sure to include *only* whole grains or oilseeds (exclude any storage used for ground or cracked corn, corn silage, or roasted soybeans).

All whole grains or oilseeds stored on the operation (regardless of crop year, end use, etc) should be reported.

If the producer tells you he has stocks for a commodity but refuses or doesn’t know the amount, make sure to leave a note. Knowing the presence of that commodity on the operation is useful information.

Farmers may report grain storage structure sizes in dimensions, rather than bushels. Make a note of the dimensions so that volume can be estimated.

If stocks are reported in tons (where the typical unit of measure is bushels or pounds) verify that it is not silage or something other than whole grain in storage.

Statisticians value any extra information you can provide. Make sure to leave notes for any odd situations; large changes; etc.

For “Out of Business” records, be sure to follow the screening questions carefully. Leave notes as to what has happened to the operation. Try to collect contact information for any new operators if the operation has been sold, rented out, or turned over to someone else.
March Agricultural Survey Practice Interviews

Questions were based on MO version. Some items may not be asked, some additional questions could also appear. If the record is matched with Cash Rents and rented land is recorded there will be questions for that as well. Make adjustments as necessary.

Practice Interview 1
Who is responding? Operator
For the total acres you operate, will you grow any crops or cut hay in 20XX? Yes

Now I would like to ask about the total acres operated under this land arrangement. On March 1, how many acres did this operation own? 240
How many acres did this operation rent or lease from others? 160
How many acres did this operation rent to others? 0
Then the total acres operated on March 1, was 400. Is that correct? Yes
Do the 400 acres include the farmstead, all cropland, woodland, pastureland, wasteland, and government program land? Yes

The remaining questions in this survey refer to the total 400 acres operated. Of the total 400 acres operated, how many acres are considered cropland, including land in hay, summer fallow, cropland idle, cropland used for pasture, and cropland in government programs? 370
How many acres of winter wheat have been planted or will be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year? 40
How many acres of winter wheat will be harvested for either grain or seed? 40

For the following grain crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year.
How many acres of oats have been or will be planted for all purposes? 0

For the following crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes this spring or summer for the 20XX crop year.
How many acres of corn have been or will be planted for all purposes? 200
How many acres of soybeans have been or will be planted for all purposes? 120
How many acres of upland cotton have been planted or will be planted? 0

Did you plant or will you plant any rice in 20XX on land you operate? No

How many acres of all hay will be cut for dry hay in 20XX? 50
On March 1, what was the total storage capacity of all structures normally used to store whole grains or oilseeds? **50,000 bushels**

On March 1, were any whole grain corn, soybeans, sorghum grain (milo), wheat, or oats on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **Yes**

On March 1, how much whole grain corn was on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **20,000 bushels**
On March 1, how many soybeans were on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **5,000 bu.**
On March 1, how much winter wheat was on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **1,000 bu.**
On March 1, how many oats were on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **0**

Was any rice on hand or stored on the total acres operated? **No**

Do you make any day-to-day decisions for another operation? **No**
Would you rather have a brief summary emailed to you at a later date? **No**
Practice Interview 2
Who is responding?  **Spouse, Mary Jones**

Let me verify the name, address, and phone numbers that I have for this operation. Is this information correct?  **Yes**

Have the operator, manager or partners changed?  **No**

For the total acres you operate, will you grow any crops or cut hay in 20XX?  **Yes**

Are the day to day decisions for this operation made by?  **An individual operator**

Now I would like to ask about the total acres operated under this land arrangement. On March 1, how many acres did this operation own?  **975**

How many acres did this operation rent or lease from others?  **0**

How many acres did this operation rent to others?  **175**

Then the total acres operated on March 1, was 800. Is that correct?  **Yes**

Do the 800 acres include the farmstead, all cropland, woodland, pastureland, wasteland, and government program land?  **Yes**

The remaining questions in this survey refer to the total 800 acres operated. Of the total 800 acres operated, how many acres are considered cropland, including land in hay, summer fallow, cropland idle, cropland used for pasture, and cropland in government programs?  **610**
Now I would like to ask you about crops on this operation. Please report for all land you operate, including land you rent from others. For the following grain crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring, and acres to be harvested for either grain or seed in the 20XX crop year.

How many acres of winter wheat have been planted or will be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year? 50
How many acres of winter wheat will be harvested for either grain or seed? 0 – (did not have good emergence, will till it under and plant oats)

For the following grain crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year.
How many acres of oats have been or will be planted for all purposes? 100

For the following crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes this spring or summer for the 20XX crop year.

How many acres of corn have been or will be planted for all purposes? 0
How many acres of sorghum have been or will be planted for all purposes? 0
How many acres of soybeans have been or will be planted? 0
How many acres of upland cotton have been or will be planted? 0

Did you plant or will you plant any rice in 20XX on land you operate? No

Now I would like to ask about acres cut and to be cut for dry hay in 20XX. How many acres of all hay will be cut for dry hay in 20XX? 320

On March 1, what was the total storage capacity of all structures normally used to store whole grains or oilseeds? 20,000 bushels
On March 1, were any whole grain corn, soybeans, sorghum grain (milo), wheat, or oats on hand or stored on the total acres operated? Yes
On March 1, how much whole grain corn was on hand or stored on the total acres operated? 0
On March 1, how many soybeans were on hand or stored on the total acres operated? 0
On March 1, how much sorghum grain was on hand or stored on the total acres operated? 0
On March 1, how much winter wheat was on hand or stored on the total acres operated? 0
On March 1, how many oats were on hand or stored on the total acres operated? 1200 bushels

Was any rice on hand or stored on the total acres operated on March 1? No

Do you make any day-to-day decisions for another operation? No
Would you rather have a brief summary emailed to you at a later date? No
Practice Interview 3
Who is responding? **Operator**
Let me verify the name, address, and phone numbers that I have for this operation. Is this information correct? **Yes**
Have the operator, manager or partners changed? **No**
For the total acres you operate, will you grow any crops or cut hay in 20XX? **Yes**
Are the day to day decisions for this operation made by? **An individual operator**

Now I would like to ask about the total acres operated under this land arrangement.
On March 1, how many acres did this operation own? **500**
How many acres did this operation rent or lease from others? **500**
How many acres did this operation rent to others? **0**
Then the total acres operated on March 1, was 1000. Is that correct? **Yes**
Do the 1000 acres include the farmstead, all cropland, woodland, pastureland, wasteland, and government program land? **Yes**
The remaining questions in this survey refer to the total 1000 acres operated. Of the total 1000 acres operated, how many acres are considered cropland, including land in hay, summer fallow, cropland idle, cropland used for pasture, and cropland in government programs? **1000**
Now I would like to ask you about crops on this operation. Please report for all land you operate, including land you rent from others.

For the following grain crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring, and acres to be harvested for either grain or seed in the 20XX crop year.

How many acres of winter wheat have been planted or will be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year? 0

For the following grain crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes last fall or this spring for the 20XX crop year.

How many acres of oats have been or will be planted for all purposes? 0

For the following crops, please report acres planted and to be planted for all purposes this spring or summer for the 20XX crop year.

How many acres of corn have been or will be planted for all purposes? 600

How many acres of sorghum have been or will be planted for all purposes? 0

How many acres of soybeans have been or will be planted for all purposes? 200

How many acres of upland cotton have been planted or will be planted? 0
Did you plant or will you plant any rice in 20XX on land you operate? Yes
How many acres of long grain rice have been planted or will be planted? 200
How many acres of medium grain rice have been planted or will be planted? 0
How many acres of short grain rice have been planted or will be planted? 0

Now I would like to ask about acres cut and to be cut for dry hay in 20XX.
How many acres of all hay will be cut for dry hay in 20XX? 0

Has no grain storage facilities and no grain stored.

Do you make any day-to-day decisions for another operation? No
Would you rather have a brief summary emailed to you at a later date? No