

# Survey Training

# Tobacco Price Inquiry

## March and December



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Workforce Performance and Staff Development Section



# Who Uses the Data?

- USDA uses prices received data to determine the value of agricultural production
- The Farm Service Agency (FSA) uses prices received estimates in computing disaster payments and other farm program payments
- Farmers use the data for planning purposes
- Grower associations use the data to help promote/further the tobacco industry



# Survey Information

- Project Code: **172** - Prices Received: All Other Crops
- Questionnaires:
  - Mail around the 1<sup>st</sup> of March and the 20<sup>th</sup> of November
  - Web reporting option is available
- Release of data:
  - *Crop Values*, late February
  - Agricultural Prices, late May



# Additional Information

- Types of Tobacco
  - Flue Cured
  - Fire Cured
  - Burley
  - Dark Air Cured
- Type of tobacco production varies geographically
- Tobacco is normally sold by the **pound** AND under **contract**
  - BUT auctions are again becoming more common



# Additional Information

- “Curing” is the process by which green tobacco leaves are dried
- Three main methods of curing:
  - Air Cured: tobacco is hung in well ventilated barns to dry out
  - Flue Cured: tobacco is dried via an external heat source that is piped in via flues
  - Fire Cured: tobacco that is dried using burning/smoldering wood.





# Screening

- Did this operation harvest any tobacco during the year?
  - If **YES**, Has this operation sold any of that tobacco crop?
    - If tobacco was sold, record sales and prices.
  - If **NO**, Has this operation been sold, rented, or .....
- The operator tells you they are “Out of Business” at the beginning of the interview.
  - Are they totally out of farming or did they just stop growing tobacco??
    - Be sure to go through all the screening questions



# Survey Questions

- For each type of tobacco:
  - Quantity **sold under contract** AND
    - Average price OR total dollars received
  - Quantity **sold at auction**
    - Average price OR total dollars received
- Type(s) of tobacco will vary by state
  - But the same questionnaire is used for all states
- Has the total crop been marketed yet?



# Reluctant Responses

- “I haven’t sold all my tobacco yet, call me back in another month.”
  - I can appreciate your wanting to give me the most complete information you can, and we may be contacting you again to find out that final number. By reporting even part of your sales, you are making more information available so that you and other farmers will be able to make well-informed decisions.



# Reluctant Responses

- We had a terrible year because of the weather. My tobacco crop was not very good and I just don't want to talk about it.
  - I am very sorry to hear that you had a bad year, but that is exactly why you should report. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) uses prices received estimates in computing disaster payments and other farm program payments. Your information along with the information from other growers like yourself is needed to make sure proper payments are made available in areas where crop failures occurred.



# Things To Watch out For:

- Decimal points on the price per pound
- Extremely large quantities sold
- High/Low prices
- Most operations will only have one or two types of tobacco



# Things To Remember:

- Be mindful of differences across your area
- Anything odd or unexpected? Be sure to leave notes explaining the situation
- Weather events
  - Be sure to leave a comment explaining the situation and if they will market their crop



# Conclusion

- Questions, comments, concerns
- Practice before calling
- Thank you!!

