December Agricultural Survey Information Sheet

December 1, 2026 | Project Code 127 | Survey ID 2723

Overview:

Collect final acreage and production information for row crops and hay/forage crops, along with on-farm grain and oilseed storage capacity and stocks. Commodities and selected questions vary by state.

Purpose:

- Provide final estimates of planted and harvested acreage, yield, production, and supplies of grain stored on farms.
- Give producers access to reliable information for marketing and business decisions and help the industry assess transportation, storage, and export needs.
- Support USDA farm credit, conservation, disaster, insurance, loan, and commodity programs, as well as research, policy, and market analysis.

General Information:

Section	Primary Information Collected
Acres Operated	Acres owned + acres rented from others - acres rented to others. Include farmstead, cropland, pasture, woodland, waste, and government program land.
Row Crops	Planted acres, acres harvested for grain/seed, acres for other purposes, and total production or yield. Crops may include corn, soybeans, sorghum, cotton, rice, peanuts, dry beans, sunflowers, and others.
Hay / Forage	Acres cut for dry hay; total dry hay production or yield from all cuttings; acres and production for haylage/greenchop in selected states; hay stocks on December 1.
Next Crop Year	Small grains planted or to be planted this fall for the next crop year, including winter wheat and other small grains as shown on the questionnaire.
Storage / Stocks	Permanent on-farm storage capacity and whole grains, oilseeds, and pulse crops stored on the operation on December 1, regardless of crop year, ownership, intended use, or government program.
Unharvested Crops	For selected row crops still in the field on December 1: acres remaining, expected yield, and whether estimated production was included in reported stocks.

Crop Reporting Reminders:

- All planted acres must be accounted for: planted acres should equal acres harvested for the specified use plus acres used for all other purposes.
- Report acreage planted for all purposes, including cover crops, nurse crops, acreage grazed off, failed or abandoned acreage, and acreage replanted to another crop. Explain unusual situations in notes.
- When both total production and yield are available, total production is preferred. If harvest is incomplete, obtain the respondent's best estimate of final production from all acres harvested and remaining to be harvested.
- If reported units differ from the questionnaire, document the original units and conversion information. For cotton reported in bales, obtain the net pounds per bale; for hay reported in bales, obtain the number and average weight of bales.
- Verify extremely low yields and acres not harvested. If only test strips were harvested for crop insurance, report only the acres actually harvested and place the remaining planted acres in other purposes.

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Key Interviewing and Data-Quality Reminders

Hay and Forage:

- Dry hay means fully cured hay only. Exclude haylage, baleage, silage, greenchop, straw, corn/sorghum fodder, and forage harvested for non-feed uses from dry hay production and stocks.
- Dry hay production or yield is the total from all cuttings during the year. Acres cut two or more times for the same use are reported once.
- The same acres may be harvested for both dry hay and haylage/greenchop. Report the acres in each applicable use and leave notes when needed.
- Bale weight is essential whenever hay production or stocks are reported in bales.

On-Farm Storage Capacity and Stocks:

- Capacity includes permanent structures normally used to store whole grains or oilseeds on the total acres operated. Exclude temporary ground storage and structures not normally used for grain.
- Exclude storage capacity and stocks in commercial elevators, cooperatives, processors, or other off-farm facilities, including space rented by the producer. These are collected separately and must not be double counted.
- Include all unprocessed whole grains, oilseeds, and pulse crops physically stored on the operation, regardless of who owns them, their intended use, the crop year produced, or whether they are under a government program.
- Exclude cracked, rolled, milled, mixed, contaminated, or processed grain whose original form has changed. Hay stocks include dry hay only.
- If the respondent knows a commodity is present but cannot or will not give the quantity, record the presence and leave a useful note. Bin dimensions, percent full, and comparisons with last year can support an estimate.

Unharvested Row Crops on December 1:

- Ask about current-year corn, soybeans, sorghum, or other crops shown on the state questionnaire that remain in the field but are intended for harvest.
- Collect acres remaining and expected yield, then verify whether the expected unharvested production was included in the stocks reported on hand. This check prevents duplication.

Things to Watch For:

- Large or changed total acres, cropland acres, rented acres, crop acres, storage capacity, or stocks.
- High or low yields, large acreage for other purposes, potential double cropping, and acreage or production that does not balance.
- Separate operating arrangements. Complete information only for the operation identified on the questionnaire; collect additional reports when the target makes day-to-day decisions for another operation, following RFO instructions.
- Changes in operator, manager, partnership, operation name, address, or phone number. Record complete notes so the operation can be correctly identified and duplication avoided.

- Valid zeros are useful. An operation with none of the commodities or stocks of interest can still provide a complete, valuable report.

Interviewing Reminders:

- Interview the operator or the person most knowledgeable about the operation. Read required introductory statements and questions as written, follow skips, and do not read enumerator instructions.
- Do not suggest answers. Probe for the respondent's best estimate and document unusual conditions, conversions, partial harvest, crop failure, or other explanations.
- Review the completed questionnaire before ending the contact. Verify totals, units, crop-year references, and comments, then thank the respondent and reinforce confidentiality.

Prepared from NASDA December Agricultural Survey training materials and the Agricultural Surveys Interviewer's Manual. Follow current questionnaire wording and Regional Field Office instructions when they differ.