2012 Explanatory Notes
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Table of Contents

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Purpose Statement

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) was established by Secretary's Memorandum No. 1446, Supplement 1, of April 3, 1961, under Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953 and other authorities. The mission of the agency is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

The statistical data provided by NASS are essential to the public and private sectors for making effective policy, production, and marketing decisions on a wide range of agricultural commodities. Every 5 years the Census of Agriculture provides comprehensive national, State, and county data as well as selected data for Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S., Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands. The USDA published its first crop report in 1863. NASS' responsibilities are authorized under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621-1627) and the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997, Public Law 105-113 (7 U.S.C. 2204g).

- **Agricultural Estimates Program** – NASS field offices regularly survey thousands of operators of farms, ranches, and agribusinesses who provide information on a confidential basis. These scientifically-designed surveys provide the basis for developing estimates of production, supply, price, and other aspects of the agricultural economy. Official USDA national, State, and county estimates and reports are issued relating to the number of farms and land in farms; acreage, types, and production of farm crops; number of livestock on farms and of livestock products; stocks of agricultural commodities; value and utilization of farm products; farm labor; prices received and paid by farmers; agricultural chemical use; and on other subjects as needed. The field offices forward the estimates to NASS headquarters where they are combined and released at scheduled times to the press and public through the Agricultural Statistics Board. Annually, NASS publishes approximately 500 national reports and thousands of additional state reports, covering more than 120 crops and 45 livestock items. These basic and unbiased data are necessary to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, and input sectors of agriculture.

- **Census of Agriculture –** The Census of Agriculture is taken every 5 years and provides comprehensive data on the agricultural economy, including data on the number of farms, land use, production expenses, value of land and buildings, farm size and characteristics of farm operators, market value of agricultural production sold, acreage of major crops, inventory of livestock and poultry, and farm irrigation practices. Final preparations are underway for the 2012 Census of Agriculture, scheduled to be mailed to the Nation's farmers and ranchers in December 2013.

- **Work Performed for Others** – NASS conducts surveys for and lends technical expertise to other Federal agencies, State governments, and private organizations on a reimbursable basis. NASS provides support and assistance with questionnaire and sample design, data collection and editing, analysis of survey results, and training. NASS also provides technical consultation, support, and assistance for international programs under participating agency service agreements.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service maintains a central office in Washington, D.C., National Operations Center will open in August, 2011, and a network of 46 field offices, serving all 50 States and Puerto Rico, that operate through cooperative agreements with State Departments of Agriculture or universities. As of September 30, 2010, NASS had 1,089 permanent full-time employees, including 431 full-time employees in Washington, D.C., 656 in field offices, and 2 in Puerto Rico.

OIG Report: #50601-15-KC 4/14/08 NASS – Establishments of Average Yields. Draft report issued January 2011. NASS is reviewing.
GAO Report: #GAO-11-37. USDA's Agricultural Chemical Usage Program Management. Final report issued November 2010. NASS is preparing Statement of Action.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Available Funds and Staff Years
2010 Actual and Estimated 2011 and 2012

Item	2010 Actual		2011 Estimated		2012 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
National Agricultural Statistics Service	$161,830,000	1,004	$161,830,000	1,044	$165,421,000	1,104
Carryover Start of Year	5,036,988		8,043,000			
Recovery	213,934					
Unobligated Balance Expiring or Withdrawn, Lapse	-63,615					
Carryover End of Year	-8,043,017	-		-	-	-
Total, Salaries and Expenses	158,974,290	1,004	169,873,000	1,044	165,421,000	1,104
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:						
Agricultural Marketing Service for pesticide work, and data on milk prices, export certification, and base month series	378,614	2	404,000	3	404,000	3
Agricultural Research Service for assistance on food consumption data, and Nutrient Data Laboratory	24,930	-	25,000	-	25,000	-
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service for animal health monitoring system	712,000	3	600,000	3	600,000	3
Economic Research Service for an agricultural resource management and small farms data	8,543,062	34	7,998,000	39	7,998,000	39
Foreign Agricultural Service	1,191,819		822,000		822,000	
Farm Service Agency for data on feed grain county estimates	8,854,000	33	6,900,000	34	6,900,000	34
Forest Service for data on grazing fees and a woodland owners survey	62,000	-	62,000	-	62,000	-
Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency - Conservation Effects Assessment Project	1,000,000	4				
Risk Management Agency for data on county estimates	825,000	4	825,000	4	825,000	4
Risk Management Agency for Organic Prices	1,500,000	5	0	-	0	-
World Agricultural Outlook Board for printing and lock-up support and cotton objective yield	39,894	-	40,000	-	40,000	-
Other USDA	9,325	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Total Appropriations	23,140,644	85	17,677,000	83	17,677,000	83
Total, USDA Appropriations	182,114,934	1,089	187,550,000	1,127	183,098,000	1,187
Other Federal Funds:						
Interior, Department of, for BLM grazing fees survey	61,000	-	61,000	-	61,000	-
NIOSH	710,000	3	698,000	3	698,000	3
National Science Foundation for data collection	400,000	2	400,000	2	400,000	2
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	48,800	-	49,000	-	49,000	-
Other Countries; Canada, Netherlands	4,857	-	-	-	-	-
United Soybean Council	39,000	-	39,000	-	39,000	-
Total, Other Federal Funds	1,263,657	5	1,247,000	5	1,247,000	5
Non-Federal Funds:						
State Agencies for survey work	3,301,235	16	3,114,000	18	3,114,000	18
Miscellaneous Contributed Funds for distribution of agricultural reports and diskettes and for data on almonds, aquaculture, cherries, grapes, hops, horses, malting barley, potatoes, pistachios, walnuts, and wheat and miscellaneous mailings	76,590	-	127,000	-	127,000	-
Total, Non-Federal Funds	3,377,825	16	3,241,000	18	3,241,000	18
Total, National Agricultural Statistics Service	186,756,416	1,110	192,038,000	1,150	187,586,000	1,210

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary
2010 Actual and Estimated 2011 and 2012

	2010			2011			2012		
Grade	Wash. DC	Field	Total	Wash. DC	Field	Total	Wash. DC	Field	Total
Senior Executive Service	10	0	10	9	1	10	9	1	10
SL	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
GS-15	21	17	38	21	18	39	21	18	39
GS-14	58	45	103	58	45	103	56	47	103
GS-13	242	64	306	230	76	306	215	91	306
GS-12	31	153	184	26	158	184	22	162	184
GS-11	23	103	126	21	105	126	20	106	126
GS-10	4		4	4	0	4	2	7	9
GS-9	20	61	81	22	59	81	20	61	81
GS-8	20	38	58	20	38	58	19	39	58
GS-7	16	161	177	16	161	177	16	156	172
GS-6	4	55	59	4	55	59	4	50	54
GS-5	1	22	23	1	22	23	1	42	43
GS-4	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	65	66
GS-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	63	63
Total Permanent Positions.....	452	722	1,174	434	741	1,175	407	908	1,315
Unfilled Positions end-of-year.....	-21	-64	-85	-3	-41	-44	-3	-162	-165
Total, Permanent Full Time Employment, end-of-year.....	431	658	1,089	431	700	1,131	404	746	1,150
Staff-Year Estimate.....	431	679	1,110	431	719	1,150	404	806	1,210

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

SIZE, COMPOSITION, AND COST OF MOTOR VEHICLE FLEET

The 2012 budget estimate for the National Agricultural Statistics Service proposes to maintain the current level of motor vehicles. All passenger motor vehicles of the National Agricultural Statistics Service are located at various field offices and are assigned based on approved program needs and geographic region.

NASS passenger motor vehicles are used for necessary field travel in carrying out the mission of the agency and ensuring accurate data are being reported and collected. Of the 45 State field offices, there are 15 government owned and 30 lease vehicles in 29 states. While all 45 NASS field offices require the use of motor vehicles, it is often cost-effective to acquire vehicles through existing cooperative agreements with the State Departments of Agriculture, through leases from State motor pools, or via rental agreements. Field offices monitor and track vehicle use and costs. Currently, NASS only owns a fleet of 15 vehicles and plans to move from owned to leased as owned vehicles are reported excess. Where possible NASS uses short term rental and shared motor pools.

Changes to the motor vehicle fleet. In 2010, NASS had three vehicles that met the Federal replacement standards and were replaced under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Replacement of passenger motor vehicles. For 2011 NASS plans to maintain the current level of 45 motor vehicles. For 2012 five vehicles are scheduled for replacement and NASS will maintain the current level of 45 motor vehicles. NASS follows the Federal replacement policy for agency owned vehicles; and maintains vehicles past the minimum Federal replacement criteria of three years 60,000 miles when appropriate. NASS uses appropriated funds to purchase agency owned vehicles when necessary. NASS complies with GSA fleet managers when replacing leased vehicles, ensuring continued program needs.

Impediments to managing the motor vehicle fleet. There are no identified impediments to managing the motor vehicle fleet in the most cost-effective manner.

Size, composition and cost of motor vehicle fleet as of September 30, 2010, are as follows:

Size, Composition, and Annual Cost
(in thousands of dollars)
Number of Vehicles by Type

Fiscal Year	Sedans and Station Wagons	Light Trucks SUVs and Vans 4X2	Light Trucks SUVs and Vans 4X4	Medium Trucks	Heavy Trucks	Ambulances	Buses	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs ($ in thous)
FY 2009	2	41	1	0	0	0	0	44	$197
Change from 2009	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	$174
FY 2010	2	42	1	0	0	0	0	45	$371
Change from 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	$37
FY 2011	2	42	1	0	0	0	0	45	$408
Change from 2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	$41
FY 2012	2	42	1	0	0	0	0	45	$449

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Salaries and Expenses:

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, $165,421,000 of which up to $41,639,000 shall be available until expended for the Census of Agriculture.

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

Annualized Continuing Resolution, 2011	$161,830,000
Budget Estimate, 2012	165,421,000
Increase in Appropriation	+3,591,000

SUMMARY OF INCREASES AND DECREASES

(On basis of appropriation)

Item of Change	2011 Estimated	Pay Costs	Program Changes	2012 Estimated
Agricultural Estimates	$116,143,000	0	0	$116,143,000
County Estimates Program Improvement	4,000,000	0	$3,439,000	7,439,000
July Sheep and Goats Estimate	300,000	0	-300,000	0
Farm Labor	1,960,000	0	-1,960,000	0
Livestock County Estimates	980,000	0	-880,000	100,000
Livestock Prices Received	539,000	0	-439,000	100,000
Subtotal, Ag Estimates	123,922,000	0	-140,000	123,782,000
Census of Agriculture - All Other	33,139,000	0	8,500,000	41,639,000
Census of Aquaculture	800,000	0	-800,000	0
Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land Survey	3,969,000	0	-3,969,000	0
Subtotal, Census of Agriculture	37,908,000	0	3,731,000	41,639,000
Total Available	161,830,000	0	3,591,000	165,421,000

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

PROJECT STATEMENT
(On basis of appropriation)

Project	2010 Actual		2011 Estimated		Increase or	2012 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff-Years	Amount	Staff-Years	Decrease	Amount	Staff-Years
Agricultural Estimates.....	$123,858,385	783	$123,922,000	814	-$140,000	$123,782,000	713
Census of Agriculture.....	37,908,000	221	37,908,000	230	3,731,000	41,639,000	230
National Operations Center*…..	-	-	-	-	-	-	161
Unobligated balance lapsing.....	63,615	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available or estimate…..	161,830,000	1,004	161,830,000	1,044	3,591,000	165,421,000	1,104

PROJECT STATEMENT
(On basis of availability)

Project	2010 Actual		2011 Estimated		Increase or	2012 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff-Years	Amount	Staff-Years	Decrease	Amount	Staff-Years
Agricultural Estimates.....	$123,858,385	783	$123,922,000	814	-$140,000	$123,782,000	713
Census of Agriculture.....	35,115,905	221	45,951,000	230	-4,312,000	41,639,000	230
National Operations Center*…..	-	-	-	-	-	-	161
Unobligated balance lapsing…….	63,615	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unobligated balance forward to next year.....	8,043,017	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total available or estimate.....	167,080,922	1,004	169,873,000	1,044	-4,452,000	165,421,000	1,104
Unobligated balance forward from prior year.....	-5,036,988	-	-8,043,000	-	8,043,000	-	-
Recovery from Prior Year….	-213,934	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total, appropriation.....	$161,830,000	1,004	$161,830,000	1,044	$3,591,000	$165,421,000	1,104

*The National Operations Center shows increased staff years for NASS but no change in funding because the work will move from an outgoing cooperative agreement to in-house.

Justification of Increases and Decreases

(1) A net decrease of $140,000 for agricultural estimates ($123,922,000 available in 2011) consisting of:

(a) An increase of $3,439,000 to enhance the annual county estimates program in support of agricultural producer safety nets ($4,000,000 available in 2011).

NASS has produced county-level statistics for selected commodities for many years. However, the importance of these data has been magnified in recent years as the Department's programs utilize the information to determine disposition of billions of dollars. The Risk Management Agency relies on NASS annual county estimates to administer crop insurance programs that provide U.S. farmers a safety net ensuring protection against unpredictable growing conditions. Additionally, the Farm Service Agency relies on NASS county level data to administer the Conservation Reserve Program, crop revenue support programs, and emergency assistance payments. The important uses of these data continue to grow.

The County Estimates Survey program was originally designed, administered, and processed at the local NASS Field Office level in support of State cooperative agreements with local governments or universities. As uses of the data have expanded to support USDA administered farm programs, it became apparent that new requirements dictated standards and consistency across all NASS Field Offices. Consequently, NASS began work on developing the infrastructure to support transition to a nationally-administered County Estimates Survey program. Initial work focused on internal processes and tools that support analyses and estimation and has recently shifted toward ensuring consistency in sampling, design, and program execution.

However, to effectively and responsibly meet USDA data needs for critical program delivery, several issues that must be addressed will require new program funding. NASS must implement a new probability-based survey design. This will require non-response follow-up to secure data from all sampled records to achieve an 80 percent response rate. Further development and enhancement of survey processing and estimation tools is also needed to establish the robust and flexible processing system required for the multitude of crop and production practices data needed to administer USDA programs. NASS must continue to explore and research small area estimation techniques, including geo-spatial tools. This is increasingly necessary due to the changing structure of the agriculture community. Finally, NASS must continue to explore ways to effectively leverage USDA and other external data sources in an effort to reduce burden on our Nation's farmers and ranchers.

(b) Program reductions: NASS completed a comprehensive review of all of its programs. That review consisted of evaluating the entire agricultural statistics program within the following priorities:

- Principal Economic Indicator data;
- data which directly impact the market;
- data necessary to implement USDA programs which provide payments to farmers and are used to administer the farm safety net for producers; and
- data for which there are no other publically available sources of information.

Additionally, NASS reviewed the availability of alternative objective data sources to identify process improvements which could be implemented to maintain data series while reducing costs to the American taxpayers.

• A decrease of $300,000 ($300,000 available in 2010) to eliminate the July sheep and goats estimate.

NASS completed a comprehensive review of all programs to determine priority. Sheep and goat inventory estimates are currently provided twice a year. This proposal eliminates the July Sheep and Goats inventory survey, but allows for the more detailed January estimate to continue. The continued decline in the sheep inventory levels resulted in this being identified as a lower priority item which could offset requested funding in support of higher priority Administration goals.

• A decrease of $1,960,000 ($1,960,000 available in 2011) and 10 staff years to eliminate the Agricultural Estimates Farm Labor program.

NASS will discontinue its Farm Labor program. Farm labor data for paid field workers, paid livestock workers, and agricultural managers are collected and published quarterly. This program is a lower priority because NASS will create a proxy for internal use which will accurately reflect farm labor rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics employment series. The proxy of the wage rate index will be a component of the Department of Agriculture (NASS) Parity Index.

• A net decrease of $880,000 ($980,000 available in 2011) and 6 staff years to reduce Livestock County Estimates due to an improved production process.

NASS has developed procedures to improve efficiency and reduce respondent burden by eliminating the need to collect data for livestock county estimates. A statistical raking/calibration procedure that produces reliable county level estimates by leveraging Census of Agriculture data and data collected from annual samples used to measure precise State and National level estimates has been developed and tested. This is an example of a business process improvement that will increase program delivery efficiencies and create savings to the American taxpayers.

• A net decrease of $439,000 ($539,000 available in 2011) and 5 staff years to reduce Livestock Prices Received from the State level to publish only a U.S. level price.

NASS will no longer collect livestock prices received data and will not publish State level prices for hogs, cattle, sheep, and lambs. Administrative data will be utilized to allow NASS headquarters commodity statisticians to derive and publish a U.S. level price. This process will save data collection costs and five field office staff years necessary to process and set State level monthly estimates.

(2) A net increase of $3,591,000 for the Census of Agriculture ($37,908,000 available in 2011) consisting of:

(a) An increase of $8,500,000 and no staff years to the cyclical Census of Agriculture funding.

This increase reflects the normal activity levels resulting from the cyclical nature of the 5-year Census of Agriculture program. Funding will be used to collect data to measure coverage of the census mail list, prepare census mail packages, and prepare for data collection activities to occur in FY 2013. NASS' annual June Area Survey will be expanded in FY 2012 to target small and disadvantaged farm operators. The data collected will be used during FY 2013 to identify the level of coverage of the census mail list and allow adjustments to account for all U.S. farms in census publications. Additionally, but independent of the area frame survey, on-going mail list improvement activities will culminate during FY 2012 to finalize the initial census mail list prior to a December 2012 mail out. Mail list improvement activities include screening 1.1 million potential farm operations to eliminate non-farm residences prior to the more expensive census data collection procedures and reducing under coverage of small and disadvantaged farm operators. These processes must remain independent to ensure the ability to properly measure coverage of the mail list.

A large portion of the increased funding will be used for printing and assembly of the census mail packages. This includes form design; high volume printing; and inspection and quality assurance of the printed materials. Finally, development and testing will be completed in FY 2012 on the systems necessary to process incoming data once the Census of Agriculture begins in early FY 2013.

Without the necessary funding for adequate preparation, the 2012 Census of Agriculture would have be delayed, have reduced level of coverage, or result in NASS not being able to account for all farms in the United States due to the inability to adequately measure coverage of the census mail list.

As Congress was notified in August 2010, NASS is developing a National Operations Center (NOC) to provide an infrastructure for increased telephone data collection capacity in a centralized environment, to centrally locate sampling frame activities and experts, and to improve training of telephone and field interviewers through delivery of a standardized training protocol. An occupancy agreement for the Charles F. Prevedel Building in St. Louis, Missouri was signed with GSA. The NOC is scheduled to open in the fall of 2011. NASS will show an overall increase in staff years in FY 2012 with the opening of the NOC because the work will move from an extramural cooperative agreement to intramural; the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) cooperative agreement with NASS will be modestly reduced but still contain funding for personal enumeration. The NOC will provide NASS with more flexibility, more integration, more streamlining, and more standardization to improve products and services.

(b) Program reductions: NASS completed a comprehensive review of all of its programs. That review consisted of evaluating the entire census of agriculture program.

NASS reviewed the availability of alternative objective data sources to identify process improvements which could be implemented to maintain data series while reducing costs to the American taxpayers.

- A decrease of $800,000 to eliminate the Census of Aquaculture ($800,000 available in 2011).

NASS completed a comprehensive review of all programs to determine priority.

This periodic report was scheduled to be completed during FY 2011 to provide the industry with the basic information needed to make key policy and business decisions. However, the majority of aquaculture, catfish and trout, are currently included in the NASS agricultural estimates program; which includes a monthly report of catfish processing, a biannual report of catfish production, and an annual report on trout production. Therefore, this program was identified as a lower priority item which could offset requested funding in support of higher priority Administration goals.

- A decrease of $3,969,000 to eliminate the tenure, ownership, and transition of agricultural land survey (TOTAL) ($3,969,000 available in 2011).

NASS completed a comprehensive review of all programs to determine priority.

This periodic report was scheduled to be completed during FY 2011 to provide a comprehensive look at the land tenure of the U.S. agriculture sector for both landlords and farm operators. However, the largest portion of land tenure is the farm operator component that is already being accounted for in the Agricultural Resource Management Survey. The TOTAL survey is inactive. It was last conducted in 1998. Therefore, this program was identified as a lower priority item which could offset requested funding in support of higher priority Administration goals.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
2010 Actual and Estimated 2011 and 2012

	2010		2011		2012	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years
Alabama	$1,102,556	12	$1,174,000	12	$1,149,000	10
Alaska	225,144	2	221,000	2	216,000	2
Arizona	852,001	10	921,000	10	902,000	9
Arkansas	1,441,200	16	1,417,000	16	1,387,000	14
California	2,737,552	25	2,908,000	25	2,845,000	20
Colorado	1,312,566	15	1,377,000	15	1,347,000	14
Delaware	139,010	1	137,000	1	134,000	1
District of Columbia	105,007,738	431	103,081,000	431	100,894,000	404
Florida	1,335,161	14	1,407,000	14	1,377,000	10
Georgia	1,365,127	13	1,445,000	13	1,414,000	10
Hawaii	954,593	11	939,000	11	919,000	9
Idaho	1,198,014	13	1,178,000	13	1,153,000	10
Illinois	1,411,786	14	1,685,000	14	1,649,000	12
Indiana	1,507,904	16	1,575,000	16	1,541,000	12
Iowa	1,437,647	17	1,497,000	17	1,464,000	13
Kansas	1,314,807	14	1,570,000	14	1,537,000	11
Kentucky	1,307,525	14	1,286,000	14	1,259,000	11
Louisiana	936,702	10	1,105,000	10	1,082,000	10
Maryland	914,948	10	989,000	10	968,000	9
Michigan	1,445,412	17	1,504,000	17	1,472,000	16
Minnesota	1,421,529	15	1,398,000	15	1,368,000	12
Mississippi	1,412,551	15	1,482,000	15	1,450,000	14
Missouri	1,139,528	13	10,839,000	53	9,772,000	237
Montana	1,032,221	12	1,015,000	12	993,000	9
Nebraska	1,312,957	14	1,383,000	14	1,354,000	12
Nevada	287,644	3	283,000	3	277,000	3
New Hampshire	1,162,180	13	1,231,000	13	1,205,000	11
New Jersey	956,529	10	1,034,000	10	1,012,000	8
New Mexico	821,135	8	909,000	8	889,000	7
New York	1,140,402	14	1,121,000	14	1,097,000	10
North Carolina	2,036,337	15	2,403,000	15	2,352,000	12
North Dakota	1,039,396	12	1,107,000	12	1,083,000	10
Ohio	1,599,910	16	1,770,000	16	1,732,000	12
Oklahoma	1,130,629	13	1,112,000	13	1,088,000	10
Oregon	1,225,019	13	1,205,000	13	1,179,000	10
Pennsylvania	1,206,573	14	1,187,000	14	1,161,000	12
South Carolina	973,955	10	958,000	10	937,000	9
South Dakota	1,232,069	14	1,384,000	14	1,355,000	11
Tennessee	1,025,726	13	1,087,000	13	1,063,000	10
Texas	2,310,440	22	2,271,000	22	2,223,000	18
Utah	815,574	8	1,002,000	8	980,000	8
Virginia	998,244	12	1,146,000	12	1,121,000	10
Washington	1,641,675	16	1,715,000	16	1,678,000	13
West Virginia	532,852	6	698,000	6	683,000	6
Wisconsin	1,538,027	16	1,701,000	16	1,665,000	12
Wyoming	809,795	10	796,000	10	779,000	9
U.S. Territories	224,000	2	220,000	2	216,000	2
Total Direct Obligations	158,974,290	1,004	169,873,000	1,044	165,421,000	1,104
Unobligated balance lapsing	63,615	-	-	-	-	-
Unobligated balance forward to next year	8,043,017	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available or Estimate	167,080,922	1,004	169,873,000	1,044	165,421,000	1,104

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
Salaries and Expenses

Classification by Objects
2010 Actual and Estimated 2011 and 2012

		2010	2011	2012
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington, D. C.		$27,820,813	$31,098,210	$34,209,240
Field		43,690,759	$48,640,790	53,506,760
11	Total personnel compensation	71,511,572	79,739,000	87,716,000
12	Personnel Benefits	21,435,431	23,932,000	26,323,000
13	Benefits for former personnel	8,800	9,000	9,000
	Total pers. comp. & benefits	92,955,803	103,680,000	114,048,000
Other Objects:				
21	Travel and transportation of persons	3,060,536	3,104,000	2,908,000
22	Transportation of things	1,237,342	5,855,000	2,887,000
23.2	Rental payments to others	101,521	103,000	121,000
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	5,033,121	5,434,000	6,351,000
24	Printing and reproduction	684,346	694,000	711,000
25.1	Contractual Services by Fed Agencies	1,516,128	1,188,000	878,000
25.2	Related Expenditures	1,700,538	725,000	519,000
25.3	Repair, Alteration or Maint of Equip	1,525,338	1,047,000	497,000
25.4	Contractual Services - Other	30,337,000	30,000,000	23,000,000
25.5	Research & Development Contracts	11,960,217	8,932,000	8,037,000
25.7	Miscellaneous Services	2,458,858	868,000	802,000
26	Supplies and materials	1,217,074	1,235,000	677,000
31	Equipment	5,178,572	7,000,000	3,977,000
42	Insurance claims and indemenities	7,893	8,000	8,000
43	Interest and dividends	3	0	0
	Total other objects	66,018,487	66,193,000	51,373,000
Total direct obligations		158,974,290	169,873,000	165,421,000
Position Data:				
Average Salary, ES positions		$162,029	$162,066	$162,089
Average Salary, GS positions		$100,000	$102,998	$98,500
Average Grade, GS positions		11.9	11.9	11.5

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) mission is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. To achieve this, NASS administers USDA's program of collecting and publishing current national, State, and county agricultural statistics. The Census of Agriculture, conducted every 5 years, provides comprehensive, local level data about agricultural communities across America. The statistical data provided by NASS are essential to both the public and private sectors for making effective policy, production, and marketing decisions on a wide range of agricultural commodities.

NASS programs are organized into the following three major areas: (1) agricultural estimates, (2) Census of Agriculture, and (3) work performed for others. Additionally, NASS is currently undertaking an organizational transformation to streamline its business processes. More information on each of these areas follows.

AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES

Current Activities:

The NASS agricultural statistics program is conducted through 45 field offices serving all 50 States, and a Puerto Rico field office. Scientifically designed surveys of farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, and others provide the basis for developing estimates of production, supply, price, and many other aspects of the agricultural economy. These surveys are supplemented by field observations, objective yield counts and measurements, and other data to provide reliable information. Administrative data available from other USDA agencies and State Departments of Agriculture are also used to produce statistical reports, including monthly livestock and poultry slaughter, egg production, and dairy products reports.

Official USDA national and State reports are issued relating to the number of farms and land in farms; acreage, yield, production, and stocks of grains; production of hay, oilseeds, cotton, potatoes, tobacco, fruits, vegetables, floriculture, nursery, and selected specialty crops; inventories and production of hogs, cattle, sheep and wool, goats and mohair, mink, catfish, trout, poultry, eggs, and dairy products; prices received by farmers for products, prices paid for commodities and services, and related indexes; cold storage inventories; agricultural chemical use; and other related items that affect the agricultural economy. The NASS field offices forward the estimates to the Headquarters office in Washington, D.C., where they are combined, analyzed, and released at scheduled times to the media and public through free published reports on the NASS Web site, http://www.nass.usda.gov/. Annually, NASS publishes more than 500 national reports, covering over 120 crop and 45 livestock items, complemented by more than 8,000 additional State reports. These basic and unbiased data are critical to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, and input sectors of agriculture.

NASS provides timely and accurate agricultural statistics that are used throughout the agricultural sector to evaluate supplies and determine competitive prices for world marketing of U.S. commodities. These statistics promote a level playing field in production agriculture with impartial information available to everyone at a predetermined and publicized date and time.

Statistical data are also provided on chemical use and biotechnology for use in monitoring and evaluating risk assessment to both food safety and food security. Data on agricultural practices, farm and ranch irrigation practice trends, and the geographic information system cropland data layer provide meaningful information on the Nation's resource base and environment.

NASS continues to keep abreast of information needs through a variety of means, including data user meetings, advisory committees, attending industry meetings, and sponsoring outreach activities. Even though most NASS reports consist of specific data series, improvements to reports and databases are constantly being made in terms of additional data breakouts, improved coverage, and improved timeliness.

Special reports or additional categories within existing reports are added to best summarize the constantly changing character of agriculture. The following examples represent FY 2010 accomplishments.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

New and Expanded Agricultural Statistics published by NASS

- Starting in December 2009, NASS published two new lower weight groups in the *Hogs and Pigs* report; less than 50 pounds and 50-119 pounds. These categories replaced the previously published weight groups of less than 60 and 60-119 pounds.

- In the monthly *Chickens and Eggs* publication, beginning in January 2010, Utah became a published state for layer inventory.

- During 2010, new products added to the monthly *Dairy Products* publication included milk protein concentrate production, whey protein isolate stocks, parmesan production, provolone production, ricotta production, Romano production, unsweetened bulk condensed milk, dry whole milk stocks, and dry skim milk – animal grade stocks.

- *Sheep and Goats Death Loss* was published in May 2010. This report is released as a cooperative effort between the National Agricultural Statistics Service and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

- Beginning with the July 25, 2010 *Poultry Slaughter* publication, the "Other" Post-Mortem Condemnation category was renamed "Miscellaneous" to more accurately reflect the various condemnations included in the category. To reflect this change the following footnote was added to the pertinent tables: "Includes any portion of the carcass affected by an inflammatory process, plant-rejected carcasses, missing viscera, or ascites fluid preventing proper inspection of the carcass."

- A special report, *Overview of the United States Dairy Industry*, was issued September 22, 2010. This report compares 2009 production year data to the 2001 data released in the *U.S. Dairy Herd Structure* report, published in September 2002. This report also discusses changes in milk cow operation size groups, and trends in the milk prices and the milk-feed ratio.

- An additional *Rice Stocks* report was added to the annual estimating program. The first September *Rice Stocks* report was released on September 30, 2010. *Rice Stocks* reports are now issued in January (for December 1 Stocks), March, June, August, September, and October (California only).

- In the monthly *Agricultural Prices* publication, beginning in January 2010, state level market (table) egg prices were discontinued. Monthly US level market (table) eggs prices and all egg prices continue to be published.

- In the February 2010 *Trout Production* release, egg sales by region were discontinued beginning with the 2009 production year. Data for egg sales: number of eggs, average price per 1,000 eggs, and total sales at the US level continue to be published.

- Beginning with the April 2010 *Meat – Production, Disposition, and Income* publication, marketing year average prices of cattle, hogs, and sheep were no longer published.

- Beginning in 2010, the estimates for California winter and summer season potatoes were combined with the estimates for spring season potatoes. As a result of this change, there are no longer estimates for winter season potatoes since California was the only estimating state.

- Effective with 2010 releases, printed publications of the Chemical Usage reports are no longer available. Report highlights are available online. Published data for chemical use are accessible in special online data tables and on the NASS website via QuickStats.

- NASS discontinued publishing the *Annual Agricultural Prices Summary in 2010*.

Research and Development

- NASS' Research and Development Division (RDD) is utilizing Banff software, written by Statistics Canada, to research improving the efficiency of survey data editing within NASS. Significance editing is defined as statistical data editing, selective editing, and outlier detection. This methodology reduces the time and effort spent manually reviewing/correcting survey questionnaires without damaging the quality of the resulting data, and focuses the manual effort on the accuracy of the survey respondents that strongly impact the survey results. RDD is examining how to incorporate significance editing into the operational survey programs.

- Three states, North Dakota, Arkansas, and Missouri were added to the remote sensing yield program for the 2010 crop year. NASS estimates yield for corn and soybeans in ten states. These estimates were created at the state and district level and provided monthly to the NASS Field Offices and Agriculture Statistics Board in September and October. County level indications for all ten states were provided in October.

- The remote sensing acreage estimation program expanded slightly for the 2010 crop year. The number of states increased from 26 to 27 adding Oregon. Alfalfa was added in 2010 bringing the number of crops from 15 to 16. The remote sensing acreage program covers all market sensitive crops and States.

- NASS completed and released the first 48 state Cropland Data Layer (CDL) for the contiguous United States. With nearly 40 years of crop classification research and development, all the resources, technology and expertise has come together to create the CDL. The CDL is foundational to the NASS remote sensing acreage and yield estimating programs. The CDL will also be important to USDA future work on climate change and many in the scientific and research communities.

- NASS began work on a NASA competitive grant titled "A National Crop Progress Monitoring System Based on NASA Earth Science Results." NASS working cooperatively with George Mason University developed crop progress field procedures for managing weekly data collection for 10 selected fields in Iowa. The collected data will be analyzed with satellite imagery to develop a satellite based crop progress monitoring system for the future.

Cyber and Physical Security

- In compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002, NASS successfully re-accredited one of its major systems, and started work to renew Certification and Accreditation (C&A) on two other systems.

- In support of FISMA's continuous monitoring requirement, NASS partnered with the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) in implementing BigFix. This solution enables NASS and the USDA to ensure all Agency network endpoints comply with all Federal and USDA policies, including OMB's Federal Desktop Common Configuration (FDCC).

- In compliance with the Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) mandate, NASS is almost finished issuing USDA LincPass smartcards to its entire staff. NASS shifted its efforts in processing smartcards for all contractors and state employees working for the Agency. NASS has upgraded all Electronic Physical Access Control Systems (EPACS) in its field offices that had either renovated, or

moved to another location. In addition, NASS has fully implemented smartcard readers to all its laptops, and is nearing completion in implementing the readers on all its desktops and workstations. These milestones put NASS in position to start using its LincPass smartcards for both physical and logical access ahead of the USDA-mandated implementation dates.

- NASS continues to elevate its users' awareness on the importance of sound security practices and procedures by means of mandatory information security awareness and privacy training. NASS garnered a 100 percent completion rate in FY 2010. In addition, system and network administrators with significant security responsibilities were required to complete security-focused courses specific to their field of expertise. NASS also earned a 100 percent completion on this Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA).

- To keep up with ever-advancing threats to its enterprise network, NASS upgraded its perimeter security with more capable Unified Threat Management (UTM) appliances, as well as state-of-the art Security Event and Information Management (SEIM) solutions that provide real-time event correlation, providing NASS with timely alerts should a security breach occur.

Data Users Meeting

- The 2010 Data Users Meeting was held in Chicago, Illinois on October 25, 2010. The meeting provided an open forum for data users to ask questions about the entire USDA statistics program. From the customer service perspective, the Data Users Meeting provided an excellent opportunity to learn about the data users' concerns and desires for improvements or changes to the statistics and economics programs. The meeting was hosted by NASS in cooperation with the World Agricultural Outlook Board, ERS, AMS, Foreign Agricultural Service, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics

- The Charter for the advisory Committee was renewed for another 2 years on May 17, 2010. The Committee is composed of 20 members with professional knowledge regarding the data needs of the food, fiber and rural sector. It provides a direct link with the major agricultural organizations and farm groups which could not be as effectively or efficiently obtained from any other source. The Committee is the primary forum for reconciling the divergent data needs between data user and provider groups. It is also instrumental in helping NASS provide the maximum value from their statistics, within available funding, and to continually improve its products and services.

- The Committee's next meeting in Washington, DC is scheduled for February 22 – 23, 2011. The meeting focus will be to advise NASS on the upcoming 2012 Census of Agriculture; and offer suggestions on the NASS on-going survey program.

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Current Activities:

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every 5 years and provides comprehensive data series at the national, State, and county level. A snapshot of the agriculture economy including the number of farms, farm typology, characteristics of farm operators, land use, production expenses, value of land and buildings, farm size, market value of agricultural production, acreage of hundreds of crops, inventory of livestock and poultry, and extensive farming practices including irrigation, marketing and utilization of government sponsored programs. The results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture were published in fiscal year 2009. Many fact sheets that summarized data not presented in the Census of Agriculture publication were released in fiscal year 2010.

Fact sheets from the 2007 Census of Agriculture highlight key topics from demographics, agricultural production, economics, farm numbers, farm practices and geography. These fact sheets combine narrative and data to illustrate current trends among U.S. farmers and agricultural operations in a brief two or four page overview. Information from the Census of Agriculture provides extensive and detailed data at the county level which facilitates locality-based policy and business decisions affecting the agricultural industry and rural residents.

The following examples represent accomplishments during fiscal year 2010.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

2007 Census of Agriculture:

- During FY 2010, twenty three fact sheets were issued to coincide with significant events or tradeshows. These fact sheets were used to keep the Census of Agriculture in the news and to provide materials for field offices in their own public relations activities. They can be found at: http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/Fact_Sheets/index.asp

- A history of the 2007 Census of Agriculture was compiled in 2010. This details the entire process for the 2007 Census of Agriculture from form development to publication.

Census Follow-On Surveys

- Results from the 2008 Organic Production Survey (OPS) were released on February 3, 2010. This effort was USDA's first-ever, wide-scale survey of U.S. organic producers. Data were collected for certified organic producers, exempt producers, and those producers in transition to organic production. The overall response rate was 87 percent, 2 percentage points higher than the 2007 Census of Agriculture. Eight percent of the responses were received using Internet reporting.

- Results from the 2008 FRIS were released in two phases. The first portion of the report was released November 30, 2009 and covered the irrigation data for field crops. The second portion of the report was released February 11, 2010 and covered all horticultural operations in two categories: operations with sales from $1 – $10,000 and sales greater than $10,000.

- Data collection, editing, analysis, and publication were completed for the 2009 Census of Horticultural Specialties. This effort collected data from any operation producing and selling at least $10,000 in horticultural crops as reported on the 2007 Census of Agriculture. Data were collected in all 50 States. The overall response rate was 88 percent with 5 percent of the responses on the Internet. The Census of Horticultural Specialties was released on December 13, 2010.

- Data collection, editing, and analysis were completed for the 2009 On-Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey. Data were collected in all 50 States via mail, Internet, phone, and personal interviews.

- Due to budgetary constraints, NASS cancelled the data collection for the proposed 2010 Census of Aquaculture and the 2010 Land Ownership and Tenure Survey.

2012 Census of Agriculture

- Two teams were formed to develop the 2012 Census of Agriculture questionnaire. These were the Content Team, which was responsible for the content of the form, and the Data Collection Team, which was responsible for development and testing of the form. The Content Team completed its tenure in 2010, incorporating many recommended updates to the content of the form that were submitted by NASS Field Offices, NASS HQ, and the Council on Food, Agriculture and Resource Economics. The Data Collection Team created a form that included these changes and has completed multiple rounds of testing. In order to

facilitate reporting and reduce paper usage, the Data Collection Team sent a letter to 2,000 operations, giving them the option of completing the report on-line. In order to improve editing, the procedures for the Census of Agriculture are constantly being reviewed. In preparation for the finalized 2012 Census report form, these procedures are being modified. Utilizing data from the 2010 Census of Agriculture Content Test, the editing procedures will be tested, modified, and evaluated for efficiency and optimal processing.

- A sub-team to the Data Collection Team has developed a special form for improved data collection for Navajo operations. This form is being tested in multiple States. If successful, the team will investigate expanding use of customized forms for other American Indian operations.

- Counting over 2.2 million farms takes a fully implemented and routinely performed list building effort. Beginning in reference year 2009, NASS began developing its Census Mail List. In January 2010, 180,000 operations received a four page questionnaire (NACS) to screen for agricultural activity. Approximately 290,000 additional operations will receive the questionnaire in January 2011 and an estimated 1.2 million operations will be mailed a mandatory questionnaire in 2012.

eGovernment

- NASS makes its data available to the public through easy to use graphical user interface based query tools that can be downloaded as well as an on-line database called Quick Stats that can be queried directly. These on-line applications are displayed on www.nass.usda.gov and www.data.gov/tools/961. This NASS web tool for accessing Census of Agriculture data is one of the five featured tools on Data.gov and currently has a five-star rating.

- NASS depends heavily on the electronic media as a vehicle for soliciting input from internal and external resources. In particular, proper census planning requires eliciting responses by advertising an Internet portal to provide the public a forum for data user feedback. These public forums are being utilized for planning the Census follow-on programs.

- NASS continues to use email subscription lists and social media tools such as Twitter, the USDA Blog and USDA YouTube channel to notify the public about all data products available from NASS.

WORK PERFORMED FOR OTHERS

Current Activities:

NASS conducts surveys for and lends technical expertise to other Federal agencies, State governments, and private organizations on a reimbursable basis. NASS provides support and assistance in the areas of questionnaire and sample design, data collection and editing, analysis of survey results, and training. NASS also provides technical consultation, support, and assistance to foreign countries desiring to enhance their statistical programs.

NASS performs services and statistical consultation for other Federal and State agencies and private commodity organizations on a reimbursable basis. Statistics generated meet special needs not covered by the National agricultural statistics program. In addition, statistical consultation by NASS staff members contributes to improvements in the overall quality and consistency of statistical information produced for the needs of other organizations. The following examples represent accomplishments during fiscal year 2010.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) Pesticide and Microbiological Data Program.

The AMS Pesticide Data Program (PDP) is the basis for a broad statistical analysis of pesticide contamination of food commodities intended for human consumption. Each quarter, samples of three (seasonally varying) groups of fresh commodities and one group of processed commodities are collected from a random sample of distribution centers located in key states. These samples are sent to regional laboratories and tested for the presence and level of the most commonly used agricultural pesticides posing a potential risk for human health. The selection of distribution centers from which commodity samples are taken follows the basic systematic probability-proportional-to-size (PPS) sampling technique. The AMS Microbiological Data Program (MDP) is a counterpart to the PDP, focusing on the potential human health risks from contamination of fresh produce by common microbiological agents. Currently, the sampling of distribution centers for selected groups of fresh commodities follows the PPS sampling methodology used for the PDP survey. The Research and Development Division continues to conduct the sample selection procedures for the AMS, in addition to investigating possible improvements to the current sampling methodology.

AMS Annual Survey of Livestock Mandatory Reporting Transactions.

Under a cooperative agreement with AMS, the Research and Development Division provided statistical services in the design of a sampling plan and estimation strategy for an annual survey of Livestock Mandatory Reporting Transactions. The survey is designed to measure the accuracy of AMS' transaction data set when compared to the standard of actual company records. The particular measures defined and estimated is the overall rate of disagreement by class within cattle, hogs, and lambs, in addition to the average price difference for two major types of transactions.

Agricultural Resources Management Survey (ARMS).

The ARMS is conducted annually in cooperation with the USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS). The survey provides data that enables NASS to publish chemical use statistics and provides ERS the ability to estimate farm income, conduct economic analysis relating to field crop chemical usage, estimate costs associated with producing agricultural commodities, and compile farm business and household financial data. Data collected support both agencies' estimation programs for farm production expenditures. ARMS Phase II target commodities for the 2010 crop year were corn and organic corn. The 2009 ARMS Phase III, conducted in the winter of 2010, focused on farm financial data for all types and sizes of farms, in addition to the hog enterprise production costs.

National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS).

In 2010, NASS conducted a survey under contract for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS) to study health management practices for catfish producers in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Additionally, NASS collected sheep and goat death loss statistics in support of APHIS programs. NASS provided statistical services including questionnaire development, data collection, data keying, and summarization.

United Soybean Board.

NASS has been collaborating with the United Soybean Board (USB) for 7 years by supplying the Board with soybean samples from 11 States involved in our annual Soybean Objective Yield Survey. Compositional analysis of the random samples is made to determine such variables as oil and protein content. These analyses help determine the quality of soybeans produced in the U.S. and how they compare with those grown in other countries. Additionally, the data help USB establish priorities for research, marketing, and education efforts. At the end of the crop season, USB provides analyses back to NASS field offices that can be distributed to Soybean Objective Yield respondents.

County Cash Rents Survey.

Through the 2008 Farm Bill, NASS was directed to conduct an annual Cash Rents survey to establish per acre estimates of county cash rental rates for dry and irrigated cropland and pastureland. Three annual surveys have been conducted providing cash rental rate indications for 2008, 2009, and 2010. Data are published at the county and/or district level for cash rental rates for all counties with 20,000 plus acres of any combination of dry cropland, irrigated cropland or permanent pasture. Data collected support the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) administration of payments for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Childhood Injury and Occupational Injury Survey.

In 2010, NASS conducted a nationwide survey, for the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), of approximately 50,000 farm operations that focused on childhood injuries and adult occupational injuries. This Childhood Injury and Adult Occupational Injury Survey is a continuation of a series of NIOSH studies conducted by NASS and sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control that focus on the occupational health of farm operators and their families. NASS provided statistical services such as sample selection, questionnaire and computer-assisted telephone instrument development, data collection, data keying, and data editing.

Organic Production and Prices.

In 2010, NASS established an agreement with the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to plan, develop, and test an Organic pilot survey designed to capture production, price, and value of organic commodities in support of RMA's insurance program. The pilot *Organic Production and Price Survey* (OPPS) will be conducted in early 2012 for reference year 2011.

Natural Resource Environmental Indicators.

NASS received funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in 2010 to establish an agreement targeted at developing a Pilot Study focused on the impact of climate change on agricultural natural resource indicators. The study is patterned after the multi-year Conservation Effects Assessment Program (CEAP) surveys that NASS conducted for NRCS over several years. Additional collaborations will occur with Iowa State University in developing sampling protocols utilizing the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) points.

NASS Review of USDA Agency Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Submissions.

NASS is recognized as USDA's statistical agency and works regularly with OMB staff and agencies on Information Collection Requests (ICRs). NASS assists other USDA agencies in the review of their ICRs prior to OMB submission. In most cases, this involves a thorough review of their survey methodology. In 2010, NASS assisted the following agencies with ICR reviews: Forest Service, Agricultural Research Service (Office of Transfer Technology), and Food and Nutrition Service.

International Technical Assistance Provided.

NASS provided technical assistance and training to improve agricultural statistics programs in nine countries. Short-term assignments supported work in Armenia, Brazil, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Serbia and Russia. The technical assistance ranged from basic survey concepts and procedures to complete national Census of Agriculture support. In addition, NASS coordinated and/or conducted training programs in the U.S. for 161 visitors representing 16 countries. These assistance and training activities promote better quality data and improved access to data from other countries, which allows U.S. analysts to better understand the world supply and demand situation. Improved analysis supports trade and more efficient marketing of U.S. agricultural products.

OPERATIONAL TRANSFORMATIONS

During FY 2010, NASS has embarked on six efforts which will change the "essential operating conditions" that currently exist within the agency. These changes move NASS toward implementing the best practices of a federal statistical agency and fully delivering on the principles a statistical organization should espouse.

Centralize Local Area Network (LAN) Services.

Information on network servers is being consolidated to fewer servers. All desktops are being virtualized so that employees will access their desktop through a web browser. Users will be able to log into the NASS network from any physical location.

Technology Enhancements Relevant to Software Applications and Database Development.

Applications are being optimized for a centralized database environment. The initiative enables the organization to be more flexible, nimbly adapting to the demands of our stakeholders and our ever-changing operating environment.

Implementing Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing.

To facilitate quality and efficiency increases in our data collection program, NASS is integrating Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) into the NASS operational program.

NASS has designed an innovative, thin client Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) solution by leveraging wireless broadband technology and a recently completed web-based data collection system. To complete a survey questionnaire for the respondent, a field interviewer accesses NASS' data collection website via the Internet using a low cost net book with a wireless broadband air card. The interview is conducted real time over the Internet with no data ever residing on the net book. Currently, this innovative approach to CAPI is being successfully implemented across NASS' Field Offices and is evolving with the use of Apple iPADs and personal wireless hotspots.

Centralized Telephoning, Frames Maintenance, and Training.

NASS is developing a National Operations Center (NOC) to provide an infrastructure for increased telephone data collection capacity in a centralized environment, to centrally locate sampling frame activities and experts, and to improve training of telephone and field interviewers through focused and deliberate delivery of a standardized training protocol. An occupancy agreement for the Charles F. Prevedel Building in St. Louis, Missouri was signed with GSA. The NOC is scheduled to open in the fall of 2011.

Video Conferencing.

In order to facilitate "distance" meetings, implement technological capabilities and mitigate the expense of transporting staff physically to various meetings NASS installed video conferencing capabilities in its headquarters and field office locations.

Research and Development.

- Under separate cooperative agreements with the National Institute of Statistical Sciences, NASS is continuing to research process improvement in three important areas. The cooperative agreements were established in June 2009 and will continue through May 2011. Each of these topics is being addressed by a research team consisting of team members both inside and outside of NASS. The external members for each team include faculty mentors, post-doctoral fellows, graduate students from a variety of universities, and an ERS representative for the team focusing on multivariate imputation of ARMS. A more detailed description of the focus of each team follows:

- ✓ *Multivariate Imputation of Agricultural Resource Management Survey Data* -- The objective of this research is to develop a comprehensive, multivariate imputation scheme for a large, diverse data set of semi-continuous data that produces results reflecting the distribution of agricultural data; that supports both economic modeling and direct estimates; and that provides for an estimable impact of imputation on mean squared error.

- ✓ *Design and Estimation Methodologies for Estimating the Number of Farms from NASS Sampling Frames* -- NASS uses its area frame both as a stand-alone frame to estimate numbers of farms and a wide variety of commodities, and as a measure of incompleteness for its list surveys -- including the quinquennial census of agriculture. The Agency's area frame estimates of the numbers of farms for 2007 were less than those from its dual-frame 2007 Census of Agriculture, raising the question of how many farms not represented on the Agency's list sampling frames were also missing from its area frame. The challenge is to develop statistical procedures to measure the number of farms missing from both frames and to incorporate these measurements into list sample weights. The dual-frame absence suggests the potential of using capture-recapture techniques or implementing a tri-system estimator. This research is focusing on designing the most effective estimation methodologies to address the issue.

- ✓ *Statistical Multi-source Predictive Models and Error Estimation in Support of Crop Production Forecasts and Estimates* -- NASS produces multiple forecasts of crop production throughout the growing season and then estimates production at end-of-season or after harvest. The components of crop production include area planted, area harvested, and yield per harvested area. Official forecasts and estimates for these components are derived from multiple current and historical sources: surveys and administrative/auxiliary information -- including weather and remotely sensed data -- and data for previous years. Historically the information for the production components has been synthesized by a panel of experts in NASS' Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) using these multiple sources, with publication of the resulting official forecasts/estimates. Subsequently, the official forecasts/estimates of production are compared to the utilization of the crops to assess the accuracy of the forecasts. The statistical questions that are being addressed by this research are 1) whether improvements can be made in the ASB's analysis process via increased use of data modeling or through other approaches; and 2) how these models or other techniques can be validated during the short time period available for analysts to review the inputs before publication of the time sensitive official estimates.

- Under a cooperative agreement with the American Statistical Association, the Joint Program in Survey Methodology at the University of Maryland is working with RDD staff on improvements to NASS' county estimates program. This agreement started in June 2009 and will remain in place until May 2011. The research is focused on using small area estimation techniques to model county-level crop indications. A two-level area model is being explored that composites a modeled direct estimate based on survey data with auxiliary variable information and then rakes these values to the official state-level estimate.

- Under a cooperative agreement, the University of Florida is working with RDD staff on improvements to NASS' cash rents estimation program. This agreement was established in July 2010. The research is focused on using small area estimation techniques to model county-level cash rents for irrigated cropland, non-irrigated cropland, and pastureland. The model being examined borrows strength from surrounding counties and also incorporates related covariate information.

- RDD staff is utilizing time series techniques to research modeling livestock estimates, such as those published for the hog estimation program. A state-space model is being utilized to incorporate historical and current survey results as well as historical published livestock inventory. The model also allows for possible influential exogenous variables such as slaughter, death loss, imports, and exports utilized in the balance sheet. Results from the modeling process are then used to extend the estimation further by allocating the national-level estimates to national subclasses, including weight class levels and state-level estimates of the livestock commodity.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Summary of Budget and Performance
Statement of Department Goals and Objectives

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) was established by Secretary's Memorandum No. 1446, Supplement 1, of April 3, 1961, under Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953 and other authorities. The mission of the Agency is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. NASS is composed of two major programs (1) Agricultural Statistics and (2) Census of Agriculture.

The agency has six strategic goals and eight objectives that contribute to the Departments Strategic goals.

USDA Strategic Goal	Agency Strategic Goal	Agency Objectives	Programs that Contribute	Key Outcome
USDA Strategic Goal 1: Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving	**Agency Goal 1**: Enhance the Competiveness and Sustainability of Rural and Farm Economies	Objective 1.1: Provide Statistical Data to Promote Efficient Domestic Agricultural Production and Marketing Systems	Agricultural Estimates	
		Objective 1.2: Provide Statistical Data for Risk Management and Financial Tools to Farmers and Ranchers	Census of Agriculture	Key Outcome 1: Ensure high quality statistics for stakeholders
	Agency Goal 2: Conduct the Census of Agriculture to Help Create Opportunities for Growth, Through Sound Agricultural Decision Making	Objective 2.1: Provide Statistically Sound Information for Expanding Economic Opportunities by Conducting the Census of Agriculture To Help Create Opportunities for Growth		Key Outcome 2: Ensure data are relevant and useful to stakeholders
USDA Strategic Goal 2: Ensure our national forests and private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources	**Agency Goal 3**: Protect and Enhance the Nation's Natural Resource Base and Environment	Objective 3.1: Provide Statistical Data in support of Watershed Health to Ensure Clean and Abundant Water	Agricultural Estimates	Key Outcome 3: Ensure timely release of data
		Objective 3.2: Provide Statistical Data to Support Management of Productive Working Cropland.	Census of Agriculture	

USDA Strategic Goal 3: Help America promote agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security	**Agency Goal 4**: Support International Economic Development and Trade Capacity Building Through Technical Assistance **Agency Goal 5:** Support the Growth of Sustainable Agricultural Production	Objective 4.1: Provide Technical Assistance to Improve Agricultural Statistics in Developing and Transitioning Countries Objective 5.1: Provide a rotational organic agriculture data series	Agricultural Estimates Census of Agriculture	Key Outcome 1: Ensure high quality statistics for stakeholders Key Outcome 2: Ensure data are relevant and useful to stakeholders Key Outcome 3: Ensure timely release of data
USDA Strategic Goal 4: Ensure that all of America's children have access to safe, nutritious and balanced meals	**Agency Goal 6**: Support a safe U.S. Food Supply and Agricultural Production	Objective 6.1: Provide Chemical Usage Statistics to Enable Informed Decision Making Using Sound Science in Risk Analysis	Agricultural Estimates	

Key Outcome 1: Ensure high quality statistics for stakeholders.

Measure: Increase the prosperity of rural communities by concentrating and strategically investing in the creation of strong local and regional economies, with a particular emphasis on food systems, renewable energy, broadband-based economies, and rural recreation.

Long-term Performance Measure: Improve the American Customer Satisfaction Index score for providing timely, accurate, and useful statistical products and service.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcomes:

- Agricultural Estimates - NASS maintained its ACSI score with one point reduction from 2004 to 2008. The overall NASS score for customer satisfaction was 76. NASS continually strives to produce quality data by using sound analytical techniques, by using proven methods, and by carefully reviewing the content of all information products. The next ACSI will be conducted in FY 2011.

- Census of Agriculture – With enhanced collaborative efforts from Community Based Organizations NASS improved the coverage of small and disadvantaged operations counted in the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2012 Proposed Resource Level:

- Agricultural Estimates – Procedures have been developed to publish county level livestock estimates and National livestock prices utilizing existing data. This has allowed for these programs to show a budget reduction, while minimizing the impact on data users.

- Census of Agriculture – Preparations to continue a high quality 2012 Census of Agriculture continue. In 2012, NASS will finalize list building efforts by mailing out nearly 1.1 million screening forms in an effort to expand coverage of all farms. This effort minimizes the response burden on individuals not qualifying by the definition of a farm and improves the overall cost and quality of the 2012 Census of Agriculture by eliminating non-farms from the mail list.

Key Outcome 2: Ensure data are relevant and useful to stakeholders.

Measure: Increase the prosperity of rural communities by concentrating and strategically investing in the creation of strong local and regional economies, with a particular emphasis on food systems, renewable energy, broadband-based economies, and rural recreation.

Long-term Performance Measure: The relevance of the report content of NASS products and services as measured by the ACSI score.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

- Agricultural Estimates/Census of Agriculture - NASS has kept abreast of information needs through a variety of means, including data user meetings, advisory committees, attendance at industry meetings, and sponsorship of outreach activities. New data series on organic and energy have recently been implemented based on industry needs. Improvements to reports and data bases like additional data breakouts, improved coverage, and improved timeliness have been made. Special reports or additional categories within existing reports are added to best summarize the constantly changing character of agriculture. With better editing and analysis tools NASS expanded the 2007 census products to include a new Watersheds report.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2012 Proposed Resource Level:

- Agricultural Estimates - Existing data series will continue on livestock county estimates and prices by utilizing already available data sources in lieu of survey data.

- Census of Agriculture - The FY 2012 funding supports final preparations for the Census of Agriculture. This includes collecting data to evaluate coverage levels of the 2012 Census of Agriculture and printing mail packages in preparation for the mail out in December 2012.

Key Outcome 3: Ensure timely release of data.

Measure: Increase the prosperity of rural communities by concentrating and strategically investing in the creation of strong local and regional economies, with a particular emphasis on food systems, renewable energy, broadband-based economies, and rural recreation.

Long-term Performance Measure: Percent of time official reports are released on the date and time pre-specified to data users.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

- Agricultural Estimates/Census of Agriculture - NASS has met its goal regarding release dates in seven of the past ten years.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the FY 2012 Proposed Resource Level:

- Agricultural Estimates/Census of Agriculture - NASS will continue to place a high priority on meeting pre-established release dates.

NASS Efficiency Measure: The increase in the data collection costs per sample unit divided by the annual rate of inflation (measured by the Employment Cost Index) is less than one.

NASS measures timeliness, accuracy, and usefulness. NASS strives to maintain high quality statistics by continually looking to improve, while working to keep costs down when compared to inflation. NASS works to ensure Internal policies and procedures continue to support on-time release of over 500 National reports each year. NASS continually monitors and develops contingency plans to ensure each of it's over 500 reports are prepared and released as scheduled. This ensures everyone has equal access to vital sector information. In the rare instance of an unavoidable technical difficulty that results in the delay of a report, NASS is transparent on notifying all stakeholders of the delay and the rescheduled release date and time. NASS constantly looks for opportunities to maximize available data in producing relevant data series. NASS uses the American Customer Satisfaction Index as well as external peer review evaluations to support and measure its goals.

Strategic Goal Funding Matrix
(On basis of appropriation)
(Dollars in Thousands)

	2010 Actual		2011 Estimated			2012 Estimated	
	Amount	Staff Years	Amount	Staff Years	Increase Decrease	Amount	Staff Years
USDA Strategic Goal 1 - Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving							
Agricultural Estimates	$114,858	727	$114,922	758	+ $140	$114,782	657
Census of Agriculture	35,116	221	37,908	230	+ 3,731	41,639	391
Total, Goal	$149,974	948	$152,830	988	+ $3,871	$156,421	1,048
USDA Strategic Goal 2 - Ensure our national forests and private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources							
Agricultural Estimates	$800	0	$800	0	0	$800	0
Total, Goal	$800	0	$800	0	0	$800	0
USDA Strategic Goal 4 - Ensure that all of America's children have access to safe, nutritious and balanced meals							
Agricultural Estimates	$8,200	56	$8,200	56	0	$8,200	56
Total, Goal	$8,200	56	$8,200	56	0	$8,200	56
Total Available	$158,974	1,004	$161,830	1,044	$3,871	$165,421	1,104

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
Summary of Budget and Performance
Key Performance Outcomes and Measures

Key outcomes and performance measures under the Department's strategic goals for which NASS is requesting an increase are outlined below:

USDA Strategic Goal 1: Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving.

Key Outcomes:

1. Ensure high quality statistics for stockholders.
2. Ensure data are relevant and useful to stakeholders.
3. Ensure timely release of data.

NASS performance measures are based on its mission to provide timely, accurate, and useful agricultural statistics. Each objective of the USDA Strategic Plan to which NASS contributes has a measure for each of the Investment Criteria: Usefulness (relevance), accuracy (quality), and timeliness (performance). These performance measures can be summarized into 3 generic measures:

Key Performance Measures:

Measure 1: Timeliness: Percent of time official reports are released on the date and time pre-specified to data users.
Agricultural statistics are the core of many decisions made in the agriculture sector. If these data are not timely, the disruption and chaos generated would be immeasurable. This performance measure is the same for all of the goals and will be calculated across all NASS reports.
Measure 2: Accuracy: Precision.
These performance measures vary by goal, but get to the root of why NASS is considered a leading provider of agricultural statistics. Precision of data are necessary for stakeholders to be able to rely on the data to make day-to-day management decisions and eliminate unnecessary chaos in the market.
Measure 3: Usefulness: Coverage.
These performance measures vary by goal. Key stakeholders are continuously providing input into the need for data series. This input comes in many forms, and is always monitored to ensure commodity inclusion and coverage is adequate and necessary. Proposed increases in the FY 2012 Department Estimates include list building and collections of data to measure coverage in the 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Key Performance Targets:

Performance Measure	2007 Actual	2008 Actual	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Target	2012 Target
Usefulness – The accuracy and usefulness of the report content of NASS products and services as measured by ACSI 1/ a. Units	Not Measured	82	Not Measured	Not Measured	>84	Not Measured
Timeliness – Percent of time official reports are released on the date and time pre-specified to data users. a. Units	100%	99.6%	99.8%	99.8%	95%	95%

1/ The American Customer Satisfaction Index is only measured every 3 years. However, the usefulness of NASS reports is monitored annually and efforts are continually made to ensure USDA is meeting the growing data needs of its constituents.

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
Summary of Budget and Performance
Full Cost by Department Strategic Goal

USDA Strategic Goal 1: Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	Dollars in thousands		
		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Agricultural Estimates - Discretionary				
	Salary expenses	$75,714	$79,827	$83,148
	Data collection (NASDA)	30,337	30,000	23,000
	Contracts	1,008	991	1,008
	Travel/ Transportation	1,952	2,421	2,464
	Printing	237	243	247
	Hardware/ Software	2,231	269	1,224
	Postage/ Shipping/ Contingencies	1,332	655	2,166
	Indirect Costs	2,047	516	1,525
	Total Costs	**114,858**	**114,922**	**114,782**
	FTE	**727**	**758**	**657**
Census of Agriculture - Discretionary				
	Salary expenses	$20,901	$22,513	$29,560
	Contracts	7,226	3,887	2,665
	Travel/ Transportation	1,391	5,583	2,376
	Printing	349	354	366
	Hardware/software	2,315	2,414	3,221
	Postage/shipping/Contingencies	2	402	442
	Indirect	2,932	2,756	3,008
	Total Costs	**35,116**	**37,908**	**41,639**
	FTE	**221**	**230**	**391**
	Total for USDA Strategic Goal 1	**$149,974**	**$152,830**	**$156,421**
	FTE	**948**	**988**	**1,048**

USDA Strategic Goal 2: Ensure our national forests & private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	Dollars in thousands		
		FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Agricultural Estimates - Discretionary				
	Contracts	$800	$800	$800
	Total Costs	**800**	**800**	**800**
	FTE	**0**	**0**	**0**
	Total for USDA Strategic Goal 2	**$800**	**$800**	**$800**
	FTE	**0**	**0**	**0**

USDA Strategic Goal 4: Ensure that all of America's children have access to safe, nutritious and balanced meals.

PROGRAM	PROGRAM ITEMS	Dollars in thousands FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
Agricultural Estimates - Discretionary				
	Salary expenses	$1,340	$1,340	$1,340
	Contracts	4,442	4,442	4,442
	Travel/ Transportation	955	955	955
	Printing	98	98	98
	Hardware/Software	581	581	581
	Indirect	784	784	784
	Total Costs	**8,200**	**8,200**	**8,200**
	FTE	**56**	**56**	**56**
		8,200		
	Total for USDA Strategic Goal 4	**$8,200**	**$8,200**	**$8,200**
	FTE	**56**	**56**	**56**
TOTAL USDA STRATEGIC GOALS, Agricultural Estimates		**$123,858**	**$123,922**	**$123,782**
	FTEs	**783**	**814**	**713**
TOTAL USDA STRATEGIC GOALS, Census of Agriculture		**$35,116**	**$37,908**	**$41,639**
	FTEs	**221**	**230**	**391**
GRAND TOTAL USDA STRATEGIC GOALS		**$158,974**	**$161,830**	**$165,421**
	FTEs	**1,004**	**1,044**	**1,104**