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PREFACE

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the "Budget" is in regard to the 2024 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2021 and 2022, enacted levels for 2023, and the President's Budget request for 2024. Amounts for 2023 estimated levels include: non-enacted amounts such as Full-Time Equivalent levels, fleet levels, information technology investment levels, recovery levels, transfers in and out, balances available end of year, and obligation levels.

Throughout this publication, the "2018 Farm Bill" is used to refer to the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. Most programs funded by the 2018 Farm Bill are funded through 2023. Amounts shown in 2024 for most Farm Bill programs reflect those confirmed in the baseline.

Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, sequestration is included in the numbers for mandatory programs in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

AGENCY-WIDE

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 is 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 (COA) provides comprehensive national, State and county data as well as selected data for Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa Islands. 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 (Title 7 U.S. Code 2204g).

Agricultural Estimates Programs (AEP)

In the AEP, NASS annually publishes approximately 450 agricultural statistical national reports and thousands of additional agricultural statistical State reports, covering more than 120 crops, 45 livestock items, and 12 major economic and environmental categories. These releases are complemented by State agricultural statistical releases. These basic and objective data are critical to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, expenses, and income sectors of agriculture. NASS uses scientifically designed surveys to provide the basis for developing estimates of production, supply price, and other aspects of the agricultural economy. Officially USDA national, State, and county estimates and statistical 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; prices received and paid by farmers; agricultural chemical use; and on other subjects as needed. The regional offices forward the estimates to NASS headquarters where they are combined and released at preannounced scheduled times to the press and public through the Agricultural Statistics Board. The statistical data provided by NASS enhances the competitiveness and sustainability of rural farm economics by leveling the playing field. All parties have equal access to official statistics. NASS regularly surveys thousands of operators of farms, ranches, and agribusiness who provide information on a confidential basis. The necessity of protecting respondent confidentiality and ensuring the impartiality of official agricultural statistics and universal accessibility at predetermined and publicized dates and times are addressed by having the Federal government produce these statistics.

Census of Agriculture Programs (COA)

The Census of Agriculture is taken every five 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. The Census of Agriculture data collection is conducted in close cooperation with the Nation's agricultural user group and farmer organizations. The Census of Agriculture ensures that the list frame used for sampling records for surveys is current and is also utilized for the Agricultural Estimates program as well as the reimbursable survey program. Under the Census of Agriculture appropriation in 2015, NASS started publishing the Current Agricultural Industrial Reports (CAIR). NASS continues preparations for the 2022 Census of Agriculture.

Work Performed for Others

NASS lends technical expertise and conducts surveys for other Federal agencies, State governments, and private organizations on a reimbursable basis. Through the reimbursable program, 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 Census of Agriculture is essential to the reimbursable program and provides a current list frame to draw sampling records from which to do client work.

NASS maintains a central office in Washington, D.C., a National Operations Center in St. Louis, Missouri, and a network of 12 regional field offices that serve all 50 States operating through cooperative agreements with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) or universities. As of September 30, 2022, there were 820 permanent full-time employees, including 371 in the headquarters office and 449 in field offices.

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTES

Table NASS-1. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2021 Actual	FTE	2022 Actual	FTE	2023 Estimated	FTE	2024 Estimated	FTE
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	$183,921	715	$190,162	729	$211,076	784	$241,119	744
Total Adjusted Appropriation	183,921	715	190,162	729	211,076	784	241,119	744
Balance Available, SOY	250	-	176	-	182	-	-	-
Recoveries, Other	11,906	-	9,921	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available	196,077	715	200,259	729	211,258	784	241,119	744
Balance Available, EOY	-176	-	-182	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations	195,901	715	200,077	729	211,258	784	241,119	744
Other USDA:								
AMS, pesticide cert. and base month	1,605	6	1,236	6	1,397	6	1,236	7
ARS, Nutrient Data Laboratory	210	1	170	-	-	-	-	-
APHIS	510	-	531	-	121	-	531	-
ERS	8,992	39	5,896	39	9,041	39	5,896	40
FAS	261	-	650	1	810	1	650	1
FS	284	-	93	-	99	-	93	-
FSA	6,462	35	6,401	35	6,371	35	6,401	36
NRCS	3,412	6	3,000	6	16,000	11	3,000	8
OCIO	302	-	219	-	-	-	219	-
RMA	1,500	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
WAOB, Lock-up	11	-	18	-	17	-	18	-
WCF	-	-	4,750	6	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous USDA Reimbursable	-	-	20	-	51	-	20	-
Total, Other USDA	23,549	92	22,984	93	33,907	92	18,064	92
Total, Agriculture Available	219,626	807	223,243	822	245,165	876	259,183	836
Other Federal Funds:								
American Peanut Council	214	1	-	-	225	1	-	-
Census Bureau	-	-	-	-	25	-	-	-
DOI, BLM grazing fees survey	79	-	79	1	82	1	79	2
Health & Human Services	206	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
NASA	-	-	-	-	78	-	-	-
United Soybean Council	25	-	-	-	25	-	-	-
US International Trade Comm	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
USGS (RDD)	-	-	5	-	5	-	5	-
Total, Other Federal	534	2	84	1	440	2	84	2
Non-Federal Funds:								
State Agencies - survey work	2,398	12	3,304	12	3,646	12	3,600	12
Total, Non-Federal	2,398	12	3,304	12	3,646	12	3,600	12
Total Available, NASS	222,558	821	226,631	835	249,251	890	262,867	850

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTES

Table NASS-2. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs

Item	2021 Actual			2022 Actual			2023 Estimated			2024 Estimated		
	D.C.	Field	Total	D.C.	Field	Total	D.C.	Field	Total	D.C.	Field	Total
SES	9	1	10	9	1	10	9	1	10	9	1	10
SL	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-15	22	16	38	24	13	37	22	16	38	22	16	38
GS-14	61	61	122	70	59	129	61	61	122	61	61	122
GS-13	195	56	251	198	59	257	195	56	251	195	56	251
GS-12	30	191	221	30	173	203	30	191	221	30	191	221
GS-11	15	18	33	15	22	37	15	18	33	15	18	33
GS-10	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-9	15	35	50	15	47	62	15	35	50	15	35	50
GS-8	10	23	33	5	35	40	10	23	33	10	23	33
GS-7	5	43	48	3	28	31	5	43	48	5	43	48
GS-6	1	4	5	-	3	3	1	4	5	1	4	5
GS-5	3	16	19	-	3	3	3	16	19	3	16	19
GS-4	-	8	8	-	4	4	-	8	8	-	8	8
GS-3	-	3	3	-	2	2	-	3	3	-	3	3
Total Permanent	368	475	843	371	449	820	368	475	843	368	475	843
Unfilled, EOY	-		-			-			-			-
Total Perm. FT EOY.	368	475	843	371	449	820	368	475	843	368	475	843
FTE	354	467	821	375	460	835	382	468	850	382	468	850

Note: In addition to those numbers above, there are temporary positions as well. 2023 does not include the 40 temporary positions for Census of Agriculture.

VEHICLE FLEET

Motor Vehicle Fleet

All passenger motor vehicles operated by NASS are located at various field offices and are assigned based on approved program needs and geographic region. NASS uses its fleet to conduct agricultural statistics programs through its 12 regional statistical offices and 33 statistical offices that serve all 50 States. The NASS fleet is comprised primarily of sport utility vehicles (SUVs) that allow passengers and equipment to travel easily to farms, ranches, fields and trade shows. Among the 12 regional offices and 33 State offices, there are 7 NASS owned vehicles and 42 vehicles leased from General Services Administration (GSA). While all 12 NASS regional offices and 33 State offices require the use of motor vehicles, it is often more cost-effective to acquire vehicles through existing cooperative agreements with the National State Departments of Agriculture, through leases from State motor pools, or via rental agreements. Field offices monitor and track vehicles' use and costs. Where possible NASS uses short term rental and shared motor pools. The use of common carrier is not feasible. The ability to reach the nation's farms, ranches, and fields is crucial to the NASS mission and for ensuring data are collected and reported accurately.

Changes to Motor Vehicle Fleet

At the end of 2022, NASS had 49 vehicles; 7 owned and 42 GSA leased vehicles.

Impediments to Managing the Motor Vehicle Fleet

There are no identified impediments to managing the motor vehicle fleet in the most cost-effective manners reported accurately.

	Sedans and Station Wagons	Vans	SUVs	Light Trucks 4X2	Light Trucks 4X4	Medium Duty Vehicles	Buses	Heavy Duty Vehicles	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs
2018 End of Year Operating Inventory	1	3	21	-	24	1	-	-	50	$238,000
2021 End of Year Operating Inventory	1	3	20	-	24	1	-	-	49	247,635
2022 Planned Acquisitions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2022 Planned Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2022 End of Year Operating Inventory	1	3	20	-	24	1	-	-	49	230,320
2023 Planned Acquisitions	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	
2023 Planned Disposals	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	
2023 End of Year Operating Inventory	1	3	20	-	24	1	-	-	49	260,250
2024 Planned Acquisitions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2024 Planned Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2024 End of Year Operating Inventory	1	3	20	-	24	1	-	-	49	294,060

Table NASS-3. Statement of Proposed Purchase of Passenger Motor Vehicles

Fiscal Year	Net Active Fleet, SOY	Disposals	Replacements	Additions	Total Acquisitions	Net Active Fleet, EOY
2021.....	49	-	-	-	-	49
2022.....	49	-	-	-	-	49
2023.....	49	1	1	-	-	49
2024.....	49	-	-	-	-	49

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

Table NASS-4. Shared Funding Projects (thousands of dollars)

Item	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Estimated	2024 Estimated
Working Capital Fund:				
Administrative Services:				
Ask USDA Contact Center	-	-	$101	$105
Material Management Service	299	154	134	141
Mail and Reproduction Services	180	261	311	308
Integrated Procurement Systems	69	63	68	70
Personnel Security Document	-	-	37	42
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems	9	11	12	14
Subtotal	557	489	663	680
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center	284	334	356	337
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center	231	216	237	245
Financial Management Systems	-	23	-	-
Internal Control Support Services	55	60	50	53
Financial Management Support Services	960	931	1,239	1,325
Subtotal	1,246	1,230	1,526	1,623
Information Technology:				
Client Experience Center	8,003	8,736	7,481	7,953
Depart. Administration Information Technology Office	-	1	1	1
Digital Infrastructure Services Center	7,541	3,473	4,911	5,032
	-	-	369	385
Enterprise Data and Analytics Services	-	-	2,501	410
Enterprise Network Services	3,332	2,747	3,117	3,040
Subtotal	18,876	14,957	18,380	16,821
Office of the Executive Secretariat	4	5	12	12
Total, Working Capital Fund	20,967	17,014	20,939	19,475
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Advisory Committee Liaison Services	2	2	3	3
Agency Partnership Outreach	63	53	65	65
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility	-	-	17	17
Human Resources Priority Goals Program	-	-	33	33
Medical Services	83	78	91	91
National Capital Region Interpreting Services	-	18	59	59
Office of Customer Experience	89	73	26	26
Personnel and Document Security Program	16	14	-	-
Physical Security	39	35	37	37
Security Detail	42	38	42	42
Security Operations Program	60	52	57	57
Talent Group	-	-	29	29
TARGET Center	11	11	14	14
USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services	50	37	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs	456	410	476	476
E-Gov:				
Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business	1	1	1	1
E-Rulemaking	3	9	-	-
Financial Management Line of Business	18	1	1	1
Geospatial Line of Business	13	13	13	13
Human Resources Line of Business	3	2	2	2
Hiring Assessment Tool	-	2	-	-
Total, E-Gov	38	28	17	17
Agency Total	21,461	17,452	21,432	19,968

ADVERTISING EXPENDITURES

There are no contracts for advertising expenses to report.

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ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets

Salaries and Expenses

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, [$211,076,000]$241,119,000, of which up to [$66,413,000]$80,883,000 shall be available until expended for the Census of Agriculture. *Provided*, that amounts made available for the Census of Agriculture may be used to conduct the Current Agricultural Industrial Report surveys subject to 7 U.S.C. 2204g(d) and (f)*;Provided further,* That the appropriations hereunder shall be available for the Experienced Services Program at the National Agricultural Statistics Service (16 U.S.C. 3851).

Change Description

The first change (line 2 and 3 of paragraph 1) deletes the 2023 appropriation amount and replaces it with the 2024 appropriation amount.

The *second change* (line 5 and 6 of paragraph1) adds language included in the 2024 Budget for the experienced services program.

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table -NASS 5. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (In dollars)

Item	Amount
Estimate, 2023	$211,076,000
Change in Appropriation	+ 30,043,000
Budget Estimate, 2024	241,119,000

PROJECT STATEMENTS

Table NASS-6. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTE)

Item	2021 Actual	FTE	2022 Actual	FTE	2023 Estimated	FTE	2024 Estimated	FTE	Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.	Chg Key
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Agricultural Estimates	$137,621	485	$143,312	499	$144,663	514	$160,236	514	+$15,573	-	(1)
Census of Agriculture	46,300	230	46,850	230	66,413	270	80,883	230	+14,470	-40	(2)
Subtotal	183,921	715	190,162	729	211,076	784	241,119	744	+30,043	-40	
Recoveries, Other	11,906	-	9,921	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bal. Available, SOY	250	-	176	-	182	-	-	-	-182	-	
Total Available	196,077	715	200,259	729	211,258	784	241,119	744	+29,861	-40	
Bal. Available, EOY	-176	-	-182	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Obligations	195,901	715	200,077	729	211,258	784	241,119	744	+29,861	-40	

1/The discrepancy between project statement and Max schedule X is the reimbursable.

Table NASS-7. Project Statement on Basis of Obligations (thousands of dollars, FTE)

Item	2021 Actual	FTE	2022 Actual	FTE	2023 Estimated	FTE	2024 Estimated	FTE	Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.
Discretionary Obligations:										
Agricultural Estimates	$137,621	485	$143,312	499	$144,663	514	$160,236	514	+$15,573	-
Census of Agriculture	58,280	230	56,765	230	66,595	270	80,883	230	+14,288	-40
Subtotal Disc Obligations	195,901	715	200,077	729	211,258	784	241,119	744	+29,861	-40
Total Obligations	195,901	715	200,077	729	211,258	784	241,119	744	+29,861	-40
Balances Available, EOY	+176		+182							
Total Bal. Available, EOY	176		182		-				-	-
Total Available	196,077	715	200,259	729	211,258	784	241,119	744	+29,861	-40
Recoveries, Other	-11,906	-	-9,921	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, SOY	-250	-	-176	-	-182	-	-	-	+182	-
Total Appropriation	183,921	715	190,162	729	211,076	784	241,119	744	+30,043	-40

1/The discrepancy between project statement and Max schedule X is the reimbursable.

Agricultural Estimates Program

Base funding for AEP provides objective data essential to both the public and private sectors of the agriculture industry. AEP base funding will be used to continue collecting integrated surveys and estimates used for approximately 450 agricultural statistical reports that:

- Directly impact the market,
- Directly contribute to the Federal Principle Economic Indicators of the United States,
- Provide data for which NASS reports are the only publicly available objective sources of information,
- Support USDA program delivery, and
- Have specific legislative requirements for release.

Providing market information was one of the USDA key missions when it was created in 1862. Critical market-sensitive data are used by the commodity and agricultural markets to operate efficiently, providing a fair and equitable environment for price discovery in the marketplace. Without a federal provision of objective data available for the U.S. and world markets, key market information would be in the hands of a few. Individual producers and ranchers would be at a disadvantage compared to those who have resources to pay for information, and markets could be exposed to manipulation.

Funds will be used for salaries and benefits, travel and transportation, rental payments, communications and utilities, printing and reproduction, goods and services from non-federal and federal sources, research and development, equipment, operation and maintenance of equipment, and supplies and materials.

The NASS AEP is an integrated program; most report costs cannot be itemized as separate costs for a single report. For example, the June Area, Crops, and Objective Yield surveys provide direct estimates or are a component of data collection and estimation for the following publications: June Acreage; Cattle Inventory; Small Grains Summary; Crop Production Summary; Hogs & Pigs Inventory; Sheep Inventory; Farm Production Expenses; Agricultural Land Values; Farms, Land in Farms, and Livestock Operations.

As with base funding, the increases and decreases shown below support the mission, vision, and goals of the agency. The funding changes are requested for the following items:

The numbers and letters of the following listing relates to values in the Change (Chg) Key column of the Project Statement:

(1) An increase of $15,573,000 ($144,663,000 and 514 FTE's available in 2023).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

a. An increase of $3,561,000 for 2024 Pay. This increase will support the annualization of the 2023 4.6 percent Cost of Living pay increase and the 2024 5.2 percent Cost of Living pay increase. This amount will enable NASS to maintain staffing levels that are critical to achieving the agency's principal goal to assist rural communities in creating prosperity, so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving. Approximately 64 percent of NASS' budget is in support of personnel compensation.

b. An increase of $8,000,000 to support climate science activities. This amount will support enhancements to our existing geospatial program. NASS is creating dynamic, high-performance computing capabilities within USDA's cloud and analytics platform which allows NASS to both leverage and automate the flow of data from a wide variety of sources, including administrative, geospatial, and economic data to improve the timeliness and quality of planted acreage estimates. The timeliness of these estimates is critical to supporting USDA's response to extreme weather events.

c. An increase of $4,012,000 to support inflationary costs in the Agriculture Estimates Program. This amount will support increased costs for printing, mailing, and data collection across all NASS surveys. These costs have risen significantly since 2019 and this funding increase will allow NASS to continue programs at the existing levels.

Census of Agriculture Program

The Census of Agriculture (COA) is conducted every five years to obtain agricultural statistics for each county, State and the Nation. The Census is the leading source of statistics about the Nation's agricultural production and the only source of consistent, comparable data at the county, State and national levels. The Census is authorized by law under Title 7, U.S. code 2204g and is conducted in close cooperation with the Nation's agricultural user groups and farmer organizations.

Continuation of the COA Program is critical because funding below the base level would result in:

- A data gap that hinders NASS ability to complete the COA.
- Lack of COA data used by public and private decision-makers, including USDA and Congress, to make sound, well-informed, and effective policy, production and marketing decisions.
- Lack of COA data that is vital to USDA programs in the Economic Research Service, Agricultural Research Service, the World Agricultural Outlook Board, Foreign Agricultural Service, Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and Rural Development.
- Difficulty producing other NASS reports. If the COA is not completed, NASS will not have a current list frame for conducting its ongoing surveys in the Agricultural Estimates program, census follow-on surveys, and reimbursable surveys as well.
- The COA Program is conducted over a five-year cycle of activities. Annual and Quinquennial Census of Agriculture special study follow-on surveys are a vital part of the Census of Agriculture Program and can include: the annual Current Agricultural Industrial Reports; and the Quinquennial Special Studies: the Census of Aquaculture; the Census of Horticulture; the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey; the Tenure, Ownership and Transition of Land Survey; Organic Production Survey; and Local Foods Special Study.

  The entire COA Program is broken down into five general categories. Due to the cyclical nature of the Quinquennial Census of Agriculture Program, appropriated funds will shift among these five broader categories over the five year cycle of activities. Research, evaluation and analysis are continually being conducted during the entire cycle of the Quinquennial Census of Agriculture throughout all aspects to ensure data quality and efficiency.

(2) An Increase of $14,470,000 in salaries and expenses for the Census of Agriculture ($66,413,000 and 270 FTE's available in 2023).

a. An increase of $2,374,000 for 2024 Pay. This increase will support the annualization of the 2023 4.6 percent Cost of Living pay increase and the 2024 5.2 percent Cost of Living pay increase. This amount will enable NASS to maintain staffing levels that are critical to achieving the agency's principal goal to assist rural communities in creating prosperity, so they are self-sustaining, repopulating and economically thriving. Approximately 64 percent of NASS' budget is in support of personnel compensation.

b. An increase of $12,096,000 for the Census of Agriculture Program to support Modernization Efforts. This increase in the Census of Agriculture account will allow for a total investment of $25 million in 2024. NASS is requesting this funding to advance modernization efforts. NASS' goals to improve customer service, improve access to data, and modernize IT infrastructure serves as the focal point for the Agency Strategic Plan which communicates and defines the future vision for NASS. NASS has identified specific actions that would provide cost savings by moving the agency towards a more modern approach in how we collect, analyze, process, and disseminate data.

   NASS has observed an increasing divide in how key agricultural data is accessed. Many large media and brokerage firms have created subscription services which aggregate publicly accessible data and repackage it so that it is more readily consumed by farmers and agricultural producers. This inherently creates a disadvantage for small producers who are often minority operators. Restructuring our data, improving access, and better documenting available data will benefit all data users. The Evidence-Based Policy Act of 2018 has mandated that federal agencies improve accessibility to public data sources. This modernization and enhancement will also lessen the digital divide between small and large producers, lower the need for producers to pay for publicly available data, and create more equitable markets by allowing all participants to easily gain insights from the key agricultural information NASS provides through our census and survey programs. NASS conducts the Census of Agriculture every five years and prepares reports covering virtually every facet of U.S. agriculture. NASS' processing and release systems employ several outdated

technology components. This investment will facilitate cybersecurity enhancement and modernization of NASS data release and publications of the Census of Agriculture.

The Census of Agriculture supports program delivery across USDA. The current state of the infrastructure supporting the Census of Agriculture is threatening the agency's ability to deliver a product that meets the needs of data users. Investment in the infrastructure that supports the Census of Agriculture will not only streamline efficiencies within NASS but allow data to be more accessible and usable in the evaluation of USDA program implementation. These improvements will also increase researcher access within and outside of USDA.

Perhaps the most unique and critical aspect of federal statistical agencies, when compared to other public entities, is that to provide a quality product and service we depend on the public to willingly provide information and be engaged participants. Farmers and ranchers are demanding easier, more convenient, and secure ways to submit their farm information. By creating the NASS Respondent Portal, we are allowing a national single point of entry, for respondents to provide information in a convenient, consistent, secure way to NASS surveys.

The Respondent Portal allows current and prospective farmers and ranchers:

- A single front door approach for customer engagement with NASS where producers can efficiently report data to our censuses and surveys
- Access to producer-specific analytics, based on the type of farming enterprise or household derived from NASS estimates and external data sources
- Demonstrate the relationship between the survey information respondents provide and the reports NASS produces
- Explore ways farmers and ranchers can improve equitable access to agricultural statistics

In 2024, efforts will turn to modernizing the underlying systems supporting the data collection component of the Respondent Portal to support data collection for all NASS surveys including the 2027 Census of Agriculture and Census Follow-On Studies, such as the Irrigation and Water Management Survey and the Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land Survey. Migrating to a cloud-based computing structure, consolidating data collection databases, and increasing processing power will allow NASS to leverage previously reported data, secondary sourced data, and geospatial data in turn reducing the reporting burden on the producer. Full migration to a cloud environment will better position NASS to receive high volumes of web survey responses and retire legacy Census data collection systems.

NASS needs sustained investments over the next 3 years to update the infrastructure that supports our primary functions of data collection and data dissemination Failure to access funding will delay modernization efforts into the future. This poses a significant risk to the collection and dissemination of the 2027 Census of Agriculture which is the primary means by which the Department measures metrics pertaining to equity. An estimated 89 percent of farms are small farms have under $350,000 in sales. Nearly 58 percent of farms have less than $10,000 in sales. Many of these small farms are represented by groups such as American Indian producers which have no other data outside of the Census of Agriculture to represent their population's contributions to agriculture. USDA would have a difficult time determining if USDA programs are serving small, minority, or any type of farm if there is no measure of the population. If funding is not received by 2024, it will significantly increase the risk that NASS will not be able successfully collect and disseminate data for the 2027 Census of Agriculture. There is also significant risk of current system failure, impacting our ability to perform data collections or produce scheduled reports critical to market decisions. Additionally, the potential of security breaches is constantly increasing, and current systems do not support the latest cyber security protections. The modernization of systems to support the Census of Agriculture provides a secondary benefit in that we can utilize those same dissemination systems to present all of NASS data in a more user-friendly and modern way. Producers can and do access private sector data, however; private firms are able to take public data and repackage it into a more user-friendly modern way for their own use and at a cost to others. Larger producers can bear that expense, but it is a much greater burden on smaller producers which places them at a disadvantage. Regardless, both small and large producers are being charged for a public good because NASS is currently unable to provide it in a way that is readily consumable through modern technologies.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Summary of Proposed Legislation

Program: Experienced Services Program, 16 U.S.C. 3851

Current legislative authority to be amended: 2024 Budget Request – Salaries and Expenses

Proposed legislative language (general provision): *Provided further*, That appropriations hereunder shall be available for the Experienced Services Program at NASS (16 U.S.C. 3851)

Proposal: The reason for this proposed legislative language is that funding has to be authorized, in accordance with the authorizing legislation at 16 U.S.C. 3851(c) 3.

Rationale: The proposed change will achieve the Secretary of Agriculture's requirements set forth in 16 U.S.C. 3851, which specifies that the Secretary shall establish an Experienced Services Program (program) to enter into agreements on behalf of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) with nonprofit private agencies and organizations eligible to receive Cooperative Agreements under the Community Service Senior Opportunities Act (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.). Participants for the program are to provide technical, professional, or administrative services, as applicable, to support the Research Education and Economics (REE) Mission Area, including NASS, and such services include: supporting agricultural research and information; advancing scientific knowledge relating to agriculture; enhancing access to agricultural information; providing statistical information and research results to farmers, ranchers, agribusiness, and public officials; and assisting research, education, and extension programs in land-grant colleges and universities (as defined in section 3103 of Title 7).

Goal: To use Salaries and Expenses for the Experienced Services Program

Change in Funding and Outlays (thousands of dollars)

Item	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	10 Year Total
Budget Authority	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Outlays	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTE

Table NASS-8. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTE (thousands of dollars, FTE)

State/Territory/Country	2021 Actual	FTE	2022 Actual	FTE	2023 Estimated	FTE	2024 Estimated	FTE
Alabama	$292	2	$307	2	$310	2	$326	2
Alaska	203	1	213	1	220	1	231	1
Arizona	291	2	306	2	312	2	328	2
Arkansas	309	19	324	19	330	19	347	19
California	3,116	26	3,334	26	3,300	26	3,531	26
Colorado	4,188	33	4,397	33	4,545	33	4,863	33
District of Columbia	135,419	255	135,866	269	142,070	284	167,585	284
Florida	424	3	445	3	455	3	478	3
Georgia	2,888	21	3,090	21	3,050	21	3,203	21
Hawaii	349	2	366	2	380	2	399	2
Idaho	349	2	366	2	380	2	399	2
Illinois	336	2	353	2	360	2	378	2
Indiana	358	2	376	2	380	2	399	2
Iowa	3,134	27	3,291	27	3,331	27	3,498	27
Kansas	289	2	303	2	312	2	328	2
Kentucky	3,501	27	3,676	27	3,702	27	3,887	27
Louisiana	308	2	323	2	330	2	347	2
Maryland	161	1	169	1	180	1	189	1
Michigan	2,803	26	2,999	26	3,200	26	3,360	26
Minnesota	310	2	326	2	340	2	357	2
Mississippi	300	2	315	2	345	2	362	2
Missouri	16,544	87	17,702	87	22,000	127	23,540	87
Montana	567	5	595	5	612	5	643	5
Nebraska	3,712	31	3,972	31	3,902	31	4,175	31
Nevada	225	1	236	1	250	1	263	1
New Hampshire	362	3	380	3	390	3	410	3
New Jersey	351	2	369	2	380	2	399	2
New Mexico	309	2	324	2	344	2	361	2
New York	309	2	324	2	344	2	361	2
North Carolina	551	2	579	2	600	2	630	2
North Dakota	314	2	330	2	345	2	362	2
Ohio	271	2	285	2	295	2	310	2
Oklahoma	520	3	546	3	555	3	583	3
Oregon	336	2	353	2	370	2	389	2
Pennsylvania	3,372	34	3,608	34	3,577	34	3,827	34
South Carolina	346	2	363	2	380	2	399	2
South Dakota	289	2	303	2	315	2	331	2
Tennessee	267	2	280	2	310	2	326	2
Texas	3,409	32	3,579	32	3,605	32	3,857	32
Utah	331	2	348	2	355	2	373	2
Virginia	304	2	319	2	330	2	347	2
Washington	2,929	28	3,134	28	3,102	28	3,319	28
West Virginia	294	2	309	2	320	2	336	2
Wisconsin	320	2	336	2	355	2	373	2
Wyoming	341	4	358	4	390	4	410	4
Obligations	195,901	715	200,077	729	211,258	784	241,119	744
Bal. Available, EOY	176	-	182	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	196,077	715	200,259	729	211,258	784	241,119	744

Please note: The FTE counts exclude reimbursable.

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS

Table NASS-9 Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)

Item No.	Item	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Estimated	2024 Estimated
	Personnel Compensation:				
	Washington D.C.	$44,779	$42,308	$44,070	$46,293
	Personnel Compensation, Field	37,525	38,873	40,477	42,558
11	Total personnel compensation	82,304	81,181	84,547	88,851
12	Personal benefits	27,712	30,660	31,933	33,564
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	16	41	15	15
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits	110,032	111,882	116,495	122,430
	Other Objects:				
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	95	500	1,000	1,000
22.0	Transportation of things	1,145	1,009	1,000	1,000
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	6,472	6,370	6,600	6,600
23.2	Rental payments to others	2,261	2,934	4,113	5,000
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	5,039	5,153	6,000	6,000
24.0	Printing and reproduction	176	305	300	300
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	5,844	4,934	5,000	5,000
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources	4,200	5,737	7,000	10,784
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources	2,548	4,398	6,000	11,000
25.4		6,428	7,917	8,000	10,000
25.41	Other Services from non-Fed. Sources NASDA	40,000	33,549	33,000	40,000
25.5	Research and development contracts	9,000	11,000	11,000	11,000
25.7	Operation and maintenance of equipment	930	2,134	3,000	8,000
26.0	Supplies and materials	500	516	732	1,000
31.0	Equipment	1,226	1,734	2,013	2,000
42.0	Insurance Claims and Indemnities	5	5	5	5
	Total, Other Objects	85,869	88,195	94,763	118,689
99.9	Total, new obligations	195,901	200,077	211,258	241,119
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)	$2,117	$2,100	$2,100	$2,100
	Information Technology Investments:				
	Major Investment 1				
	Related Mission Area PPA #1				
11	Internal Labor	10,494	10,500	11,300	11,300
	External Labor (Contractors)	14,000	13,591	13,750	34,324
25.2	Outside Services (Consulting)	-	890	959	959
	Total Major Investment 1	24,494	24,981	26,009	46,583
	Mission Area Standard Investment Totals	30,396	31,523	31,409	31,409
		15,304	14,423	14,487	16,413
	Total Non-Major Investment	45,700	45,946	45,896	47,822
	Total IT Investments	**70,194**	**70,927**	**71,905**	**94,405**
	Position Data:				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position	$190,102	$194,855	$199,726	$205,718
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position	$91,505	$93,793	$96,138	$99,022
	Average Grade, GS Position	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5

The reason of discrepancy between object class and MAX schedule O is the reimbursable.

STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (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, which consists of the Agricultural Estimates and the Census of Agriculture programs. The NASS statistical data 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 conducts its survey work through 12 regional field offices (RFOs) and 33 State offices serving all 50 States.

Annually, NASS publishes approximately 450 national agricultural statistical reports, covering over 120 crops, 45 livestock items, and 12 major economic and environmental categories, complemented by additional State agricultural statistical releases. These basic and objective data are critical to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, expenses, income, and input sectors of agriculture. These statistics promote a level playing field in production agriculture with impartial information available to everyone at a predetermined and publicized date and time.

Agricultural Estimates Program

NASS produced six of USDA's eight principal economic indicator reports: Agricultural Prices, Crop Production, Grain Stocks, Cattle on Feed, Hogs and Pigs, and Acreage. These are broadly used in agribusiness and market analyses, including for decision making by buyers and sellers of agricultural commodities.

Geospatial Program

Remote Sensing for Enhanced Crop Acreage Estimates

NASS uses remote sensing to enhance its crop acreage estimates as a major input in constructing the nation's area sampling frame – the statistical foundation for collecting agricultural estimates with complete coverage of U.S. agriculture. The Cropland Data Layer (CDL) is the agency's core remote sensing product; it provides crop-specific land cover information and serves as the basis of acreage estimates. The CDL shows the type and location of crops planted in a particular season using freely available mid-resolution satellite imagery, such as Landsat 9 and Copernicus Programme Sentinel 2a and 2b; high-quality ground reference data; and efficient and robust land cover classification software.

Remote Sensing for Yield Assessments

Remotely-sensed, modis-based, normalized difference vegetation index-based (ndvi) forecasts of corn and soybean yield are derived at the speculative region, and for states within that region, in parallel with operational survey processes. The results are provided to the agricultural statistics board for their consideration in producing reports. After the growing season's conclusion, county-level yield estimates for corn and soybeans are generated and further refined by integrating land surface temperature.

Remote Sensing for Disaster Assessments

Geospatial decision-support products were derived and provided for rapid response to assess the impact on agricultural disaster areas from fire and flooding and identify potential crop losses. Wildfires in Kentucky and Kansas in December 2021 and Texas in March 2022 were assessed for potential crop loss. Midwestern flooding in July/August, followed by Hurricane Fiona over Puerto Rico and Hurricane Ian over Florida in September were assessed for flooding and potential agricultural losses. All disaster assessment analyses were performed within Google Earth Engine. The geospatial data assessment products were derived from remote sensing satellites such as MODIS, Sentinel-1 Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), Sentinel-2 optical, PlanetScope, and the NASS Crop Condition and Soil Moisture Analytics (Crop-CASMA) application. Supporting fire information was provided by the National Interagency Fire Center, Puerto Rico validation data from FEMA WAZE Alerts, and hurricane data from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Hurricane Center. Cropland disaster assessments were shared with the USDA Operations Center Emergency Programs Division and the USDA Office of the Chief Economist to be included in their assessment efforts. The disaster assessment reports, maps, crop inundation raster layers, metadata and a methodology report were posted on the NASS website for public dissemination at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Research_and_Science/Disaster-Analysis/index.php. Final reports, excluding in-season crop and pasture hay estimates, were posted on the NASS web site for public use.

Research and Development

Integrated Modeling and Geospatial Estimation System (IMAGES)

Census of Agriculture Program

Currently, the NASS Agricultural Statistics Board (ASB) receives estimates and information from multiple sources for some of its programs. These include survey estimates, administrative data, remote sensing estimates, and weather information. The ASB combines this information using expert opinion to produce official estimates. NASS initiated a pilot study in Illinois to explore the use of all relevant data, including survey, remote sensing, administrative, weather, and precision agriculture data, to produce modeled, early-season estimates of planted acreage.

To support that effort, in 2022**,** NASS continued utilization of a high-performance computing environment in the USDA EDAPT environment and automating the collection and integration of these diverse data. Further progress in automation is planned for 2023. In 2022, modeled pre-season forecasts and in-season estimates of acreage planted to corn and soybeans were produced for the twelve states with the largest corn and soybean production, referred to as the speculative states, and provided to the NASS ASB. As part of the effort to geo-reference farms in the corn and soybean speculative states, farms were added to the NASS list frame, thereby improving its coverage. This was accomplished by adding administrative records from FSA and by identifying non-FSA farmland using a new geospatial product known as Crop Sequence Boundaries (CSBs). The CSBs, which are being developed collaboratively with the USDA Economic Research Service, provide agricultural field polygons, including their crop rotation history, for the conterminous U.S. The CSBs serve as a foundation for modeling, improving coverage of the NASS list frame, and facilitating georeferencing of farms. Another geospatial product, the Predictive Cropland Data Layers (PCDLs) were created in March for all states in the conterminous U.S., which is three months earlier than the traditional approach. The PCDLs were used for editing and imputation during the June Area Survey.

In 2023**,** modeling research will continue by incorporating survey data into models for the corn and soybean speculative states; farms in all U.S. conterminous states will be georeferenced; automation and standardization of data processes will be enhanced and planning for the integration of these new products and processes into the production process will continue.

Census of Agriculture Program

The Census of Agriculture (COA) is conducted every 5 years and provides comprehensive data series at the national, state, and county level. It provides a snapshot of the agriculture economy including the number of farms, characteristics of farm producers, 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 main results of the 2017 Census of Agriculture were published in fiscal year 2019. Fiscal year 2022 is the final planning year before beginning data collection for the 2022 Census of Agriculture.

Census of Agriculture

2017 Census of Agriculture. The final product from the 2017 Census of Agriculture was released in July 2022. The History of the 2017 Census of Agriculture documents, in great detail, the planning and execution of the 2017 Census of Agriculture. There are no official agricultural statistics included in this publication.

Census of Agriculture Special Tabulations. As a compliment to the data provided from the Census of Agriculture, NASS receives requests from the public for a variety of reformulations of available data. In response to data user requests, NASS completed and made public twenty-six special tabulations that included data on specialty crops, farm economics, farmer demographics, and geographic disbursements of livestock inventories.

2022 Census of Agriculture Preparations. NASS continues preparations for the 2022 Census of Agriculture. Planning and development for the 2022 Census of Agriculture was initiated with the formation of two teams: one responsible for the content (Content Team) and one responsible for development and testing of the forms and data collection (Data Collection Testing Team). The following highlights the planning activities in 2022.

- List Building for 2022 Census of Agriculture - Counting over 2.2 million farms takes a fully implemented and routinely performed list building effort. During 2022, NASS finalized the mail list for the Census of Agriculture. The final Ag pre-screener was collected and processed from approximately 1,100,000 operations. This successful effort resulted in the addition of over 200,000 potential farms to the census mail list. Equally important, these efforts eliminated over 300,000 potential farms that responded with no agriculture activity. The improved quality of the census mail list will result in more efficient and timely data collection.

- During 2022, work continued to improve the electronic data reporting (EDR) instrument used for capturing online Census of Agriculture responses. These efforts began in 2015 with the initiation of a new responsive web-design instrument. Responsive web designed instruments provide an optimal viewing and interactive experience while reducing burden for respondents. Based on results from testing, NASS continued to focus on enhancements throughout 2022.

- NASS completed the forms design process in 2022 for the preparations of mail packets. This includes a long form and Puerto Rico. Additional mail materials were developed, including all correspondence letters and instructions to assist respondents in completing their questionnaire.

- NASS also completed work on a customized questionnaire for the American Indian population in the Southwestern United States. This a special emphasis is aimed at increasing coverage of this historically under-served demographic.

- During 2022, NASS completed data collection on over 14,000 area segments designed to improve estimation for farming operations not covered on the mail list. Data from these segments are also used to determine under-coverage for a wide range of farming sectors and farmer demographics.

- NASS started its census marketing campaign with a communications plan. The plan, complete with products and timelines, detailed the four phases of census marketing: Sign Up to be Counted, Census is Coming, Respond Now, and Still Time. The overall campaign began with printed materials and countdown press release, the development of a partner toolkit and partner page for stakeholders/promotion partners on the census website, and the launch of a social media campaign to promote producer and partner awareness and list building. The plan also included stakeholder and sister agency outreach with regular follow-up throughout the phases as well as paid media advertising and freelance articles published in low response rate areas.

- During 2022, NASS hosted a Community Based Organizations (CBO) Workshop. The event hosted 59 participants representing 38 organizations from across the nation with the primary effort to raise awareness for the upcoming 2022 Census of Agriculture. As part of the overall strategy, NASS is focused on improving coverage of minority operations which includes partnering with CBOs.

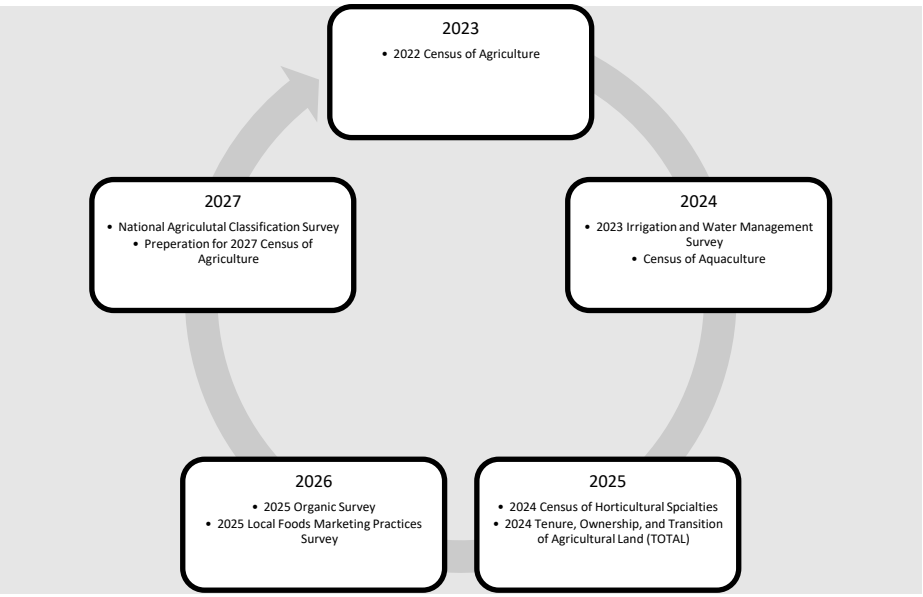
- During 2022, critical IT programming and infrastructure were enhanced and tested to improve and streamline statistical activities that include data coordination, data collection, data processing, data editing, data analysis, imputation, summarization and disclosure.

Census Follow-on Surveys

- ***Local Food Marketing Practices Survey*** – During fiscal year 2022, NASS released the results from the 2020 Local Food Marketing Practices Survey. This survey provides updated metrics on the value of agriculture products sold by marketing practice and marketing channel, as well as the geographic location of production and the distance traveled to market directly to consumers. This Census Special Study, conducted as a follow-on survey to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, is the leading source of detailed data for these agricultural marketing practices.

Census Five Year Plans

Future Census Plans. The chart below shows the planned Census studies for 2024 through 2027. These follow the normal census rotation cycle but are subject to change based on funding and direction provided by policy makers.



ACTIVITIES COVERING BOTH AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES & THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Operational Transformations to Streamline Business Processes

NASS continues to implement its three Strategic Initiatives to better align the agencies resources and effectiveness. The three initiatives link to the Agency's Strategic Plan.

1. Strategic Initiative 1 Customer Centric Data Interface focuses on creating an interface which will provide an opportunity to collect primary-sourced survey data as well as view other harmonized secondary sourced data, allowing respondents to make more informed enterprise-level decisions about their agricultural operation. We will deploy a portal for respondent access to survey information.

    - NASS has continued its ongoing efforts to modernize its customer interfaces, making responding to surveys and accessing NASS data and reports *faster, friendlier, and easier*. This modernization effort also allows NASS to work more efficiently. Modernization will be focused in two main areas, Data Collection and Data Dissemination.
    - During 2022, NASS released the new Respondent Portal in February of 2022 and all new data collections now flow through this modern entry point. Immediate benefits of the portal are:
        - Streamlined authentication process provides a convenient, central point to respond to all NASS surveys.
        - Creating and using a user account allows respondents to see past survey responses.
        - Integration with USDA's Farmers.gov website, allowing farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses to expand their access to multiple USDA agencies' information to make decisions for their operation that are fact based and data driven.
        - Improved performance and speed of the portal.

Incremental development and improvements over the next few years will further meet customer expectations, such as: offer additional options for reporting data to NASS, including an upload feature, and providing a customized digital experience designed around the user's needs and behaviors. Farmers and ranchers will be able to build and save custom homepages to compare their data with other (national, state, county) data.

2. Strategic Initiative 2: Operation Model Re-Imagined focuses on improving the operating model with the goal of providing the same or more output with less inputs.

    During 2022, this team continued to look for continuous process improvements. The first area was using and leveraging new technology such as QR Codes to gain efficiencies. A series of QR Code tests were

completed in the Southern Plains region. A sub-team identified immediate internal QR code uses such as adding them to Objective Yield maps for enumerators and enumerator's training material. Also, adding QR codes for the respondent portal for short simple surveys, and informational pages for respondents. Also, QR Code best practices were identified.

Another sub-team looked at formatting for centralized processing. In 2022, the team identified multiple avenues to make processing/mailing of small or decentralized survey programs more efficient in a hybrid working environment. A new processing method was implemented into production, developed the ability to construct variable data jobs with one mail file. Finally, alternative data collection methods (no mail, pressure sealer only, email only) for some small programs were identified. Improvement efforts on this area are ongoing and are expected to continue in 2023.

3. Strategic Initiative 3: Improving the Data User's Experience. The goal and objective of this project is to modernize and improve the NASS agricultural data user experience by creating access to data which allows users to interact with data at their level of comfort. The first release planned is Milk Production in the new environment and later the Economics and Field Crops Data.

USDA Cybersecurity Performance

NASS continues to maintain a high level of security maintaining current Authority To Operate (ATO) on all its Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA) systems. NASS manages risks in accordance with established Federal cybersecurity regulations. The Agency has started implementing multi-factor authentication across its environment and in the process of transitioning its information technology in accordance with OMB 22-09, *"Moving the U.S. Government Toward Zero Trust Cybersecurity Principles",* ensuring that no actor, system, network, or service operating outside or within the security perimeter is trusted, NASS also continues to enhance its capabilities to ensure compliance with Executive Order 14028, "*Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity*".

Stakeholder Engagement/Information Technology Projects

NASS Twitter Following

In 2022, NASS increased its Twitter following from 47,539 to 57,542, a 21 percent growth in followers for a net gain of 10,004 followers. The @usda_nass Twitter account team produced 701 tweets or replies on accurate, resourceful, and timely topics, including 376 photos or data visualizations, 8 videos, and 125 links. In March, NASS started livestreaming the Agricultural Statistics Board executive briefings on YouTube and streamed 14 ASB briefings live. NASS continued its monthly #StatChat series on Twitter with 25 #StatChats, inviting users to ask questions directly to NASS representatives following crop production, cattle, and hog report releases. The most popular topics by impressions were: Thanking a farmer with turkey data, hemp survey, NACS survey, national hemp report, celebrating Asian producers data, celebrating female producers data, #StatChat Twitter discussions, and other heritage observances incorporating AgCensus data.

Agricultural Statistics Board Livestream Report Briefings

On March 30, 2022, NASS began livestreaming the Secretary of Agriculture's data report briefing for the first time. Data briefings are now streamed on NASS's YouTube channel five minutes after NASS reports are released to the public. Livestreaming improves access for the public, increasing transparency and understanding of NASS's and WAOB's data and processes. For anyone unable to attend a livestream, a recording is posted to YouTube following the data release.

Using Email and Text Communications in Data Collection

As part of NASS's data collection modernization efforts, the NASS Enterprise Messaging Outreach (NEMO) Team worked on expanding communication methods with operators by incorporating electronic options, in accordance with federal regulations, to provide survey reminders with links that facilitate easier access to NASS web instruments and help encourage operators to complete questionnaires in a timely manner. This is a multi-faceted effort involving the development of a custom-built system on the Aura Platform which is integrated with NASS's Survey Management Services (SMS) System, as well as external email validation and FedRamp compliant targeted messaging services. In 2022, the team successfully designed the NEMO System components to effectively facilitate and manage the implementation of electronic messaging through a multi-stage process for message campaign development, approval, and tracking. To minimize contacts, the system is designed to send electronic reminders in real-time only to those who have not yet responded. In conjunction with the email component, NASS also worked to

build its database of operators who consent to texting and plans to use this service in the 2022 Census of Agriculture. In 2023, NASS will complete its policy and standards documentation to manage electronic communication methods and send email and text reminders for the quinquennial Census of Agriculture, as well as selected monthly and quarterly surveys. Since NASS is now utilizing electronic messaging, the agency will work on optimizing its communication strategy with other contact methods. Optimizing strategy can improve relationships with agricultural operators and save agency resources, allowing NASS to concentrate resources where needed. Throughout 2023, NASS will continue to evaluate the analytics and effectiveness of our electronic campaigns to ensure success going forward. Ultimately, this work aims to improve the customer experience with one-click access to NASS web instruments and encourage online completion. Using electronic reminders also costs less than mailed reminders and promotes earlier responses, reducing the need for more expensive follow-up methods.

Using Video Conferencing in Data Collection

In 2022, NASS expanded its communication methods for conducting interviews and outreach via video conferencing (using the Government-licensed Zoom product) as face-to-face interviewing was minimized to ensure the safety of enumerators and agricultural operators. NASS also documented its policy on utilizing video conferencing methods for data collections and implemented this new policy across all its regional offices. While it is anticipated only a small proportion of data collection interviews will be conducted via video, NASS continues to offer this option in 2023 for producers who prefer it or when in person visits are not feasible (e.g., influenza in poultry flocks) to help NASS meet its mission to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

Paradata Analysis for Web Data Collection

Collecting data via a self-administered web instrument poses unique design challenges not present in other interviewer-administered modes. Many factors must be carefully implemented to ensure web surveys are designed effectively to promote high quality data while minimizing burden. In 2022, NASS conducted the Census of Agriculture Web Test and evaluated the corresponding web paradata (e.g., device type, help access, changing answers, where breakoffs occur, browser type, and where errors are triggered). Evaluating the Census of Agriculture web instrument paradata helped NASS gain insight into the user experience across mobile and non-mobile device types and identified problematic areas. Issues found from the analysis of the paradata for the Census Web Test instrument informed changes to the 2022 Census of Agriculture web instrument. In 2023, NASS plans to conduct a web paradata analysis for the 2022 Census of Agriculture and the quarterly Agricultural Survey to gain additional insight into the user experience. These paradata analyses will also help NASS to evaluate questionnaire items that are utilizing non-edited respondent data to minimize respondent burden and study the effectiveness of the non-edited respondent data by reviewing whether respondents change their responses to these questions. Ultimately, this work can help evaluate the customer experience during web collection, assess respondent burden, and inform instrument design to ensure ease in online reporting for the Census of Agriculture as well as NASS survey programs.

Work Performed For Others – Reimbursable Program

Reimbursable Work for Federal, State, and Private Organizations

NASS conducts surveys for and lends technical expertise to other Federal agencies, State governments, and private organizations on a reimbursable basis. Statistics generated meet special needs not covered by the NASS programs. 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. 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.

External Project Agreements

NASS partners extensively with external State and Federal governmental organizations, universities, and agricultural commodity organizations to provide high-quality, rigorous, and standardized statistical consultation. NASS provides statistical services on a fee-for-service basis and fully recovers all costs. To date, NASS has worked on more than 1,312 projects since beginning this centralized process in 2012, which includes about 87 such projects in 2022. NASS relies on the discretion of cooperators to fund these projects; however, the number of projects in 2023 is anticipated to be similar to past years.

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Pesticide Data Program (PDP)

NASS will continue to provide sampling support to AMS and select AMS-PDP samples in 2023. The AMS-PDP Sampling Frame comprises terminal markets and large chain store food distribution centers. The Sampling and Frame Development Section (SFDS) in NASS' Methodology Division compiles the AMS-PDP sampling frame information supplied by State Department of Agriculture agencies prior to selecting the quarterly AMS-PDP samples using a probability-proportional-to-size as well as stratified simple random sample techniques**.** Working with AMS staff and key customers for PDP data (particularly the Environmental Protection Agency), NASS will develop methodology for estimating quantiles of pesticide levels for key pesticide-produce pairs and eventually implement that methodology.

The AMS-PDP uses samples selected by SFDS to collect data on pesticide residue on commodities most commonly consumed by infants and children. The Environmental Protection Agency relies on sample results to conduct dietary risk assessments and to ensure pesticides residues – if any – are at safe levels. USDA uses the data to ascertain the relationship of pesticide residues to agricultural practices, to enhance USDA's Integrated Pest Management objectives and to work with growers to improve agricultural practices.

Agricultural Resources Management Survey (ARMS)

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 I target commodities for the 2022 crop year will be wheat (spring, durum, and winter). Phase II target commodities for the 2022 crop year are spring, durum, and winter wheat for the production practices, cost, and return data (PPCR) and potatoes for the production practices and return data (PPR). The 2023 ARMS Phase III, will focus on calendar year 2022 farm financial data for all types and sizes of farms.

County Cash Rents Survey

Through the 2018 Farm Bill, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) rental rates are based on soil productivity and county average rental rates. USDA may use the NASS survey estimates relating to dryland cash rental rates when determining annual rental rates. NASS is required to conduct a survey no less than once a year on county average market dryland and irrigated cash rental rates. The 2023 County Cash Rents Survey is designed to collect statistically reliable county or state subdivision estimates of average market dry land and irrigated cash rental rates for cropland and pasture; and at least 20,000 acres cropland and pastureland per county. Data collected supports the Farm Service Agency's administration of payments for CRP.

Chemical Use Program

Chemical Use Data is Useful to Federal Agencies and State and Local Governments.

The NASS Chemical Use program provides chemical usage statistics to enable informed, science-based decisions. Through various programs and activities, NASS provides data that other Federal agencies, as well as State and local governments rely on to protect the U.S. food supply, agricultural production and water quality. NASS' agricultural chemical use database is USDA's official source of statistics about on-farm and post-harvest fertilizer and pesticide use and pest management practices. It encompasses surveys looking at chemical use by producers of fruits, vegetables, field crops, livestock, and other animals and crops. The database also includes post-harvest chemical use, obtained by surveying storage facilities, processors, packers, and shippers.

- ***Chemical Use Database***. To create the database, NASS surveys fruit and vegetable producers to determine use of fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, and other pesticides; each chemical produced is classified by its active ingredients. The data collected includes acreage of the targeted commodities grown during the year and treated with chemical applications; the name, amount, and method of application of all chemical products applied; and the operation's pest management practices.

- ***Redesigned Chemical Use Program*** The 2022 Vegetable Chemical Use survey is currently being conducted with data collection continuing through January 2023. The Fruit Chemical Use Survey was last conducted in 2021 and will be conducted again in 2023. Data from the Fruit Chemical Use Survey was released in August 2022. The chemical and fertilizer use survey is also coordinated in conjunction with ARMS for row crops and other crops.

2024 Conservation Practice Adoption Motivation Survey

In 2022, NASS supported USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with a series of surveys to capture and measure the state of their programs. NASS conducted this survey in 2022, information that was asked for the first time from U.S. producers. The survey data will help NRCS, and the US Agriculture sector understand conservation practice adoption and motivation to better examine key factors to help improve NRCS programs. NASS surveyed producers with two questionnaire versions (cropping practices and livestock practices) in 2022. NASS will resume collecting the Conservation Practice Adoption Motivation Survey (CPAMS) in 2024 related to grazing/pasture and forestry practices. The data collection for this survey will skip a year to focus on the 2022 Census of Agriculture.

NRCS conservation programs seek to leverage long-term changes in the use of crop, livestock, grazing/pasture, and forestry practices that conservation resources protect the environment by providing technical and financial assistance to producers/landlords who agree to adopt or install best conservation practices.

For structural practices (e.g., terraces, grassed waterways), NRCS provides technical and financial assistance that covers part of the cost of initial installation. Producers must maintain these practices over their useful life (usually 10-15 years).

For management practices (e.g., no-till, cover crops), NRCS provides technical and financial assistance that covers part of application cost. These practices typically have a one-year useful life. NRCS programs typically provide financial assistance over a period three-five years. Once the contract ends, the producer/landowners have no further obligation to continue applying these annual practices.

What has been difficult for NRCS to track are producers who may have already applied basic conservation practices that received financial assistance for an ongoing maintenance of existing practices. The plan is to measure the producers that are not using NRCS program technical and financial assistance to enhance the function of existing practices through the Conservation Stewardship Program. While NRCS seeks to leverage long-term changes for their programs in conservation behavior, farmers and landowners eventually decide whether to continue or expand adoption without financial assistance. NASS will present to NRCS a method of tracking and monitoring programs in a way that currently does not exist.

2022 National Animal Health Monitoring System *Commercial Turkey Case Control Survey*

In partnership with Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS, in 2023, NASS will conduct a Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Virus (HPAI) Turkey Case Control Study (the "Study"). The Study is an emergency study aimed at helping APHIS identifying risk factors for turkey farms infected by HPAI as part of the 2022 outbreak of HPAI H5N1 and to provide actionable steps that producers can take to reduce their own risk and the risk of neighboring producers in contracting HPAI in turkeys on their farms. The Study will include a mailed presurvey letter and a paper-assisted telephone interview (PATI) for up to 500 producers.

2022 Hemp Acreage Production and Disposition Survey

The authority of the agencies to enter into this agreement are described in the 2018 Farm Bill. Data described within are collected, kept confidential, and protected by the parties pursuant to section 1619 of the Food, Conservation, Farm Security and Energy Act of 2008, P.L. 110-246 ("Section 1619"); section 2004 of the Food, Conservation, Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, P.L. 107-171; the Privacy Act of 1974; and the E-Government Act of 2002. Section 11102 of the 2018 Farm Bill states this about hemp: "Data collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, whether published or unpublished, shall be provided in an aggregate form to the Corporation for the purpose of providing insurance under this subtitle; and kept confidential by the Corporation in the same manner and to the same extent as is required under – section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (Title 7 U.S.C. 2276); and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 44 U.S.C. 3501)". Other authorities may also apply.

The 2022 Hemp Acreage and Production Survey will conduct in 2023. The publication of the 2022 Hemp Acreage Production and Disposition report will be released in April 2023.

Climate Change

NASS along with other USDA agencies developed climate adaptation resilience plans during 2022. As part of NASS's plans, a data needs assessment was conducted related to survey data already being used for climate related impacts. The data needs assessment identified where data gaps exist that would better inform climate adaptation

strategies and actions across USDA. NASS invited other USDA agencies to identify their climate data needs as a first step in understanding the climate data gaps. Currently a proposed team of NASS, ARS, ERS, and NRCS staff to develop a Data Series to better assist the OCE-OEEP with improving greenhouse gases assessment is being considered for 2023.

- USDA Climate Hubs, the Economic Research Service, and the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service identified data needs.
- NASS continues to work with other USDA agencies to support climate change activities.
- Remote Sensing will be leveraged where survey data is limited. There're plans to bring together a partnership of NASS, ERS, ARS, and NRCS in this area, which includes the support of NASA resources.

International Technical Assistance Provided

In 2022, NASS provided technical assistance and training virtually and in-person to improve agricultural statistics programs in seven countries: Argentina, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, and Kenya. The technical assistance ranged from basic survey concepts and procedures to Census of Agriculture methodology. Major accomplishments included training on area frame and remote sensing for Indonesia, yield estimation training for Argentina, sampling frame development activities in Kenya and Dominican Republic, editing system improvements in Georgia; and activities between NASS and the Department of Commerce's Census Bureau to coordinate population and agriculture censuses in developing countries. NASS also planned and conducted in-person Cochran training programs for Brazil and Vietnam. 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.

The agricultural statistics programs in Argentina, Kenya, Ghana, and India are funded and continuing. A new multi-year project is funded and will begin in 2023with Kazakhstan. The programs in Dominican Republic and Georgia are expected to continue in 2023. Projects are dependent upon NASS receiving reimbursable funds.

International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS IX)

The International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS) brings together experts from around the world to share research and operational accomplishments, and to explore the latest methodological innovations by countries and development partners. NASS and ERS are the main two USDA agencies involved in organizing this conference, which will be held May 17-19, 2023, in Washington, DC. ICAS IX is co-organized by USDA and the World Bank, in coordination with the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization and under the aegis of the International Statistical Institute's Committee on Agricultural Statistics.

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AGENCY-WIDE PERFORMANCE

INTRODUCTION

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports covering virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture. Production and supplies of food and fiber, prices paid and received by farmers, farm labor and wages, farm finances, chemical use, and changes in the demographics of U.S. producers are only a few examples.

The purpose of the Summary of Performance section is to provide an update on Performance and Evidence and Evaluation efforts, facilitating compliance with the Government Performance Results Modernization Act (GPRMA) and the Evidence Act of 2018, as well as departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPI). The Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) leads the Department in performance, evaluation, evidence, and risk management and chairs the Performance, Evaluation, Evidence Committee (PEEC) and the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) committee. Each USDA Mission Area is represented on these committees.

The Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area and the Office of the Chief Scientist are jointly represented through the OCS' Strategic Planning, Program Evaluation, and Enterprise Risk Officer, whose team functions as the coordinating members on USDA's PEEC and ERM committees.

The Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has Federal leadership responsibility for advancing scientific knowledge related to agriculture through research, extension, and education. The mission area office is led by the Under Secretary for the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) and Chief Scientist for USDA, whose responsibilities include oversight of the four agencies that comprise OCS/REE, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Economic Research Service (ERS), and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The National Agriculture Library, National Arboretum, and the Office of the Chief Scientist also fall under this mission area.

The mission of the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS) is to provide strategic coordination of the science that informs the Department's and the Federal government's decisions, policies, and regulations that impact all aspects of U.S. food and agriculture, related landscapes, and communities.

Therefore, REE performance, evaluation, evidence and risk management efforts are coordinated and led by the Office of the Chief Scientist on behalf of the Mission Area. The OCS Strategic Planning, Program Evaluation, and Enterprise Risk Officer leads the Mission Area by chairing two committees: the OCS/REE Performance, Evaluation and Evidence Committee (OCS/REE-PEEC) and the OCS/REE Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Committee. The two Mission Area committees are comprised of REE agency leaders in performance, evaluation, evidence and risk management, as well as the Mission Area's functional and operational leads as necessary.

ALIGNMENT TO USDA 2022 – 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

NASS contributes to Goal 2 of the Department's Strategic Goals in the current 2022 – 2026 USDA Strategic Plan. Departmental KPIs are performance indicators that are aligned to the Strategic Objectives laid out in the USDA's Strategic Plan.

- Strategic Goal 2: Ensure America's Agricultural System is Equitable, Resilient, and Prosperous
  - Objective 2.3: Foster Agricultural Innovation

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

A more detailed report of the performance plan can be found at https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/aboutusda/performance. The following table summarizes the results for the Departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for which the NASS is responsible.

Table NASS-10. Key Performance Indicators

Strategic Objective 2.3		**2023**	**2024**
Citations of REE Reports	**Results**	**-**	**-**
Number of Citations of REE Reports	**Target**	**129**	**134**

Expected Performance Progress Towards the Achievement of Strategic Objectives:
Strategic Objective 2.3: Foster Agricultural Innovation.

Citations of REE Reports: NASS will continue releasing new product themed landing pages through 2023 and 2024 to impact this metric. The Census of Agriculture will also be released in early calendar year 2024 which provides many updated data points that aren't available from annual programs.
NASS is working with a third-party to identify citations in peer-reviewed research articles using a machine learning model. This may be a mature and fruitful novel KPI by 2024.