

2021 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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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 COA 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 COA data collection is conducted in close cooperation with the Nation’s agricultural user group and farmer organizations. The COA 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. Results from the 2012 COA were released in May 2014. Under the COA appropriation in 2015, NASS started publishing the Current Agricultural Industrial Reports (CAIR). Results from the 2017 COA was released April 2019.

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.

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND STAFF YEARS

**National Agricultural Statistics Service
(Dollars in Thousands)**

Item	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Estimate	SY	Budget	SY
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	\$191,717	831	\$174,517	768	\$180,294	839	\$177,465	831
Mandatory Appropriations	-	-	1,000	-	-	-	-	-
Balance Available, SOY	134	-	151	-	204	-	-	-
Other Adjustments (Net)	5,151	-	11,926	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available	197,002	831	187,594	768	180,498	839	177,465	831
Balance Available, EOY	-151	-	-204	-	-	-	-	-
Obligations	196,851	831	187,390	768	180,498	839	177,465	831
Ob. Under Other USDA Appr.:								
AMS, pesticide cert. & base month series	158	1	1,195	3	174	3	174	3
ARS, Nutrient Data Laboratory	450	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
APHIS-Health monitoring system	1,047	3	1,842	3	625	3	300	3
ERS, Ag Resource & small farms	8,266	37	7,731	36	7,195	39	7,077	39
Foreign Agricultural Service	1,288	5	1,112	5	1,011	5	1,011	5

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FS, Grazing Fees & Woodland	124	1	87	1	87	1	120	1
FSA, Estimates & Surveys	6,445	34	2,816	34	6,456	35	6,456	35
NRCS & Farm Service	-	-	52	-	-	-	-	-
RMA, County Estimates	825	5	825	5	-	-	-	-
WAOB, Lock-up, Printing	23	-	20	-	20	-	20	-
Miscellaneous USDA Reimbursable	1,040	2	664	2	-	-	-	-
Total, Other USDA	19,666	89	16,344	89	15,568	86	15,158	86
Total, Agriculture Appropriations	216,517	920	203,734	857	196,066	925	192,623	917
Other Federal Funds:								
American Pecan Council	135	1	-	-	214	1	214	1
Census Bureau	-	-	-	-	25	-	-	-
DHS, RDD	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DOI, BLM grazing fees survey	76	-	76	-	76	-	79	-
DOL, Ag Labor	1,200	2	1,200	3	1,400	5	1,400	5
Inter American Bank	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
NSF, Data Collection	675	2	1,403	2	500	2	500	2
NASA	85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rutgers University, Special Tab	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Soybean Council	40	-	40	-	40	-	25	-
CNSTAT Core (DOT)	15	-	15	-	15	-	15	-
USGS (RDD)	3	-	6	-	6	-	6	-
Total, Other Federal	2,276	5	2,740	5	2,276	8	2,239	8
Non-Federal Funds:								
State Agencies - survey work	2,084	12	2,580	12	2,124	12	2,070	12
Total, Non-Federal	2,084	12	2,580	12	2,124	12	2,070	12
Total, NASS	220,877	937	209,054	874	200,466	945	196,932	937

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND STAFF YEAR

Item	2018			2019			2020			2021		
	D.C.	Field	Total									
SES	9	1	10	9	1	10	9	1	10	9	1	10
SL	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2
GS-15.....	29	17	46	29	17	46	29	17	46	29	17	46
GS-14.....	56	71	127	56	71	127	56	71	127	56	71	127
GS-13.....	205	90	295	205	90	295	205	90	295	205	90	295
GS-12.....	32	155	187	32	155	187	32	155	187	32	155	187
GS-11.....	19	43	62	19	43	62	19	43	62	19	43	62
GS-10.....	2	3	5	2	3	5	2	3	5	2	3	5
GS-9.....	22	63	85	22	63	85	22	63	85	22	63	85
GS-8.....	12	20	32	12	20	32	12	20	32	12	20	32
GS-7.....	17	106	123	17	106	123	17	106	123	17	106	123
GS-6.....	1	19	20	1	19	20	1	19	20	1	19	20

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GS-5.....	3	16	19	3	16	19	3	16	19	3	16	19
GS-4.....	1	13	14	1	13	14	1	13	14	1	13	14
GS-3.....	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6	6
Total Permanent.	416	617	1,033	410	623	1,033	410	623	1,033	410	623	1,033
Unfilled, EOY	16	111	127	28	160	168	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Perm. FT												
EOY	400	506	906	382	463	845	410	623	1,033	410	623	1,033
Staff Year Est.....	416	521	937	400	474	874	400	545	945	400	537	937

SIZE, COMPOSITION, AND ANNUAL COSTS OF 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 8 NASS owned vehicles and 41 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 2019, NASS had 49 vehicles; 8 owned and 41 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.

Fiscal Year	Sedans and Station Wagons	Lt. Trucks, SUVs, and Vans (4x2)	Lt. Trucks, SUVs, and Vans (4x4)	Medium Duty Vehicles	Heavy Duty Vehicles	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs ^b
2018	3	24	25	1	-	53	\$238
Change	-2	-3	+1	-	-	-4	+16
2019	1	21	26	1	-	49	254
Change	-	-	-	-	-	-	+41
2020	1	21	26	1	-	49	295
Change	-	-	-	-	-	-	+6
2021	1	21	26	1	-	49	301

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- ^a Vehicle count include those owned by agency and leased from commercial sources or GSA.
- ^b Excludes acquisition costs and gains from sale of vehicles as shown in FAST.

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Estimate	2121 Budget
Working Capital Fund:				
Administration:				
Material Management Service.....	154	116	209	205
Mail and Reproduction Services.....	167	185	215	212
Integrated Procurement Systems.....	98	97	97	97
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems.....	10	11	8	9
Subtotal.....	429	409	529	523
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	199	73	142	343
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center.....	257	255	234	219
Internal Control Support Services.....	-	33	54	45
Financial Management Support Services.....	651	648	646	654
Subtotal.....	908	936	934	918
Information Technology:				
Client Technology Services.....	1,469	1,332	1,990	2,025
Department Administration Information Technology Office.....			10	10
National Information Technology Center.....	968	1,141	982	945
Enterprise Network Services.....	1,314	1,537	3,032	3,134
Subtotal.....	3,751	4,010	6,015	6,114
Correspondence Management:				
Office of the Executive Secretariat.....	12	3	3	3
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	5,299	5,430	7,622	7,901
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
GSA Rental Payments.....	6,321	6,486	6,580	6,700
DHS Security Payments.....	1,767	1,826	1,824	1,829
Advisory Committee Liaison Services.....	2	-	-	-
Agency Partnership Outreach.....	72	76	73	73
Human Resources Self-Service Dashboard.....	6	6	6	-
Human Resources Transformation.....	9	-	-	-
Medical Services.....	34	23	35	-
Office of Customer Experience.....	19	26	28	28
People's Garden.....	5	-	-	-
Personnel and Document Security.....	15	14	14	14
Physical Security.....	-	-	55	39
Security Detail.....	43	43	43	43
Security Operations.....	100	104	54	59
TARGET Center.....	13	12	11	11
USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services.....	-	-	50	50
Virtual University.....	10	-	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs.....	8,413	8,615	8,772	8,846
E-Gov:				
Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business.....	1	1	1	1
Enterprise Human Resources Integration.....	20	20	-	-
Financial Management Line of Business.....	1	1	1	1

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Geospatial Line of Business.....	13	12	13	13
Human Resources Line of Business.....	3	3	3	3
Integrated Acquisition Environment.....	-	1	-	
Total, E-Gov.....	38	38	18	18
Agency Total.....	13,750	14,083	16,413	16,765

ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

2020 Appropriations	\$180,294,000
Change in Appropriation.....	-2,829,000
2021 Request.....	177,465,000

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

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

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, [~~\$180,294,000~~]\$177,465,000, of which up to [~~\$45,300,000~~]\$46,300,000 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).

PROJECT STATEMENT

Item	2018		2019		2020		2021		Change		
	Actual B.A.	SY	Actual B.A.	SY	Estimate B.A.	SY	Budget Request B.A.	SY	from 2020 Estimate B.A.	SY	
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Agricultural Est.....	\$128,367	561	\$129,217	538	\$134,994	609	\$131,165	599	(1)	-\$3,829	-10
Census of Ag.....	63,350	270	45,300	230	45,300	230	46,300	232	(2)	1,000	2
Total, Discretionary Funding,	191,717	831	174,517	768	180,294	839	177,465	831		-2,829	-8
Mandatory Funds:											
Farm Bill – Organic Prod.....	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Subtotal, Mandatory Funds...	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Carryover from Prior Years:											
Census of Ag.....	134	0	151	0	204	0	0	-		-204	-
Recoveries, Other	5,151	-	11,926	-	0	-	0	-		-	-
Total Available.....	197,002	831	187,594	768	180,294	839	177,465	831		-3,033	-8
Bal. Available, EOY.....	-151	-	-204	-	-	-	-	-		-	-
Total Obligations.....	196,851	831	187,390	768	180,294	839	177,465	831		-3,033	-8

JUSTIFICATIONS OF INCREASES/DECREASES

Agricultural Estimates

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 over 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:

1) **Agricultural Estimates Program: A net decrease of \$3,829,000 and 10 staff years from the FY 2020 Appropriations.**

- a) An increase of \$2,949,000 for the following items:
- i. An increase of \$1,120,000 for pay costs (\$513,000 for annualization of the 2020 pay increase and \$607,000 for the 2021 pay increase).

This increase will allow NASS to continue to meet its objectives. This critical increase is needed to support and maintain current staffing levels to meet NASS' statutory requirements. Elimination of the pay cost increase means the NASS would not be able to fund approximately 11 staff and/or would need to significantly cut travel, training, and mission support. Approximately 62 percent of our budget supports personnel compensation and benefits. We would have to accomplish this reduction in staff through attrition, inhibiting NASS' ability to meet its mission.

- ii. An increase of \$809,000 for performance awards.

This increase will support a 1 percentage point increase in awards spending, consistent with objectives outlined in the President's Management Agenda, to enhance workforce development. Without this additional funding, NASS will be unable to absorb these costs in FY 2021, resulting in reductions to planned hiring levels, eroding USDA's ability to meet key Administration priorities contained in this Budget.

- iii. An increase of \$1,020,000 for the Department's increased contribution to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

This increase will cover the expenses for the mandated increase of USDA's contribution to FERS. These increases were effective January 1, 2020, and impact approximately 845 employees' retirement packages.

- b) An increase of \$10,000,000 for a NASS Pilot Study (\$0 available in 2020).

Funding is requested to provide support for a pilot study utilizing historical remotely sensed data, precision agriculture data, FSA data, and survey data in combination with 3-m and 10-m resolution imagery which will lead to more precise and timely early-season predictions of harvested acres and production. In addition, funding will be used to support a redesign of the NASS survey process allowing for increased use of administrative data reducing the burden placed on agricultural producers.

Enhancements to the timeliness and accuracy of agricultural data through improved access, dissemination, visualization, and presentation tools are also planned.

- c) A decrease of \$13,246,000 to the Acreage, Crop Production and Grain Stocks (\$67,600,000 available in 2020).

Sample sizes as well as field enumeration will be reduced. The reduction in sample size results in less precise estimates as measured by coefficients of variation (CVs) confidence intervals, or other measures of precision. Less field enumeration means a lower response rate. As a consequence, during the forecast months, the number of states published for each commodity will be reduced and in some instances only a national estimate will be released.

For the county estimates program, sample sizes will be lowered to save funds. This will lower the number of counties that can be published.

NASS will be more efficient in sampling as a tradeoff to any increased costs to maintain the quality and quantity of reports issued.

d) A decrease of \$3,532,000 to the Chemical Use Program (\$7,503,000 available in 2020).

NASS will eliminate the fruit chemical use survey.

NASS will eliminate the data collection associated with Fruit Chemical Use for FY 2021. The Chemical Use Program will continue to collect data associated with Field Crops Chemical Use with current target commodities of cotton, peanuts and wheat.

2) **Census of Agriculture Program: An increase of \$1,000,000 and 2 staff years from the FY 2020 Appropriations**

This funding increase will be used to:

- Hire two staff years with a focus on outreach and research activities. Strategies developed for improving participation in regions of the country with historically poor response rates. Special attention will be given to producers representing traditionally underserved minority populations.
- Increase participation in the Census of Agriculture Special Study and Census of Agriculture Content Test which are scheduled for FY 2021. The focus of these efforts will be on field enumeration with impact records and minority producers in an effort to gather more producer insight to aid in improving overall responses.
- Increase participation through the online data collection instrument.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND STAFF YEARS

State/Territory/Country	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Estimate	SY	Budget	SY
Alabama.....	261	2	266	2	271	2	271	2
Alaska.....	180	1	185	1	190	1	190	1
Arizona.....	246	2	265	2	270	2	270	2
Arkansas.....	2,140	19	2,805	19	2,840	18	2,840	18
California.....	2,055	26	2,827	26	2,875	25	2,875	25
Colorado.....	3,738	33	3,798	33	3,860	31	3,860	31
Delaware.....	91	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
District of Columbia...	143,856	338	130,206	315	121,222	400	118,393	394
Florida.....	379	3	385	3	390	3	390	3
Georgia.....	2,587	21	2,620	21	2,662	19	2,662	19
Hawaii.....	300	2	305	2	310	2	310	2
Idaho.....	312	2	317	2	322	2	322	2
Illinois.....	290	2	305	2	310	2	310	2
Indiana.....	275	2	325	2	330	2	330	2
Iowa.....	2,627	27	2,843	27	3,400	26	3,400	26
Kansas.....	128	2	263	2	268	2	268	2

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Kentucky.....	2,655	27	3,177	27	3,500	26	3,500	26
Louisiana.....	284	2	280	2	285	2	285	2
Maryland.....	131	1	146	1	150	1	150	1
Michigan.....	2,305	26	2,543	26	2,583	25	2,583	25
Minnesota.....	279	2	282	2	287	2	287	2
Mississippi.....	268	2	272	2	276	2	276	2
Missouri.....	14,654	120	15,007	80	15,250	78	15,250	78
Montana.....	268	5	509	5	518	5	518	5
Nebraska.....	3,290	31	3,368	31	3,421	30	3,421	30
Nevada.....	184	1	199	1	205	1	205	1
New Hampshire.....	327	3	332	3	337	3	337	3
New Jersey.....	317	2	324	2	324	2	324	2
New Mexico.....	265	2	281	2	286	2	286	2
New York.....	273	2	280	2	284	2	284	2
North Carolina.....	459	2	505	2	510	2	510	2
North Dakota.....	283	2	284	2	289	2	289	2
Ohio.....	250	2	246	2	251	2	251	2
Oklahoma.....	315	3	466	3	471	3	471	3
Oregon.....	274	2	309	2	314	2	314	2
Pennsylvania.....	2,954	34	3,059	34	3,100	32	3,100	32
South Carolina.....	286	2	308	2	312	2	312	2
South Dakota.....	238	2	260	2	265	2	265	2
Tennessee.....	246	2	248	2	252	2	252	2
Texas.....	2,877	32	3,093	32	3,138	31	3,138	31
Utah.....	277	2	299	2	304	2	304	2
Virginia.....	244	2	279	2	283	2	283	2
Washington.....	2,377	28	2,658	28	2,700	27	2,700	27
West Virginia.....	264	2	265	2	270	2	270	2
Wisconsin.....	265	2	281	2	286	2	286	2
Wyoming.....	277	4	319	4	323	4	323	4
Obligations	196,851	831	187,594	768	180,294	839	177,465	831
Bal. Available, EOY	151	-	204	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	197,002	831	187,798	768	180,294	839	177,465	831

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS

Item No.	Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Estimate	2021 Budget
Personnel Compensation:					
	Washington D.C.....	\$42,204	\$43,338	\$43,900	\$44,778
	Personnel Compensation, Field.....	34,506	35,500	36,988	37,525
11	Total personnel compensation.....	76,710	78,838	80,888	82,303
12	Personal benefits.....	27,519	25,312	27,125	28,177
13.0	Benefits for former personnel.....	1,000	32	34	34
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits...	105,229	104,182	108,047	110,514
Other Objects:					
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons....	2,072	1,373	1,300	1,000
22.0	Transportation of things.....	1,594	1,070	900	900
23.1	Rental payments to GSA.....	6,321	6,486	6,580	6,700
23.2	Rental payments to others.....	165	3,252	3,100	2,000
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges...	1,246	3,289	3,000	3,100
24.0	Printing and reproduction.....	422	335	332	300

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Item No.	Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Estimate	2021 Budget
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources...	9,075	5,320	3,000	3,000
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources	4,987	5,490	4,000	3,000
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities...	4,814	5,109	3,000	3,000
25.41	Contractual Services–Other Non-Federal – NASDA.....	42,500	35,100	32,377	30,345
25.5	Research and development contracts.....	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
25.7	Operation and maintenance of equipment...	4,911	5,343	3,300	3,000
26.0	Supplies and materials.....	1,846	506	593	600
31.0	Equipment.....	2,663	1,733	1,760	1,000
42.0	Insurance Claims & Indemnities.....	6	6	5	6
	Total, Other Objects.....	91,622	83,412	72,247	66,951
99.9	Total, new obligations.....	196,851	187,594	180,294	177,465
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)	\$1,767	\$1,826	\$1,824	\$1,829
	Position Data:				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position.....	\$180,907	\$184,525	\$187,293	\$190,102
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$86,652	\$88,385	\$90,153	\$91,505
	Average Grade, GS Position.....	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5

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 work through 12 regional field offices (RFOs) and 33 State offices serving all 50 States.

Annually, NASS publishes more than 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 leading economic indicator reports: Agricultural Prices, Crop Production, Grain Stocks, Cattle on Feed, Hogs and Pigs, and Plantings. 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 has used remote sensing to enhance its crop acreage estimates since the 1970s, when satellite imagery was first used 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 low-cost and free mid-resolution satellite imagery, such as Landsat 8, Disaster Monitoring Constellation Deimos-1 and UK2, Indian Space Research Organization Resources at 2, and Sentinel 2a and 2b; high-quality ground reference data; and efficient and robust classification software.

Remote Sensing for Disaster Assessments

Geospatial decision support products were derived and provided for rapid response to assess flooded areas and identify potential crop losses caused by Hurricane Barry and Dorian, as well as flooding in the Midwest in the spring of 2019. The geospatial data products were derived from remotely sensed satellite and meteorological information obtained from the European

Space Agency (ESA), the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and NASA's Disaster Program. The products included flood assessment reports with crop and pasture land inundated areas and percentages of impacted crops, CDL crop area maps, and wind swaths or surface winds overlaid onto crop areas identified from the CDL product. The estimates of crop and pasture hay inundation were provided to the NASS Agricultural Statistics Board for decision support. Crop inundation raster layers were shared with the USDA Operations Center Emergency Programs Division and the USDA Office of the Chief Economist to be included in their mapping efforts. NASS flood mapping techniques were shared with representatives across government to help all participating Departments improve their understanding of what flood mapping products are available, to identify opportunities to harmonize products, to encourage product interoperability and to identify new technology and procedures for inundation mapping.

Research and Development

Precision Agriculture

Precision agriculture (PA) is defined as the use of technologies and science-based decision tools to improve profitability, while reducing the impact of agriculture on the environment. In FY 2019, precision agriculture data was obtained from a farm operation in Pennsylvania. The raw data was reviewed, cleansed and then examined. The data was rich in information and included crops grown by field, acres planted and harvested, yield per acre, fertilizer and crop protectants applied, as well as total production. Deeper analyses unveiled information on the operation's biocontrol practices, including the amount applied and date and time of application. NASS is currently exploring a pilot study to develop actionable insights from the farm to our Surveys and remotely-sensed modeling.

Census of Agriculture Program

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every 5 years and provides comprehensive data series at the national, state, and country level. It provides a snapshot of the agriculture economy including the number of farms, 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 2017 Census of Agriculture were published in FY 2019. Reformulations of the data in the form of additional products continued after the release and will continue into FY 2020.

2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS successfully released the final results of the 2017 Census of Agriculture in April 2019. In addition, NASS successfully rolled out a variety of other census products that are reformulations of data available from a complete census of agriculture. In response to data user

requests and needs to have data provided in different media and tabular formats, NASS has provided the public the following products since the data release in April.

Puerto Rico & Outlying Areas

During FY 2019, NASS completed data collection from farmers for the agriculture census in each of the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Census of Agriculture data for all of the U.S. territories is set to be released in FY 2020.

2022 Census of Agriculture

NASS has begun 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).

Census Follow-on Surveys

NASS concluded data collection, editing, and analysis for the 2018 Irrigation and Water Management Special Study and is set for release in November 2019.

NASS completed data collection, editing, and analysis for the 2018 Census of Aquaculture Special Study (Census Follow-on Survey). The Census of Aquaculture collects detailed information relating to production methods, surface water acres and sources, production, sales, point of first sale outlets, and aquaculture distributed for restoration, conservation, or recreational purposes. The release for the 2018 Census of Aquaculture is set for December 2019.

NASS finalized preparations to conduct the 2019 Organic Survey. This survey provides acreage, production, sales, price, expenses, and other data for various organic crop and livestock commodities at national, state, and commodity levels. NASS completed its final preparations to conduct the 2019 Census of Horticultural Specialties. This Census Special Study, conducted as a follow-on survey to the Census of Agriculture, is the leading source of detailed production and sales data for this specialized industry.

ACTIVITIES COVERING BOTH AGRICULTURAL ESTIMATES & THE CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

Operational Transformations to Streamline Business Processes

In 2019, NASS developed three specific Strategic Initiatives to better align the agencies resources and effectiveness.

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
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.
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.

USDA Cybersecurity Scorecard

NASS continues to maintain mostly green scores on its biweekly cybersecurity scorecard. NASS is one of a few agencies/offices to achieve this feat. NASS continues to put effort in maintaining a high level of security around all its IT assets and data.

Stakeholder Engagement/Information Technology Projects

NASS Twitter Following

In FY 2019, NASS increased its Twitter following from 33,400 followers in FY 2018 to 37,600 by sending 167 tweets on accurate, useful and timely topics, including graph, chart, and map data visualizations. NASS's tweets achieved 3.1 million impressions and over 10,000 engagements. NASS continued its monthly #StatChat series on Twitter with 12 #StatChats during the year, inviting Twitter users to ask questions directly to NASS representatives following major report releases. The three most popular tweet topics during the year were from the June, August, and September #StatChat Twitter discussions, with the April 12 Ag Census #StatChat in a close 4th place.

Quality Management Program

Paradata Analysis for Web Data Collection

In FY 2018, NASS launched a newly designed Census of Agriculture web instrument to conduct the 2017 Census of Agriculture (COA). 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 FY 2019, NASS analyzed the web paradata (i.e., data about the process by which the data were collected) for the COA. Evaluating the COA web instrument paradata (e.g., device type, changing answers, help access, where breakoffs occur, and where errors are triggered) helped NASS to gain insight into the user experience and identify possible problematic areas. Modeling (including machine learning methods) was also conducted to better understand the drivers to web reporting. The analysis results helps NASS to better understand the web collection process

and to make informed decisions on web data collection procedures and processes (e.g., targeting potential respondents).

Work Performed For Others – Reimbursable Program

Current Activities

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 1,039 projects since beginning this centralized process in 2012, which includes about 104 such projects in FY 2019.

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

NASS will continue to select AMS-PDP samples in FY 2020. The AMS-PDP Sampling Frame comprises terminal markets and large chain store food distribution centers. The Sampling and Frame Development Section (SFDS) in NASS's 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 technique.

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 Labor Survey

In April 2019, NASS began collecting Total Gross Wages Paid and subset the total by collecting Total Base Wages, Total Bonus Wages, and Total Overtime Wages. The calendar

year 2019 will be the first year collecting and publishing the new wage data series. This new wage data series is expected to capture the true distinctions between base wages, incentives/bonus pay, and gross wages, NASS added three additional columns in the worker code, hours work, and wages portion of the questionnaire to collect data by worker codes to better identify the differences between base wages and incentive/bonus paid wages on agricultural labor wages. For FY 2020 and calendar year 2020 data collection cycle NASS is preparing to make small changes to the questionnaire with the sole purpose of improving the responder's experience reporting their information. These small changes have been pre-tested by survey methodologist over a two year period.

Survey Marketing and Promotions

During FY 2019, the NASS Public Affairs Office (PAO) supported collection of data through strategic communications promoting response to surveys including the Agriculture Resource Management Survey, the quarterly agricultural and livestock surveys, and dissemination of the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Preparation included distribution of national news releases, blogs, feature stories, talking points, e-mails, videos and tweets. NASS created and distributed production story packages with interviews for local radio around the country. The NASS Public Affairs Office encouraged electronic reporting as quicker, easier, more secure, and leading to less burden than responding by mail.

International Technical Assistance Provided

NASS provided technical assistance and training to improve agricultural statistics programs in nine countries. Short-term assignments in 2019 supported work in Cambodia, El Salvador, Indonesia, Laos, Mexico, Paraguay, South Korea, Tanzania and Thailand. The technical assistance ranged from basic survey concepts and procedures to complete national Census of Agriculture support. Major accomplishments included the successful completion of the Household Listing Exercise in preparation for the Census of Agriculture in Tanzania; Area Frame Survey data analysis for the State of Jalisco in Mexico; and coordination activities between USDA NASS and the Department of Commerce Census Bureau to coordinate population and agriculture censuses in developing countries. In addition, NASS coordinated and/or conducted training programs in the United States for 25 visitors representing seven 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.

The agricultural statistics programs in Mexico and Tanzania are expected to continue in FY 2020 and activities with the Republic of Georgia will resume. Proposals for multi-year projects in Indonesia, Kenya and Paraguay are under consideration. Each project is dependent upon NASS receiving reimbursable funds.