NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Contents

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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 five years the Census of Agriculture (COA) provides comprehensive national, State, and county data as well as selected data for Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana 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 Program (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 crop and 45 livestock items. These basic and objective data are necessary to maintain an orderly association between the consumption, supply, marketing, and input 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. Official 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 field 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 economies by leveling the playing field. All parties have equal access to official statistics. NASS field offices regularly survey thousands of operators of farms, ranches, and agribusinesses 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 (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 groups 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 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).

- **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, 2017, NASS had 956 permanent full-time employees, including employees in Washington, D.C., NOC, and field offices.

Available Funds and Staff Years (SYs)

(Dollars in thousands)

Item	2016 Actual		2017 Actual		2018 Estimate		2019 President's Budget	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Appropriations - Salaries & Expenses	$168,443	859	$171,239	867	$170,077	916	$165,000	876
Balance Available, Start of Year	356	-	270	-	134	-	-	-
Other Adjustments (Net)	10,943	-	11,415	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available	179,742	859	182,924	867	170,211	916	165,000	876
Balance Available, End of Year	-270	-	-134	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Obligations, NASS	179,472	859	182,790	867	170,211	916	165,000	876
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:								
Ag. Marketing Service - Pesticide work & data on milk prices, export certification, & base month series	428	-	806	3	201	2	201	3
Agriculture Research Service - Soybean Samples and Wheat & Barley Scab	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Animal health monitoring system	905	2	925	3	-	-	-	-
Economic Research Service - Agricultural resource management & small farms data	7,783	37	7,104	37	6,854	38	6,000	38
Foreign Agricultural Service	1,322	5	1,220	5	1,019	6	1,019	6
Farm Service Agency - Estimates & Surveys	6,431	34	6,424	34	2,615	34	2,615	34
Forest Service - Grazing fees & woodland owners	71	-	114	1	114	1	114	1
Natural Resource Conservation Service & Farm Service Agency - Conservation effects assessment	10,000	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Risk Management Agency - County estimates	2,325	4	825	5	825	6	825	6
World Agricultural Outlook Board - Lock-up & printing support & cotton objective yield	19	-	28	-	28	-	28	-
Miscellaneous USDA Reimbursements	119	-	131	2	131	2	131	2
Total, Other USDA	29,406	92	17,577	90	11,787	89	10,933	90
Total, Agriculture Appropriations	208,878	951	200,367	957	181,998	1,005	175,933	966
Other Federal Funds:								
Dept. of Interior, BLM; Survey Fees	70	-	73	-	73	-	73	-
National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dept. of Labor - Agriculture Labor	1,200	1	1,200	2	1,200	3	1,200	2
National Science Foundation - data collection	615	1	615	2	615	2	615	2
National Aeronautics & Space Administration	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
United Soybean Council	40	-	40	-	40	-	40	-
CNSTAT Core Contribution (OMB)	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CNSTAT Core Contribution (DOT)	30	-	15	-	15	-	15	-
Total, Other Federal	2,012	2	1,943	4	1,943	5	1,943	4
Non-Federal Funds								
State Agencies - Survey work	2,594	12	2,724	12	2,848	12	2,848	12
Total, NASS	213,484	965	205,034	973	186,789	1,022	180,724	982

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary

Item	2016 Actual			2017 Actual			2018 Estimate			2019 President's Budget		
	Wash. D.C.	Field	Total	Wash. D.C.	Field	Total	Wash. D.C.	Field	Total	Wash. 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	58	80	22	50	72
GS-8	12	20	32	12	20	32	12	20	32	12	14	26
GS-7	17	106	123	17	106	123	17	100	117	17	90	107
GS-6	1	19	20	1	19	20	1	19	20	1	12	13
GS-5	3	16	19	3	16	19	3	16	19	3	10	13
GS-4	1	13	14	1	13	14	1	13	14	1	10	11
GS-3	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6	6
Total Perm. Positions	410	623	1,033	410	623	1,033	410	612	1,022	410	572	982
Unfilled, EOY	-10	-52	-62	-10	-67	-77	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Perm. Full-Time Employment, EOY	400	571	971	400	556	956	410	612	1,022	410	572	982
Staff Year Est	435	530	965	435	538	973	435	587	1,022	435	547	982

Motor Vehicle Fleet Data

The FY 2019 budget estimate for NASS proposes to reduce the level of motor vehicles by one.

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 State statistical offices that serve all 50 States.

The NASS fleet is comprised primarily of sport utility vehicles (SUVs) that allow for passengers and equipment to easily travel to farms, ranches, and fields. Among the 12 regional offices and 33 State offices, there are 11 NASS owned vehicles and 40 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 vehicle use and costs. NASS plans to move from owned to lease as owned vehicles are reported excess. 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 accurate data are being collected and reported.

Changes to motor vehicle fleet. At the end of 2017, NASS had 51 vehicles; 11 owned vehicles and 40 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 manner.

Size, Composition, and Annual Operating Costs of Vehicle Fleet

Fiscal Year	Number of Vehicles by Type *								Annual Operating Costs ($ in 000) **
	Sedans and Station Wagons	Light Trucks, SUVs, and Vans		Medium Duty Vehicles	Ambu-lances	Buses	Heavy Duty Vehicles	Total Number of Vehicles	
		4x2	4x4						
2016	2	21	27	1	-	-	-	51	$228
Change	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+5
2017	2	21	27	1	-	-	-	51	233
Change	+1	+1	-2	-	-	-	-		+5
2018	3	22	25	1	-	-	-	51	238
Change	-	-1	-	-	-	-	-	-	+4
2019	3	21	25	1	-	-	-	50	242

* Numbers include vehicles owned by the agency and leased from commercial sources or GSA.

** Excludes acquisition costs and gains from sale of vehicles as shown in FAST.

Shared Funding Projects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Estimate	2019 President's Budget
Working Capital Fund:				
Administration:				
HR Enterprise System Management	$12	$12	$10	$14
Integrated Procurement Systems	109	108	98	99
Mail and Reproduction Management	108	115	167	168
Material Management Service Center	148	165	153	156
Procurement Operations	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	377	400	429	437
Communications:				
Creative Media and Broadcast Center	30	36	199	35
Correspondence Management:				
Correspondence Management	13	13	12	12
Finance and Management:				
Financial Management Services	780	662	651	663
National Finance Center	294	296	257	257
Subtotal	1,074	958	908	920
Information Technology:				
Client Technology Services	600	1,290	1,469	1,502
National Information Technology Center	1,122	920	968	968
Enterprise Network Services	231	1,662	1,314	1,124
Subtotal	1,953	3,872	3,751	3,593
Total, Working Capital Fund	3,447	5,278	5,299	4,998
Departmental Shared Cost Programs:				
1890 USDA Initiatives	$33	$33	$33	$33
Advisory Committee Liaison Services	2	2	2	2
Classified National Security Information	6	6	6	6
Continuity of Operations Planning	21	18	18	18
Emergency Operations Center	24	20	21	21
Facility and Infrastructure Review and Assessment	4	4	4	4
Faith-Based Initiatives	4	4	4	4
Federal Biobased Products Preferred Procurement Program	-	-	-	-
FITARA Administration and Operations	-	-	-	-
Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program	18	18	19	19
Honor Awards	1	1	1	1
Human Resources Transformation (includes Diversity)	16	15	15	15
Identity and Access Management (HSPD-12)	70	64	64	64
Medical Services	33	29	30	30
People's Garden	7	6	6	6
Personnel and Document Security	8	7	8	8
Preauthorized Funding	39	37	35	35
Retirement Processor Web Application	6	6	6	6
Sign Language Interpreter	-	-	-	-
TARGET Center	15	14	14	14
USDA 1994 Program	7	7	7	7
Virtual University	21	19	20	20
Visitor Information Center	-	-	-	-
Total, Departmental Shared Cost Programs	334	309	314	314

Shared Funding Projects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Estimate	2019 President's Budget
E-Gov:				
Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business	1	1	1	1
Enterprise Human Resources Integration	20	20	19	19
E-Rulemaking	-	-	-	-
E-Training	29	29	-	-
Financial Management Line of Business	2	2	1	1
Geospatial Line of Business	8	8	13	13
Human Resources Mgmt Line of Business	3	3	3	3
Integrated Acquisition Environment - Loans and Grants	-	-	-	-
Integrated Acquisition Environment	13	13	-	-
Total, E-Gov	76	76	37	37
NASS Total	3,857	5,663	5,650	5,349

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

Salaries and Expenses:

For necessary expenses of the National Agricultural Statistics Service [$170,077,000] $165,000,000, of which up to [$41,891,000] $45,300,000 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. 2204 g(d) and (f).

Lead-Off Tabular Statement
Current Law

Budget Estimate, 2019	$165,000,000
2018 Annualized Continuing Resolution	170,077,000
Change in Appropriation	-5,077,000

Project Statement
Adjusted Appropriations Detail and Staff Year (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	2016 Actual		2017Actual		2018 Estimate		Inc. or Dec.		2019 President's Budget	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Appropriations:										
Agricultural Estimates.....	$126,266	629	$129,062	637	$128,186	646	-$8,486 (1)	-	$119,700	646
Census of Agriculture.....	42,177	230	42,177	230	41,891	270	3,409 (2)	-40	45,300	230
Total Appropriation.....	168,443	859	171,239	867	170,077	916	-5,077	-40	165,000	876
Bal. Available, SOY.....	+356	-	+270	-	+134	-	-134	-	-	-
Recoveries.....	+10,943	-	+11,415	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	179,742	859	182,924	867	170,211	916	-5,211	-40	165,000	876
Bal. Available, EOY.....	-270	-	-134	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	179,472	859	182,790	867	170,211	916	-5,211	-40	165,000	876

Project Statement
Obligations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	2016 Actual		2017 Actual		2018 Estimate		Inc. or Dec.		2019 President's Budget	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Obligations:										
Agricultural Estimates.....	$126,266	629	$129,062	637	$128,186	646	-$8,486	-	$119,700	646
Census of Agriculture.....	53,206	230	53,728	230	42,025	270	3,275	-40	45,300	230
Total Obligations.....	179,472	859	182,790	867	170,211	916	-5,211	-40	165,000	876
Bal. Available, EOY.....	+270	-	+134	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	179,742	859	182,924	867	170,211	916	-5,211	-40	165,000	876
Bal. Available, SOY.....	-356	-	-270	-	-134	-	+134	-	-	-
Recoveries.....	-10,943	-	-11,415	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	168,443	859	171,239	867	170,077	916	-5,077	-40	165,000	876

Justification of Increases and Decreases

Agricultural Estimates Program

1. A net decrease of $8,486,000 for the Agricultural Estimates Program ($128,185,000 and 646 staff years available in 2018).

Base funding for the 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 publically available objective sources of information,
- Support USDA program delivery, and
- Have specific legislative requirements for release.

Reduction in sample size results in less precise estimates as measured by coefficients of variation (CVs), confidence intervals, or other statistical measures of precision. If sample sizes are reduced fewer estimates may meet publication standards.

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:

a. An increase of $600,000 for a Geospatial Improvement Initiative ($200,000 available in 2018).

Additional funding for the geospatial program would be used to integrate the Decision Support System (DSS) into NASS processes and to move production of the Cropland Data Layer (CDL) and derivative products into a secure cloud environment, which will utilize modern capabilities such as open source technology to ensure data interoperability to internal and external ecosystems.

The DSS integrates weather, climate and crop information, customized to match the time-frame for NASS' weekly Crop Progress and Condition Reports (CPCR). Gathering current weather information and forecasts for the CPCR is a time-intensive effort conducted by NASS regional and State field offices. The report will be largely, if not fully, automated and more standardized across the nation through use of the DSS. The DSS can also be enhanced by adding features, such as crop yield forecasts using crop simulation models.

Production of the CDL currently requires downloading an average of 75 gigabytes of data daily, and the amount of data available in increasing annually. These data are then processed in-house, which is computationally challenging and manually intensive. Secure data from the Farm Services Agency are used as ground-reference to classify the CDL. Estimates of both acreage and yield, which must also be secure, are produced using statistical modeling using June Area survey data and remotely-sensed data. If the imagery were pushed to a cloud environment, data processing could occur coincident with the data, reducing the computational limitations of the current system. This increased computational capacity would allow estimates to be derived for larger geographic regions (more states). Through the acquisition and use of additional imagery, which is beyond the capacity of the current system, the phenological development phases can be better characterized, allowing improved estimates for current estimates and the development of additional estimates for specialty and small crop areas. Thus, new methods and improved processing capability will open opportunities for the identification and estimation of commodities not previously estimated.

b. An increase of $5,000,000 to conduct the Farm Labor Survey (no funding available in 2018).

In Fiscal Year 2019, NASS will transition the Agricultural Labor Survey from a reimbursable partnership with the Department of Labor to a core program within the Agricultural Estimates Program. NASS will continue to work collaboratively with DOL staff to ensure the resulting data products meet their needs, as we expand the data products based on ongoing process improvements.

The current improvement initiative is underway to ensure the resulting statistics provided continue to reflect the agricultural sector. The survey instrument is undergoing modifications and cognitive testing to ensure that the wage rate is reflecting current trends in the industry. Additionally, the granularity of data published is under review in an effort to continue to meet stakeholder needs. In FY 2019, NASS will publish the first results that are based on the improved survey instrument at increased levels of granularity.

To focus resources on highest priorities, NASS is streamlining the AEP by reducing sample sizes for the programs listed below. Reduction in sample size results in less precise estimates as measured by coefficients of variation (CVs, confidence intervals, or other measures of precision. As a consequence, fewer estimates may meet the publication standards.

c. A decrease of $1,350,000 to the Bee and Honey Program ($2,902,000 available in 2018).

To save $1.3 million dollars NASS can eliminate parts of the Bee & Honey program. The annual Cost of Pollination program would save approximately $1 million dollars. The annual loss program for small operators, that collects colony loss and bee & honey information would save an additional $.3 million.

The Cost of Pollination release contains information on pollinating various crops across the United States. It provides users the total value of bee pollination. In 2015, this was over $350 million dollars in the United States. This value and the associated pollinated crops would no longer be known.

The annual colony loss survey also collects annual honey information for small operators, those having less than 5 colonies on their operation. How they compare to the larger operators for bee colony loss, reasons for colony losses, and associated economic data will no longer be available. Likewise, honey production data for small operators will no longer be available. This information will not be available for analysis or policy action by those who normally need information on small operators.

The cutting of these two surveys would impact the information currently published.

d. A decrease of $4,003,000 to Chemical Use Program ($7,503,000 available in 2018).

NASS will eliminate the fruit chemical use survey.

e. A decrease of $2,468,000 to Fruit and Vegetable Reports ($8,935,000) available in 2018).

Reduction in some of the forecast for the fruit and vegetable reports.

Fruit and Vegetable Program Cost Savings:

- Consolidate noncirtrus fruit and vegetable monthly price estimation functions to Headquarters.
- Exclusively utilize administrative data for estimating monthly noncitrus fruit and vegetable monthly price estimates.
- Eliminate in-season forecasts for vegetable crops.
- Eliminate in-season forecasts for noncitrus fruit & tree nut crops.
- Reduce the number of noncitrus fruit crops included in the estimating program.
- Reduce the number of vegetable crops included in the estimating program.
- Reduce the number of States included in the estimating program for noncitrus fruit & tree nut crops.
- Reduce the number of States included in the estimating program for vegetable crops.
- Discontinue processing vegetable estimates by county.

Remaining Program:

- Annual end-of-season estimates for noncitrus fruit & tree nut crops, including acreage, production, utilization, price, and value.
- Annual end-of-season estimates for vegetable crops, including acreage, yield, production, utilization, price, and value

f. A decrease of $6,264,000 to the Acreage, Crop Production and Grain Stocks ($64,542,000 available in 2018).

Reduction in sample size results in less precise estimates as measured by coefficients of variation (CVs), confidence intervals, or other measures of precision. As a consequence during the forecast months, NASS will publish national and major production States estimates only.

Census of Agriculture Program

(1) A net increase of $3,409,000 for the Census of Agriculture ($42,025,000 available in 2018).

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years to obtain agricultural statistics for each county, State, and the Nation. The COA also includes the outlying areas: Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam. The COA is the leading source of statistics about the Nation's agricultural production and the only source of consistent, comparable data, at the county level. The COA is authorized by law under Public Law 105-113, Title 7, U.S. Code 2204g, and is conducted in close cooperation with the Nation's agricultural user groups and farmer organizations.

The entire Census of Agriculture Program consists of: the COA conducted every five years; the Current Agricultural Industrial Report program; and Special Studies, such as the Census of Horticulture, Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, and the Census of Aquaculture.

The COA is broken down into five broad categories of activity. Due to the cyclical nature of the COA, appropriated funds will shift among these categories over the five year cycle of activities. Research, evaluation and analysis are conducted during the entire COA cycle to ensure data quality and efficiency.

Direction and Planning: This category includes planning, administration, and support for the entire Census program. The category encompasses developing timelines, milestones, deliverables, and quality assurance measures associated with the Census of Agriculture, as well as collaboration with USDA, other Federal and State agencies, and private sector stakeholders to incorporate critical periodic and emerging data needs into the plan.

Content Determination and Design: Staff from many units in NASS evaluate and test the questionnaires for the COA. Any proposals for new content, whether from staff or from external stakeholders, must be tested before being included in the questionnaire to ensure respondents will understand the question correctly and answer consistently. NASS staff conduct cognitive interviews to obtain vital feedback on questionnaire content and design. The COA questionnaire is developed to facilitate NASS' capability to survey specific sub-populations without the additional cost of screening for those populations.

The category includes implementing the findings from research, evaluation, and analysis activities. In improving the questionnaire design and modifying the questions, NASS relies on research done throughout the Census cycle. For example, NASS staff use metrics from the Census edit system to determine how frequently and what kinds of changes are made during the edit process. This enables NASS to discern which questions need to be adjusted to more accurately collect data that lead to higher-quality data products.

Mail List Development and Mail Out: The activities necessary to develop a robust, inclusive and proficient census mail list (CML) are similar to those needed to maintain NASS' list frame for the ongoing Agricultural Estimates Program. NASS uses the information collected from the COA to build a sampling frame used in the AEP. This sampling frame is critically important to adequately cover specific commodities and farm attributes that are routinely estimated in the more than over 450 reports that NASS produces each year. NASS builds and improves the list on an ongoing basis by obtaining information from outside sources such as Federal and State government agencies, producer associations, seed growers, pesticide applicators, veterinarians, marketing associations, and other agriculture-related interest. NASS also obtains special commodity lists to address specific list deficiencies. Staff review the outside sources to determine whether they already are or should be included on the CML. Many names on newly acquired lists are already on the CML. Records not on the CML are treated as potential farms until NASS can confirm whether they are a qualifying farm.

NASS conducts the National Agricultural Classification Survey (NACS) in the three years leading up to the COA. The NACS questionnaire is sent to new additions to the CML: It includes four pages of questions used to assess whether the operation meets the farm definition for inclusion in the COA. NACS allows NASS to prescreen all new operations and reduce the overall cost of the COA. Following the third year of NACS, the CML is a comprehensive list of all known farms and ranches in the United States.

This category also covers all activities related to screening potential farms. Included are the cost for assembling and labeling the mail packets, and the return postage costs for questionnaires returned by mail.

Data Collection and Processing: This category involves all activities associated with system development, programming, and data collection for the COA. A high Census response rate is important both for conducting an accurate Census and for keeping the list frame up to date. NASS staff process, edit, and analyze all online and mailed responses. Also included is outreach to Native American farms and tribes, outlying areas, and small or disadvantaged farm operators (including outreach to the community-based organizations). NASS outsources some data collection and processing activities in cooperative agreements with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and the Census Bureau's National Processing Center (NPC) in Jeffersonville, Indiana.

Publication and Data Dissemination: This category includes marketing, production, and dissemination of print and electronic products created to promote data collection as well as products created in connection with data release for the Census of Agriculture. NASS conducts publicity prior to and during data collection to encourage better response rates. Public relations and customer service activities are important functions that encourage the continued willingness of farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses to provide information on which most NASS statistics are based. Also included is staff time for developing publication tables, creating summary and disclosure programs, and reviewing data and data products prior to release.

This category also includes research into value-added data products and dissemination techniques that respond to data user needs and requests. In response to such requests, for example, NASS examined ways to improve the visual representation of Census data, which produced a dynamic new web-mapping product first made available for the 2012 Census of Agriculture data.

Release of the 2017 Census of Agriculture Special Products: Upon completing the collection, processing, and analysis of Census of Agriculture data in 2018, NASS will complete its summary and disclosure processes and prepare the catalog of Census Special Products for release beginning in early 2019. Products including special tabulations will be released at intervals throughout the remainder of 2019.

> **County Profiles:** The County Profiles provide a snapshot of agriculture activity by county. The profile includes number of farms, land in farms, market value of commodities produced, economic and operator characteristics, along with a host of other information that details the importance of

agriculture in the specified area. This product also provides a listing of the top crops and livestock within the county and ranks the commodity across the State and U.S. This is one of the cornerstone products of the Census of Agriculture because of the program's focus on compiling uniform and comprehensive agricultural statistics at the county level.

Congressional Profiles and Rankings: Following each Census, reporting farms and ranches are assigned to congressional districts and two products are prepared, district profiles and district rankings. Congressional district profiles provide data on selected farm, economic, and operator characteristics for the farms and ranches assigned to the district. The ranking of congressional districts presents the order of districts from largest to smallest for selected items from the Census of Agriculture. This allows the data user to understand agriculture activity as it relates to congressional districts across the Nation. Rankings are provided for farm and operator characteristics, selected value of agricultural products sold, selected livestock and poultry inventories, and selected crops area harvested.

Watershed Publication: The 2017 Census of Agriculture Watershed publication provides data that supplement the 2012 Census of Agriculture. As a service to agricultural and environmental data users, the 2017 data for 38 individual land characteristics are published at the 6-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) level. For comparison, data from the 2012 Census of Agriculture will also be published in this report.

Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Profiles Tabulation: This product comes as a result of the Department's focus on supporting socially disadvantaged farms. These profiles provide State and county level farm operator data for women, Hispanic, Native American Indian, Asian American, and Black farmers. The statistics provided in these profiles include number of farms, value of products sold, government payments received, operator and economic characteristics, and production levels for selected crops and livestock commodities.

Zip Code Tabulations: The zip code tabulations may be used by regional planning boards, County Commissioners, and others interested in looking at farm level information more narrowly than county level data provide. Some of the Census data are tabulated as aggregate totals produced by farms and populated into QuickStats [*http://quickstats.nass.usda.gov*] NASS' online database available to the public. Individual farm information is not disclosed (for privacy laws); however the data on the count of farms that produce different products is valuable information for anyone needing statistical farm related data within a particular county.

Specialty Crops Tabulation: The 2017 Census of Agriculture Specialty Crop publication provides data that supplement the 2012 Census of Agriculture. This publication complies with Section 10103 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. As a service to agricultural and economic data users, the 2012 data for specialty crops are published at the U.S. and State level. A specialty crop is defined by Section 3 of the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004 (7 U.S.C. 1621 note; Public Law 108-465) as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and nursery crops (including floriculture).

a. <u>A decrease of $2,385,000 due to expiration of a contract for the temporary Centralized Edit Unit</u>

The Centralized Edit Unit provided NASS with a temporary streamlined and standardized edit and analysis unit. This new unit hired contract employees to handle the large volume of work associated with the data collection year. The unit was led by four NASS staff serving on detail for the duration of the unit to train, guide, and provide quality control. In FY 2019, the contract for the centralized edit unit will expire.

<u>An increase of $5,794,000 for 2018 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, Publication, and Planning</u>

The Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey last conducted for the 2013 growing year, provided one of the most complete and detailed profiles of irrigation in the United States. It supplements basic irrigation data collected from all farm and ranch operators from the Census of Agriculture. Examples of data summarized from this survey include: quantity of water usage, distribution methods, water sources, equipment and energy expenditures, and crops produced using irrigation. This follow-on survey has been conducted in 1979, 1984, 1988, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2008, and 2013. There is tremendous demand for the Farm and

Ranch Irrigation Survey data especially because of the recent drought conditions in parts of the country. These survey results are critical to agriculture and will affect policy decisions for the next five years.

Publication includes finalizing tables and review, county profiles, watersheds, and specialty crops for the COA. NASS will also start planning for the FY 2022 Census during FY 2019.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
(Dollars in thousands and Staff Years (SYs))

State/Terrority	2016 Actual		2017 Actual		2018 Estimate		2019 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Alabama	$241	1	$247	1	$257	2	$243	2
Alaska	158	1	163	1	172	1	163	1
Arizona	225	2	234	2	235	2	230	2
Arkansas	2,118	21	2,246	19	2,133	21	2,123	21
California	2,002	27	2,036	26	2,044	27	2,007	27
Colorado	3,382	33	3,492	32	3,677	33	3,405	33
Delaware	86	1	74	1	86	-	86	-
Florida	354	3	362	3	372	3	357	3
Georgia	2,527	24	2,565	21	2,579	22	2,532	22
Hawaii	280	2	284	2	294	2	283	2
Idaho	287	2	294	2	303	2	294	2
Illinois	269	2	276	2	283	2	274	2
Indiana	256	2	260	2	266	2	261	2
Iowa	2,520	18	2,576	18	2,580	27	2,520	27
Kansas	94	2	117	2	126	2	95	2
Kentucky	2,598	22	2,648	21	2,613	27	2,603	27
Louisiana	271	2	276	2	277	2	276	2
Maryland	124	2	130	2	124	1	129	1
Michigan	2,264	25	2,280	24	2,289	26	2,270	26
Minnesota	237	2	263	2	269	2	242	2
Mississippi	254	2	261	2	260	2	259	2
Missouri	2,302	24	12,850	58	12,654	149	12,534	109
Montana	249	2	259	2	259	5	254	5
Nebraska	2,975	23	2,986	21	3,283	31	2,980	31
Nevada	163	1	166	1	178	1	166	1
New Hampshire	297	2	313	2	317	3	302	3
New Jersey	297	2	307	2	307	2	303	2
New Mexico	244	2	252	2	257	2	249	2
New York	251	2	262	2	265	2	256	2
North Carolina	343	2	350	2	350	2	448	2
North Dakota	257	2	264	2	273	2	261	2
Ohio	229	2	237	2	240	2	234	2
Oklahoma	286	3	298	3	305	3	291	3
Oregon	250	2	257	2	266	2	256	2
Pennsylvania	2,756	23	2,802	24	2,791	34	2,761	34
South Carolina	263	2	269	2	278	2	267	2
South Dakota	218	2	227	2	236	2	219	2
Tennessee	237	2	243	2	237	2	242	2
Texas	2,696	26	2,755	25	2,750	32	2,703	32
Utah	254	2	264	2	267	2	259	2
Virginia	235	2	242	2	235	2	240	2
Washington	2,298	22	2,323	21	2,330	28	2,302	28
West Virginia	246	2	252	2	255	2	251	2
Wisconsin	250	2	255	2	260	2	253	2
Wyoming	255	2	265	2	269	4	260	4
District of Columbia	140,808	507	133,008	485	120,110	381	116,057	390
Obligations	179,472	859	182,790	867	170,211	916	165,000	876
Bal. Available, EOY	+270	-	+134	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	179,742	859	182,924	867	170,211	916	165,000	876

Classification by Objects
(Dollars in thousands)

		2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Estimate	2019 Estimate
Personnel Compensation:					
Washington D.C.		$38,500	$41,500	$42,000	$42,500
Field		32,000	34,000	34,500	35,000
11	Total personnel compensation	70,500	75,500	76,500	77,500
12	Personal benefits	23,500	24,500	25,500	26,000
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits	95,000	101,000	103,000	104,500
Other Objects:					
21.0	Travel & transportation of persons	2,000	2,000	1,500	1,000
22.0	Transportation of things	1,300	1,400	1,000	1,000
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	6,634	6,742	6,321	6,447
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	800	837	800	800
24.0	Printing & reproduction	300	400	300	300
25.1	Other Goods & Services from Federal Sources	7,474	7,200	5,000	3,900
25.3	Other Purchases of goods and services from Federal sources	2,300	2,000	2,000	2,000
25.4	Contractual Services - Other Non-Federal	3,945	3,000	4,000	3,000
25.41	Contractual Services - Other Non-Federal-NASDA	41,086	39,400	30,279	26,043
25.5	Research and development contracts	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
25.6	IT Services & Supplies	4,000	4,000	3,000	3,000
26.0	Supplies & materials	1,221	1,400	1,000	1,000
31.0	Equipment	4,400	4,200	3,000	3,000
42.0	Insurance Claims & Indemnities	12	10	10	10
	Total, Other Objects	84,472	81,589	67,210	60,500
99.0	Total, new obligations	179,472	182,790	170,211	165,000
DHS Buiding Security (included above in 25.3)		$1,447	$1,676	$1,734	$1,734
Position Data:					
Average Salary (dollars), ES Position		$177,360	$180,907	$184,525	$188,216
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position		$84,953	$86,652	$88,385	$90,153
Average Grade, GS Position (Grade.Step)		11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

Summary of Budget and Performance

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

Key Performance Measures:

Performance Measures		2016	2017	2018	2019
		Actual	Actual	Target	Target
1	Error free	99.8%	>95%	>95%	>95%
2	Timeliness	99.6%	>95%	>95%	>95%
3	Coverage for the Census of Agriculture and Follow-on surveys[1]	98.6	>85%	>85%	>85%
4	Response Rate for Census of Agriculture and Follow-on surveys	84.8%	>80%	>80%	>80%
5	Usefulness	18,452,020	30,000,000	37,000,000	55,500,000
6	Survey and Census questionnaires available on the smart web forms	0	1%	20%	>95%
7	Published Production/Inventory coverage for speculative commodities	98.6%	>95%	>95%	>95%
8	Data Security and Privacy – incident response and handling (30 day closure rate)	100%	>98%	>98%	>99%
9	Coverage of Land in Farms for the NASS List Frame ($50,000 or more in sales)[2]	91.4%	>90%	>90%	>90%
1/ CAIR data for non-Census years. Baseline is a non-Census year. 2/ Annual measure and reporting.					

Measure 1. Error free – The accessibility, relevance, coherence, comparability, and usefulness of NASS official reports and products and services as measured by NASS issuing errata for Agricultural Statistics Board reports. These performance measures vary by goal, but get to the root of why NASS is considered the Federal leading provider of agricultural statistics. Precision of data are necessary for stakeholders to be able to rely on the data to make day-to-day management decisions and eliminate unnecessary chaos in the market.

Measure 2. Timeliness - Percent of time official reports are released on the date and time pre-specified to data users. Agricultural statistics are at the core of many decisions made in the agriculture sector. If these data are not timely, the disruption and chaos generated would be immeasurable. This performance measure is the same for all of the goals and will be calculated across all NASS reports.

Measure 3. Census Coverage – Percent of United States farms or ranches covered by the census mail list (CML) every five years. NASS strives to build the CML that covers a maximum number of farms and ranches nationwide. NASS devoted tremendous resources to the 2012 COA to maximize coverage rates and continually strives to improve upon this for the 2017 COA.

For non-Census years, the Current Agricultural Industrial Reports provide a coverage measure for the NASS follow-on Census programs. The largest commodity/item in each report was used to provide the statistical measure for coverage. Coverage is a measure of actual reported data divided by the total data published.

Measure 4. COA Program Response Rates – Percent of CML respondents returning a usable report. NASS strives to maximize the response rates using multiple approaches to data collection. Even though response rates are historically trending downward, NASS strives to improve its response rate for the COA program. For non-Census years, the Current Agricultural Industrial Reports provide a measure of response rates for the NASS follow-on Census programs.

Measure 5. Usefulness – The measure is a combination of information from 4 websites. The baseline number includes total Quick Stats API calls from 2016, Quick Stats website page views from 3 quarters of 2017 averaged out and multiplied by 12, AgCensus website pages views from 2016, and NASS website page views from 2016. The number of data calls to the QuickStats API has increased dramatically already this year, a modest projection for 2017 is 59 million total page views based on the current activity we are seeing.

Measure 6. Smart Web Forms - The demand from farmers and ranchers for the option to respond to NASS surveys and censuses over the internet and on mobile devices continues to rise. In FY 2016, work began on developing a secure, modern, smart web form farmers and ranchers could use to respond to NASS surveys and censuses. The outcomes of this program will be monitored and measured by the number of census and survey programs successfully integrated and produced into the new smart web form. By the end of FY 2019, plans are to fully integrate the existing 630 NASS surveys and censuses into the new smart web form.

Measure 7. Published Coverage for Speculative Commodities - There are seven speculative commodities selected for this measure. They are corn, soybeans, cotton, oranges, wheat, cattle on feed, and hogs. For each commodity, the measure is the percentage of production or inventory accounted for by published States. A simple average across the seven commodities is reported as the measure.

Measure 8. Data Security & Privacy - As reflected on the included baseline data, NASS takes security incident response, handling, and management very seriously. The NASS baseline data, covering more than a year's worth of incidents, show that all non-PII incidents, including all but one PII incident, were closed within 30 days after initial report. The sole PII incident closed beyond the set threshold was submitted to the USDA privacy office 10 days after it was reported. In all, NASS takes an average of 16 days to report, investigate, remediate, submit, and close security incidents. NASS intends to maintain its resiliency in responding to, and handling security incidents, and keep this measured performance target at a high level in the coming years.

Measure 9. Coverage of Land in Farms - Coverage measures by size and type of farms are based on results from the annual June Area Frame Survey. The area frame consists of identifiable land units called segments. Approximately 11,000 segments are selected and visited by enumerators during the first two weeks in June to detect planted crop acreage, stocks of grain, livestock inventories, and other agricultural items of interest. During data collection, all names of people who operate agricultural land within each segment are recorded. The names are then checked against the NASS's list of farm operators. Those who are not on the list are used to generate the measure of list incompleteness.

Selected Past Accomplishments toward Achievement of the Key Outcome**:**

Past accomplishments toward achievement of the key outcome to ensure high quality statistics and data are relevant and useful to stakeholders; and released on time include:

Agricultural Estimates:

Beginning in February 2017, with the 2016 crop year there were many significant changes made to the vegetable estimating program.

- All States in the vegetable estimating program now estimate fresh and processing utilization for each crop, except for lettuce. For lettuce (head, leaf, and romaine) crops, only fresh utilization is estimated.

- Harvested production not sold (unutilized production) estimates were added to the program.

In June 2017, bearing acreage and yield estimates for the 2016 crop year were published for pecans. Previously, only production, price, and value of production by variety were published.

Beginning in September 2017, the in-season yield and production forecasts for dry edible peas, Austrian winter peas, and lentils are now published in the September crop Production report. Prior to this year they were not published until the November Crop Production report.

In March 2017, NASS published new data on the economics of beekeeping in the annual Honey report. New data included prices for queens, expenditures, and estimates on pollination and other incomes.

In July 2017, vegetable chemical usage data were released. This report is released every other year.

In August 2017, NASS published farm computer usage and ownership. This publication is released biennially.

Census of Agriculture:

- **Local Foods Survey**. In FY 2017, NASS published the results from the Local Foods Survey. This was the first publication of data looking into the marketing channels utilized by producers to market their products locally. Data provided insights into four marketing channels; direct to customer, direct to retailer, direct to institutions, and sales to intermediate markets.

- **Census Content Test**. In FY 2016, the Census Content Test was conducted. A sample of approximately 30,000 records received the modified Census of Agriculture report form. This content test serves as a dry-run for all the processing steps and systems utilized during the production phase. Tremendous efforts were put into enhancing the online version of the questionnaire in hopes of soliciting more web responses.

- **Electronic Data Reporting (EDR).** In FY 2017, work continued to improve the EDR) instrument used for capturing online census of agriculture responses. These efforts began in FY 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. NASS successfully deployed the new instrument during the 2015 Content Test. Based on results from this test, NASS continued to focus on enhancements through FY 2017.

- **Forms Design and Development**. NASS completed the forms design and development process in FY 2016 for the preparations of mail packets in FY 2017. This includes a long form, short form, and customized forms for American Indians and Puerto Rico. Additional mail materials were developed that included all correspondence letters and instructions to assist respondents in completing their questionnaire.

- During FY 2016, 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.

- During FY 2016, NASS finished compiling the maps generated from satellite imagery used to supplement area frame samples. These additional samples will be used by enumerators in all States to collect data designed to improve estimation of under-coverage, particularly for key demographic groups.

- **Data Collection**. During 2017, NASS completed data collection on over 14,000 area segments designed to improve estimation for farming operations not covered on the census of agriculture mail list. Data from these segments are also used to determine under-coverage for a wide range of commodity sectors and farmer demographics.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the 2019 Proposed Resource Level**:**

Agricultural Estimates:

- **Federal Principle Economic Indicators**. In 2019 NASS will conduct the vital Federal Principle Economic Indicators at the FY 2017 level. NASS will continue to respond to stakeholders to provide critical market sensitive data needs as they arise. NASS will produce the following essential reports in 2019:

    - Crop Production;
    - Cattle, and Cattle on Feed;
    - Agricultural Prices;
    - Grain Stocks;
    - Hogs and Pigs;
    - Prospective Plantings;
    - Small Grain Summary and;
    - Winter Wheat Seedings and Acreage.

- **Conduct Farm Labor Survey.** The Agricultural Labor Survey is undergoing a process improvement initiative to ensure the resulting statistics provided continue to reflect agricultural sector. The survey instrument is undergoing modifications and cognitive testing to ensure that the wage rate reflects current trends in the industry. Additionally, the granularity of data published is under review in an effort to continue to meet stakeholder needs. In FY 2019, NASS will publish the first results that are based on the improved survey instrument at increased levels of granularity.

Census of Agriculture:

- **Publication of the 2017 COA**. The COA will be published in early 2019. The COA is conducted every five years to obtain agricultural statistics for each County, State, and the Nation. The COA also includes the outlying areas: Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Guam. The COA is the leading source of statistics about the Nation's agricultural production and the only source of consistent, comparable data, at the county level. The COA is authorized by Public Law 105-113, Title 7, U.S. Code 2204g, and is conducted in close cooperation with the Nation's agricultural user groups and farmer organizations.

- **Conduct the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey:** The last FRIS was conducted for the 2013 growing year, providing one of the most complete and detailed profiles of irrigation in the United States. It supplements basic irrigation data collected from all farm and ranch operators from the Census of Agriculture. Examples of data summarized from this survey include: quantity of water usage, distribution methods, water sources, equipment and energy expenditures, and crops produced using irrigation. This follow-on survey has been conducted in 1979, 1984, 1988, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2008, and 2013. There is tremendous demand for the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey data especially because of the 2012 drought in the midsection of the country. These survey results are critical to the country and will affect policy decisions for the next five years.