

USDA TO ASSESS THE STATE OF THE CATTLE INDUSTRY

[Phoenix, Arizona] – The U.S. Department of Agriculture will contact more than 50,000 cattle operations in January to provide the latest and most accurate data on current industry conditions including cattle inventories and calf production.

“During the first two weeks of January, the Arizona Field Office of USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will be contacting about 400 operations in order to measure trends in beef and dairy cattle inventories, calf crop and cattle operations” said director Steven Manheimer. The operators will be asked to report their current inventories of cattle and their projected calf crop for the entire year of 2009. “The information they provide is a critical decision-making tool for the cattle industry,” he explained.

The main beneficiaries of these data will be the cattle producers themselves. Cattle inventory estimates serve as an important baseline of beef and milk cow herd supplies expected in the U.S. This number allows cattle producers and industry to estimate the number of beef moving to market. With these data at hand, individual producers can minimize their financial impact of swings in farm gate prices.

Operators selected for the survey will have the option of responding via Internet, telephone, mail, or by requesting a personal interview with a local NASS representative. “Whichever option a producer chooses, they are providing an important service to the cattle industry and to U.S. agriculture as a whole,” Manheimer said. “Their responses will be compiled with those of their fellow producers nationwide, providing the only accurate and comprehensive estimate of the state of U.S. cattle production.”

Manheimer noted that, as is the case with all NASS surveys, information provided by respondents is confidential by law. NASS safeguards the privacy of all survey responses, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

Results will be published in NASS’s biannual *Cattle Inventory* report, on January 28, 2011. The report will provide national estimates of total inventory, beef cows, milk cows and bulls. *Cattle Inventory*, as well as all other NASS reports, will be available on the NASS web site: www.nass.usda.gov.

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