NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MARYLAND FIELD OFFICE
50 Harry S Truman Parkway, Annapolis MD 21401

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE   Contact: Shareefah Williams
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USDA still accepting 2022 Census of Agriculture forms from Maryland producers

ANNAPOLIS, MD – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is reminding Maryland farmers and ranchers that the window is closing on the opportunity to participate in the 2022 Census of Agriculture. To date, NASS has received 15,175 completed questionnaires from Maryland producers for a return rate of nearly 51%. NASS is encouraging U.S. producers who have not returned their completed ag census questionnaires to do so as soon as possible to avoid additional mail, phone, email, text, and in-person follow-up, which is currently underway.

"I want to express my gratitude to those Maryland operators who have already taken the effort to complete the 2022 Census of Agriculture. The wellbeing and health of Maryland's agricultural community will benefit from the data that was collected. There is still time to answer for those who haven't finished their reports," said NASS Maryland State Statistician Shareefah Williams. "Making certain that we hear from every operator in Maryland is my main objective. I appreciate your efforts to feed the world."

NASS is reminding producers that if they produced and sold $1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022, or normally would have produced and sold that much, they meet USDA's definition of a farm. However, federal law requires everyone who received the 2022 Census of Agriculture questionnaire complete and return it, even if they do not currently meet this definition. Producers can respond online at agcounts.usda.gov or by mail.

"If you received the ag census but do not fit the definition of a farm, are no longer farming, never farmed, or are a landowner who leases your land to a producer, please write your status on the form and mail it back," said Williams.

The Census of Agriculture remains the only comprehensive and impartial source of agriculture data for every state and county in the nation. Census data are used by policymakers, trade associations, researchers, agribusinesses, educators, and many others. The information helps inform decisions on farm policy, rural development, the development of farm technologies, and more. It also aids in the creation and funding of loans and insurance programs and other forms of assistance.

The ag census differs from other NASS surveys. Beyond being conducted just once every five years, it provides important demographic information and data on certain commodities, such as horses, bison, and Christmas trees, that would not otherwise be available. The Census of Agriculture collects information on nearly every aspect of American agriculture for a complete picture of the health of the industry. Changes to the 2022 questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep and updates to internet access questions.

Federal law under Title 7 USC 2204(g) Public Law 105-113 requires that NASS keep all submissions confidential, use the information for statistical purposes only, and publish aggregate data to prevent disclosing the identity of any individual producer or farm operation.

NASS will release the results of the ag census in early 2024. To learn more about the Census of Agriculture, visit nass.usda.gov/AgCensus. On the website, producers and other data users can access frequently asked questions, past ag census data, special study information, and more. For highlights of these and the latest information, follow USDA NASS on Twitter at @usda_nass.

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