



News Release

USDA to Measure Financial Well-Being of Michigan Farmers and Landowners

Beginning in January, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will spend several weeks gathering information about land ownership income, expense, debt, asset, demographic and other landlord characteristics to provide detailed information from all agricultural landowners across Michigan, as the agency conducts the Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land (TOTAL) survey.

TOTAL is a joint effort between NASS and USDA's Economic Research Service. The information farmers and ranchers provide through the survey influences national and state policy-making decisions. In addition, TOTAL data are used to calculate the farm sector portion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

"TOTAL will measure the state of farmland ownership," said Marlo D. Johnson, Regional Director of the USDA NASS, Great Lakes Region. "The results of this survey help shape federal, state and local farm policies, and will help farmers and landowners to plan out Michigan farmland rental agreements."

In an effort to obtain the most accurate data, NASS will reach out to more than 40,000 producers nationwide, including over 1500 in Michigan, between January and April. The survey asks producers to provide in-depth information about their operating revenues, production costs, and household characteristics. The 2024 TOTAL survey in Michigan focuses on landowner farm costs and returns. The survey also includes questions on conservation practices, farm and household finances, and off-farm employment.

In January, interviewers will begin reaching out to those farmers who have not yet responded by mail or on-line. We appreciate their time and are here to help them with the questionnaire so that their information will continue supporting sound agricultural decision-making.

In addition to producing accurate information, NASS has strong safeguards in place to protect the confidentiality of all farmers who respond to its surveys. The agency will only publish data in an aggregate form, ensuring the confidentiality of all responses and that no individual respondent or operation can be identified.

The expense data gathered in TOTAL will be published in the annual *Farm Production Expenditures* report on July 25, 2025. That report and others are available at nass.usda.gov/Publications. More reports based on TOTAL data and more information about TOTAL are available at ers.usda.gov/arms.

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