

Ten Examples of Responses to Reluctant Respondents

1. My farm is too small to make a difference.

Your farm represents other small farms. Small farms have different characteristics than large farms. Some farm programs target keeping small farms in business. Together, small farms contribute a lot.

2. Prices went down the last time I did a survey.

Prices are affected by these reports, but prices go up about as often as they go down. Without public information middlemen and retailers are more likely to benefit than the producers.

3. I'm too busy.

I know you are, but this won't take very long. Why don't we get started, and then if you need to leave, we can finish up another time? (Or) I can go through the questionnaire fairly quickly if you can do it now. If not, when would be a better time for me to contact you?

4. It's not mandatory.

It is very important to you and the agricultural industry. Farm organizations, the Extension Service, university staff, congressmen, and agriculture reporters support these surveys. (Or) It is important that farmers are heard. Surveys are a means of letting others know the current farm situation. (Or) Don't you think that it is important that farmers are heard? This survey is a means of letting others know the current farm situation.

5. I am contacted for surveys too often.

We understand that you get a lot of requests for information. I collect the official unbiased data on agriculture.

Small operations rotate in and out of surveys while large operations are asked to participate more frequently.

6. It's none of the government's business what I farm.

Your farm data is kept strictly confidential. It is used only in combination with other reports and is not given to anyone outside of NASS.

7. I don't use the reports.

Actually, you probably do indirectly. For example, agriculture farm reporters use our reports to keep you updated on agriculture news by radio, newspapers, and farm publications.

8. I don't do surveys.

This isn't just any survey. We collect the official data used by Congress for decisions on the Farm Bill, enhancing exports, and proving the effects that weather has on crops.

9. Why do you need so much information about my finances?

Farm disaster relief legislation relies heavily on financial information.

10. This information will be used against me.

Actually, this data is frequently used to promote agriculture and explain its contribution to the State's economy. Agribusinesses use the data to locate suppliers and processors near producers to reduce transportation costs.