

2023 ARMS III – WHY?

Why are we doing this survey ?

We already covered Purpose

Why should the operator complete this survey ?

Getting your foot in the door

Benefits

Refusal Conversions

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Getting your Foot in the door

- **ENUNERATOR GUIDE BOOKLET**
- **Be Educated about the survey**
- **Be polite and respectful and honest**
- **Be to the point (time is money)**
- **Be organized**

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Top 6 Uses of ARMS III Data (Why Should I Report?)

1) **Measure of Financial Health**

ARMS is the primary source of information on the financial condition of America's farms and the economic well-being of America's farm households. ARMS provides the **ONLY** National perspective on the annual changes in the financial conditions of production agriculture

2) **Better Policy**

Many policy decisions are made that directly affect farmers. ARMS provides farmers with best means to ensure policy makers have accurate information when making those decisions. The next Farm Bill will rely heavily on ARMS data.

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Top 6 Uses of ARMS III Data (Why Should I Report?)

3) **Cost of Production**

ARMS data allow analysts to determine production costs of various crop and livestock commodities, and the relative importance of various production expense items.

4) **National Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

ARMS data provide the farm sector portion of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While the farm sector portion may be small, its volatility must be accurately measured to identify the sources of change in the overall economy.

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Top 6 Uses of ARMS III Data (Why Should I Report?)

5) **Production vs Environment**

ARMS gathers information about relationships between agricultural production and the environment which allow analysts to understand the factors in producing high quality food while maintaining the long term viability of natural resources and rural communities.

6) **Informs Service Providers**

ARMS data are used by lenders, input providers, farm associations, and extension advisors to track the financial performance and outlook for agriculture, to evaluate credit and lending conditions, and formulate sound strategies.

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How does this help/benefit me and my operation?

- Big picture
 - Overall Farm Picture - Links Enterprise, Whole Farm, & Household Income, Expenses, Assets, Debt
 - National Ag policies, taxes, health care, Farm Bill, Net Farm Income
- Then break it down to the local picture
 - Local community – public utilities, highways, hospitals
 - Local Ag (commodity) industry – associations, businesses,
 - Local Agricultural Aids - Ag research and extension, NRCS, FSA, Ag Farm Credit

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Find a Local Example

- Use Twitter, Google, Yahoo, etc.
- Search for “Indiana/Ohio/Michigan net farm income”
- Have your enumerators try this on their iPad or phone.
- Media sources: ERS/NASS, Farm and Dairy, Ohio’s and Michigan’s Ag Net, Ohio’s Country Journal, OSU, Purdue, MSU, Michigan Farm News
- Extension Offices – outlook forum meetings, specialty meetings

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How to respond to Farmers defenses...

- I (the respondent) have no time...
 - Yes, it's a long survey but...
 - Records, taxes, documents will make it go quicker...
 - I have been trained to accurately and efficiently complete the questionnaire.
- You ask too many questions/too personal...
 - You are just a number to us – to be summarized to give an OVERALL picture in the Ag industry.
 - Many questions don't apply (crop only operations likely won't have livestock expenses).
- I only fill out mandatory surveys...
 - This gives a complete picture just like Census but you can have real time numbers (annually instead of just 5yr numbers)

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How to respond to Farmers defenses...

- None of the Government's business....
 - National programs – FSA/NRCS/ERS, Farm Bill, crop insurance, WHOLE farm picture
- You are a stranger (or worse) a friend of the respondent...
 - Comes back to being too personal..."I signed a Confidentiality... and I remember nothing..."
- I'm too small to matter/only this or that (hay, horses, sheep, llamas)
 - Remember screener
 - You, the farmer, (and only you) will account for all the other people that have small farms or that only have a little of this and a little of that...only your voice will be heard.

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How to respond to Farmers defenses...

- I'm picked too often – pick someone else
 - We have a unbiased, random survey selection (I know it doesn't feel like it sometimes)
- I'm not a FARM
 - Remember screener
 - You (and only you) will account for all the other people that are small farms or that only have a little of this and a little of that
- My voice will not matter – no one will hear
 - BUT you will be heard – remind them who uses our data

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In Conclusion

- Make sure you can answer questions from respondents?
 - Who uses the data?
 - What benefit is in it for me?
 - How long will this take?
 - Why are the questions so invasive?
 - Why do you need my information?
- If you can't answer these questions - talk with supervisors, experienced enumerators, NASS staff
- BE PREPARED

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