

Friday Feedback for October 25, 2019

CAPI Labor Issue

It was brought to our attention that the “DK” feature in the CAPI Calculator for the Ag Labor Survey isn’t working properly. NASS HQ is aware of the problem but noted it will take some time to fix. In the meanwhile, enumerators are encouraged to leave a comment where a DK can’t be left to help explain the situations.

ARMS II/FCUS Update

We’re about halfway through the data collection period for ARMS II, and forms have been trickling in to the office. We understand that farmers are very busy with harvest at this time and are difficult to catch, but please keep trying and please be sure to keep your supervisors informed on your progress. At this point in both ARMS II and FCUS, all enumerators should have attempted to contact their samples at least once to try to set up the interview. NASDA Coordinators will be reaching out to supervisors to discuss each group’s progress on these important surveys.

One item that we’ve discovered now that some of the forms are in the computer: On question 26 on both the FCUS and the ARMS II, if a respondent in column 1 indicates that they NEVER use a particular source of information for making pest management decisions (code 4), then no value is required in column 2 (leave it blank). Also as a reminder, if University/Cooperative Extension is NEVER used (code 4) in question 26, then question 27 should be left blank.

Saying Goodbye

This week, the Great Lakes Region said goodbye to another one of its statisticians.

Takiyah Walker has been an Agricultural Statistician in the Great Lakes Regional Field Office since summer 2016, working on a variety of projects, including Peaches, Wheat, Hay Prices and Production, the Prices Paid Survey, and the Cost of Pollination Survey while contributing her help on several other projects. She had previously interned with the Eastern Mountain Regional Field Office in Louisville, KY in the summer of 2015. She is a 2016 graduate of Virginia State University with a degree in agriculture. She has accepted a position at NASS Headquarters in Washington, DC with the Livestock Branch’s Poultry and Specialty Commodity Section working on the national Broiler program as well as the Bee and Honey program. Her last day in East Lansing was October 16 before her move to Washington.

Top Pumpkin Producing States

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, nearly 65,900 acres of pumpkins were harvested in the US in 2018, producing more than 1.5 billion pounds of usable pumpkins with more than 2 billion produced overall.

The top nine states together (Illinois, California, Ohio, Indiana, Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina and New York) produced nearly 75% of that. Approximately 15 percent of the pumpkin acreage is used to make processed pumpkin products. Illinois remains the leading processed pumpkin producing state, producing more than the other 5 leading states combined and about half of the national total.



Pumpkin varieties for commercial canning are all Cucurbita. Moschata, a tan-colored (rather than orange), firm-fleshed, and elongated fruit. The most common variety used for processed pumpkin is Libby’s Select Dickinson. In 2016, the average pumpkin yield per acre among the top six states was 24,100 pounds and ranged considerably from 11,100 to 38,900 pounds.

Friday Feedback for October 18, 2019

iPad Updates – Laird/Lawson

Thanks to everyone for their patience throughout this week as we have muddled through the updates to all of the iPads. We understand this has been a slow, challenging, and frustrating process for many people, but fortunately it has been a slow week as far as CAPI data collection is concerned. It is critically important that as we get through the last few iPads requiring updates and that you remain in communication with your supervisor or NASDA Coordinator regarding the status of your iPad and where you are in the migration process. Do not be surprised if you are contacted by someone from the office if it appears on our end that your iPad is still out of compliance. With Ag Labor and Objective Yield both starting up next week, and with November Ag Yield right around the corner, it will be especially important that everyone's iPads are up and fully functional by the beginning of the week. Please monitor the "Alerts" section of the GLR Home Page for status updates.

ARMS II & FCUS Updates – Miyares

We have been slowly receiving ARMS II and FCUS forms back from the field, and for the most part, things we have seen have looked pretty good. We have learned along the way regarding some of the new production practices questions in Section E of both forms:

- If a respondent indicates that they are using custom sprayers to apply any chemicals to the fruit or wheat crops, and you are unable to get permission to contact the custom sprayer, please make good notes. Please indicate "DK" or use code "99" in areas where it seems appropriate to record this as an answer. For questions where "DK" is not an option, please write the DK in the margins and be sure to follow the appropriate skip instructions
- We are seeing a number of respondents indicate that they didn't spray their crops this year, either because they are organic producers or because their wheat crop was too poor to both spraying. In those cases, please take good notes. Please indicate "None" or "No" where appropriate regarding production practices tied to spray activities that may not have taken place. If recording "None" or "No" is not an option, please write "No" or "None" as needed in the margins. If you are asked to record a reason code why a particular practice wasn't used, and the reason is that operator didn't spray at all, use code 6 (other) as the reason code.
- For question 26 (both ARMS and FCUS), although the directions say "select one" in column 2, you are allowed to have more than one primary and non-primary source for making pest management decisions. For example, if a producer makes most pest management decisions based on pesticide product labels and chemical dealers, both can be coded as "Primary" (code 1) in column 2.
- For question 28 (both ARMS and FCUS), be sure to only fill in columns appropriate to what was sprayed (insecticides, fungicides, herbicides). If nothing was sprayed, those cells can be left blank.

Also, as a reminder:

- Please record start and end times of your interviews in military time.
- Please record your time and mileage in iSolved on a daily basis.
- Please leave box 9989 (on the back page, which is labeled "POID") completely blank. It is not needed for this survey.
- In Michigan: Please return any unused Recertification Records (bubble sheets) with the questionnaires. Unused forms can be used for future chemical surveys.

What Happens to Last Minute CAPI Submissions? – Miyares

CAPI is set up to allow submissions up until 11:59 p.m. on the last day of data collection. As soon as 12:00 a.m. comes, all of the records that were in CAPI disappear from both the enumerator and supervisor listings. This includes any records coded as “Saved for Review” that the supervisor didn’t get a chance to review because he/she didn’t want to stay up until midnight looking for work that might have been submitted at the last minute.

While the Regional Field Office has ways to pull these reports out of the system after CAPI turns off, it is not easy to turn them back on for supervisors to review. To that end, if you are going to submit reports in CAPI at the last minute, and you want to make sure you get credit for your work, we ask that you do one of two things, depending upon your supervisor’s preference:

- Submit the forms earlier in the day and communicate with your supervisor about work they might need to review before midnight that night, or
- Submit the form using “Final Submission” rather than “Saved for Review” to make sure the data makes it all the way to the regional office.

National Sweetest Day October 19

National Sweetest Day, celebrated in several Midwestern and Northeastern states, originally began in Cleveland, Ohio in October 1922. In its early days, the holiday was designed as a way to do something nice for the less fortunate, such as pass out candy and gifts to orphans, the elderly, and the disabled. Today, Sweetest Day, like Valentine’s Day, is associated with heart-shaped boxes of candy, and most greeting cards designed for Sweetest Day are romantic.



Friday Feedback for October 11, 2019

iPad Migration

The iPad wipe/reset will occur sometime after midnight tonight (Friday, October 11, 2019). All NASDA iPads turned on and connected to Wi-Fi or cellular will get the signal to reset. The wipe/reset will erase all data and apps on your iPad. Check with your supervisor about what to do after the reset. Stay up-to-date with the latest information by visiting the [GRL Website](#).

Ag Yield Responses Continue to Improve – Miyares

We would like to thank all of the Great Lakes enumerators for their extra efforts this month with the October Ag Yield Survey. Our regional response rate for this survey was up 6.9 percent from a year ago. Indiana led the region’s increase with a 7.6 percent improvement over last year while Michigan went up by 7.0 percent and Ohio’s response rate rose by 5.2 percent. This month is the fifth time this year that the Monthly Ag Yield survey achieved an improved response rate from last year! This month’s report, released Thursday October 10 at noon on the NASS Website, contained updated yield estimates for corn, soybeans, dry beans, and dry hay for our region. Having solid response rates helps to strengthen the estimates we publish in service to agriculture. Great job once again, and thank you!

Friday Feedback for October 4, 2019

IMPORTANT: MAJOR IPAD UPDATE COMING! – Lawson/Laird

A major security update, which will completely erase all data and apps from enumerator iPads, is coming at 3:00 a.m. on Saturday October 12. Specific instructions on how to reset your iPads once the wipe takes place will be coming from the Regional Field Office through your Supervisor or NASDA Coordinator. For now, there are four important steps that must be taken by ALL enumerators and supervisors in order to minimize the disruption caused by this process:

- 1) **Be on the lookout for an e-mail from USDA with a User Name and PIN.** This e-mail will be sent to the address where you received a test message earlier this week from your NASDA Coordinator. When you see this e-mail, either print it or write down the new user name and PIN and keep it handy. This will be the **ONLY** way you will be able to reset your iPad once it has been wiped clean, especially if you are unable to access e-mail except through your iPad. The e-mail should be arriving by Wednesday October 9.
- 2) **All enumerator time sheets for Pay Period 20 (September 29 – October 12) must be completed and submitted in iSolved by Thursday night October 10.** Supervisors must have all timesheets validated by Friday October 11 at 11:59 p.m. Any hours people expect to work on October 11 or 12 should be included in this time sheet, and any necessary adjustments can be made during the following pay period.
- 3) **All survey work for Small Grain CAPS or Quarterly Colony Loss MUST be submitted in CAPI by Friday October 11 at 11:59 p.m.** CAPI will be unavailable on your iPads starting at 3:00 a.m. on October 12 until your iPad is set up again with all of the icons and apps.
- 4) **Leave your iPad ON overnight on October 11.**

If you feel comfortable enough to attempt to set up your iPad by yourself after the factory reset takes place and once the instructions arrive, you are welcome to do so; however, if you believe you will need help to set up your iPad from scratch, you will need to wait until Tuesday October 15 when Regional Office Staff will be available to assist after the Federal holiday.

Selling the new Production Practices Questions on ARMS II and FCUS – Miyares/Goings

We've received some questions from field enumerators asking for guidance on how to help operators understand the importance of the new Production Practices questions on the ARMS Phase II and the FCUS. The questions were designed to help gain a better understanding of grower pesticide spraying practices with a focus on grower participation in programs to manage pesticide drift, decisions regarding application methods, nozzle choices, and spray tank management, and practices employed to manage pesticide resistance and reduce pesticide exposure to pollinators. Here's an abbreviated answer:

“These new questions were added to the Chemical Use Surveys at the request of USDA's Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP), a group that works hand in hand with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on pesticide registration review, regulation and policies. Data from these questions help to assure the EPA and other regulatory agencies that pesticide regulatory decisions are based on modern, realistic agricultural practices as reported by growers. In return, OPMP wants to use the data to allocate resources appropriate to educate growers on the appropriate use of pesticides and integrated pest management strategies.”

Moving forward, the intent is that these new questions will be included on future ARMS II Production Practices Reports (PPR) and on both the Vegetable and Fruit Chemical Use Surveys, administered in alternating years. For more information, please consult your interviewer's manual or the survey specific information on the GLR Purdue Website.

Hiring for the Population Census

Every ten years, the U.S. Census Bureau is responsible for conducting the nationwide population census. While the next census itself will be taken in 2020, the Census Bureau is already recruiting to fill thousands of Census Taker positions across the country. Applicants are encouraged to apply online at www.2020census.gov/jobs, or to call toll-free at 1-855-JOB-2020 with questions, or to obtain more information or assistance. You can also visit www.census.gov/regions for information on how to contact your Regional Census Center.

An accurate count is the goal of every census, the 2020 Census included. The results of the census have real-world impacts, and consequences, for communities across our country, from determining the number of seats each state has in the U.S.

House of Representatives to planning for roads, schools, and hospitals. By being a census taker in your community, you can help ensure that your community is properly represented.

If you pursue this opportunity, please be sure it does not adversely affect your ability to handle your NASDA workload. We realize that NASDA offers part time and intermittent work, with no guarantees of minimum work and that most of you have other activities as sources of income. As part of that understanding, we have, and always will, maintained the expectation that you will be able to properly manage your assignments when you take them. As always, communication is the key, so for this and all other matters, don't hesitate to reach out to your supervisor.

Fire Prevention Day is October 9th

According to legend, on October 8, 1871, Mrs. O'Leary was in her barn, milking her cow. The cow kicked over a lamp, which started the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The fire burned for over 27 hours. When it was over, more than 300 people were killed, 100,000 people were left homeless, and over 17,000 structures were destroyed.

The Great Chicago fire sparked major efforts in fire prevention. Forty years later, the Fire Marshall's Association of North America (FMANA) held the first Fire Prevention Day. In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed Fire Prevention Week as the week in which October 9th falls. The Saturday during Fire Prevention Week is Fire Service Recognition Day.

