

Friday Feedback for July 26, 2019

NAHMS Due Date Reminder:

As a reminder, the last day to ship NAHMS Goat Survey forms back to East Lansing is Monday August 5. As of Friday July 26 at noon, we have only received about 140 of the 400 forms back in the office.

One item we would appreciate your paying close attention to when completing the forms are the relationships between the age groups and the primary use on pages 2 and 3. In addition to the total number of goats on line 5c matching up to the number by primary use in question 3 parts a-d, the totals by age group reported in question 2 should also be comparable to the breakdown by age groups in question 5. For example the number of kids less than 1 year old reported in question 2a should match the number of market kids and replacement kids reported in question 5.

June Area Re-Interview Success!

A huge THANK YOU to everyone for their hard work on the June Area Re-Interview Survey. We received all of the worksheets and photos back in time for everything to get processed, and out of more than 1100 tracts revisited, there were only two fields where enumerators were unable to determine what was there because the fields were not easily accessible from public roads for observation and the operator was unavailable. Stats in the Regional Field Office in East Lansing are analyzing the data now and will be making their recommendations to HQ regarding potential updates to planted acreage of corn and soybeans in our region. The results of your efforts will be published in the August 12 *Crop Production* report, which will also include the first forecast of yields for corn, soybeans, hay, dry beans, and sugarbeets as well as updated yields for winter wheat, barley and oats.

Objective Yield Update:

We still don't have as much information to share as we would like regarding the Objective Yield Surveys this year. We know we're only going to have half the samples we had last year, and we know that the first data collection will begin at the end of August in preparation for the September *Crop Production* report, but we've been told that samples may not be known until as late as August 2, since they need to sample from the fields from the updated June Area Survey results. As soon as we know where the samples are located, we will be reaching out to supervisors to get work assigned. Once complete, we can start shipping out materials, including manuals, quizzes, and other home-study materials in preparation for the first mini-schools in our region, which are scheduled for August 8 and 9. We will still be holding a teleconference with supervisors on July 31 to discuss mini-school plans. We appreciate your patience and understanding with this delay. Please be sure to stay in communication with your supervisor over the next week, as things are going to happen very quickly once samples become available.

National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day

In 2017, President Donald J. Trump declared July 27 to be National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day to be a day to honor the patriots who defended the Korean Peninsula against the spread of Communism in what became the first major conflict of the Cold War.

Situated between World War II and the Vietnam War, the Korean War has often been labeled as the "Forgotten War" despite having claimed the lives of more than 36,000 Americans. For three years, beginning in June 1950, a coalition made up of troops from the United States and fifteen allies and partners fought an unrelenting war of attrition against North Korean forces, backed by the Soviet Union and China. On July 27, 1953, North Korea, China, and the United Nations signed an armistice suspending all hostilities.

On July 27, we remember those who laid down their lives in defense of liberty and advancing the cause of freedom, in a land far from home.

Friday Feedback for July 19, 2019

Upcoming Due Date Reminder:

As a reminder, the last day to ship June Area Re-Interview forms back to East Lansing is this coming Monday July 22. As of Friday July 19 at noon, we have received about 800 of the 1100 forms back in the office. Most of the forms are looking good, and many of the unusual situations have had good comments to explain the situations. We appreciate your extra efforts on these in order to help improve our planted acreage indications for the 2019 crop year!

June Area Re-Interview Tract #NAM?:

We've received a few calls in the office asking us to make sense when the re-interview worksheet says that the tract letter is "#NAM?" The person who created the worksheets at our HQ was very good about being able to match tract letters to tract numbers for the first round of the alphabet (A = 1, B = 2, etc.) but once it got beyond tract Z, the process failed. If you aren't sure what tract letter it's supposed to be, please refer to the "Tract Letter to Number Conversion" Chart, which can be found by touching [HERE](#).

Other Upcoming Due Dates:

Don't forget that all NAHMS forms need to be completed and shipped back to East Lansing by August 5. We understand that folks are busy with the June Area Re-Interviews but we've received only a relatively small number of them so far, and the August 5 deadline is only about two weeks away, and we'll have a few other surveys going out before that's over, including Ag Yield (all states), Apple/Peach Forecast (MI Only) and Potato PDI (MI Only).

What's the Story with Objective Yield?:

The Re-Interview Survey has caused a delay in the availability of our Objective Yield samples. Knowing that many fields were identified in June with corn and soybean acres left to be planted, and with the Re-Interview survey showing that many operators did either switch crops intended to be planted or didn't plant anything at all in those fields, our HQ elected to wait until after the Re-Interview survey is over to select the fields for the Objective Yield survey, minimizing the likelihood of lost samples due to misidentification. The GLR's Objective Yield Team will be meeting on Monday July 22 to discuss how this delay will impact our planning, preparation, and training plan for this year's OY surveys. Please stay tuned for more information.

Shipping Aerial Photos

Do As I Say: In our efforts to get Area Re-Interview forms & the coordinating photos shipped to 100+ enumerators as quickly as possible, we opted to put all of the survey information in the photo box. This is not normal procedure for us. As a rule, enumerators should NEVER send questionnaires back in photo boxes, as we often wait until later in the day to open and the photo boxes, and materials could get missed.

You Can Help: When sending aerial photos back to the office it would be helpful if the photos are sorted face up with "north" in the same place. Photos are large and slippery, they are checked in by scanning the barcode at the top of the back. Following this procedure will make the check in go a lot quicker and easier.

Hot Weather Safety

Dangerously high temperatures are back and safety is once again the primary concern with fieldwork. The best guidance every year is simply this: Do not go out if you are not feeling well, or if you gut tells you it might be a bad idea. When you do go out, notify someone of where you are going and when you will be back. There are many neat tracking features that you can enable on your phone that might help people know where you are.

That little voice in the back of your head can be a lifeline. Know the signs of heat related injury and the immediate steps that need to be taken for first aid. Applying cold compresses to the back of your neck and wrists can aid in lowering body temperature quickly. Remember, heat exhaustion and dehydration attacks your cognitive ability and judgement, so it does not take long to find yourself on a slippery slope. The clothing you wear must be protective but also loose and breathable, and a hat and sunscreen are a must. Eat well and avoid alcoholic drinks the day before you go out. Lastly, load your vehicle with the things that will help you get through the day comfortably and safely. Carry many water bottles and freeze a few so they will be cold by the end of the day. I always liked the idea of filling a cooler with ice and a cheap bottle of aftershave (not lotion) then stuffing in some washcloths. The cold cloths along with the evaporative qualities of the alcohol in the aftershave can cool you down quickly. And you will smell good if you have to make an in-person visit at the end of the day.

Water Bottles in Hot Cars

You probably think it's a responsible move to bring a water bottle with you when you're out as it's important to drink plenty of water throughout your day to stay healthy and focused, especially when the temperature is very hot. Grabbing a water bottle on your way out the door is a smart move, but there's one thing you should never do when you're taking bottled water out with you: leave it in the car. When sunlight is refracted through a plastic water bottle, it's just like light traveling through a magnifying glass that can set things on fire. If you aren't going to have time to remove the bottles, just make sure that they're kept out of direct sunlight.

Not only can water bottles cause a fire hazard when left in your car, but they can also become unsafe for your direct health, as well. Studies conducted in the past few years have been showing that when plastic bottles are left in a hot enough car for long enough, harmful chemicals may be released into the water.

Presidential Proclamation

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated July as **National Ice Cream Month** and the third Sunday of the month as **National Ice Cream Day**. In 2019, **National Ice Cream Day** will be Sunday, July 21.



Friday Feedback for July 12, 2019

Reminders about CAPI coding for last-day-of-survey submissions: – Miyares

NASS Headquarters is changing some of the procedures it is using to better account for missing reports towards the end of data collection starting with the August 1 Ag Yield and Small Grain CAPS surveys, so with that in mind, we thought it might be a good reminder of how best to handle forms that are submitted on the very last day of a survey:

- We have seen the occasional record come through that really should have been a refusal or an inaccessible coded as a complete report, only to find that when we review the information submitted that the farmer didn't tell us anything. Those records end up having to get recoded as refusal or inaccessible when they arrive in the office and it takes critical time away from processes that need to happen before we can get clean on the last day of the survey. As a general rule, do not code any record as "complete" that does not have any data on it.
- We've seen a number of reports recently that say that the operator was unavailable to do the report or that no one was ever home when visited or no one ever answered the phone when phoning was attempted that were coded as "refusals" rather than as "inaccessible". Be cautious about what you are calling a "refusal" when submitting your reports because we do look carefully at response histories and refusals are treated very differently than inaccessible records when it comes to follow-on survey handling. The computer coding doesn't make a distinction between "soft refusals" and "hard refusals", but comments certainly can. An operator going out of his way to avoid meeting with an enumerator or who tells an operator that he/she is too busy to complete a report is a soft refusal. An operator that is never available when you try to contact them is simply an inaccessible.
- If you are unable to reach an operator and would normally code the record as inaccessible, perhaps consider not submitting the record at all UNLESS you need to submit a comment about the operation that someone in the office needs to see that will help us when we attempt the next contact. For example, comments such as "phone number was disconnected and I never was able to contact the operator" or "visited the location and saw the property was abandoned and no one in the neighborhood knows what happened to the operator" are important because we know we're going to need to do some digging before we attempt the next contact. However, "Tried three times and never got an answer" or "no one was available to help with the survey when I visited" aren't. The computer will automatically code it as inaccessible for us and attribute the form to the enumerator assigned to it, so submitting it as inaccessible in CAPI just adds time needlessly to process unless your comment will be helpful for a future contact.
- While the "call history" features are beneficial for you and for your supervisor to know what has been attempted and when, none of the comments entered there come back to the office. If you do have a comment that you NEED to relay to the office, please be sure to enter it in the main body of the form when submitted in CAPI, either as a comment attached to a particular question or in the "enumerator comment" boxes provided.

June Area Re-Interview Update – Miyares/Cloos

We've started to receive a number of re-interview forms back already and things are looking good! As we've reviewed some of the earliest forms, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- On the worksheet, the “Current Information” is given for each field. The total acres in the field wouldn't be expected to change. If there is some unusual situation, please let us know.
- Please do your best to fill out the information for required fields completely and leave comments to help clarify the farmer's intentions. Cells may appear gray on the worksheet simply because we didn't print forms in color, not because they are supposed to be grayed out.
- Please be sure to indicate whether any corn is to be harvested for grain or for silage. While this might not be obvious through observation, your knowledge of the farm and your communications with the farmer will help to make this clear, especially in a year where farmers are being permitted to grow corn for silage on ground that has been classified as having “prevented planting”. In any case, we do need to update that value in the computer on our end.
- As with the June Area survey before it, don't forget to complete your time sheet in iSolved every day.

Feel free to contact one of us or your NASDA Coordinator if you have any questions, and thank you for all of your hard work on this important project.



Friday Feedback for July 5, 2019

Additional Information about the June Area Re-Interview Survey – Miyares

By now, you all should have heard that NASS is going to conduct a “re-interview” survey to shore up the planted acreage indications from June. Many of you who worked the June Area survey know that at the start of June, there were many fields left to be planted and a lot of uncertainty regarding if those fields were ever going to get planted, so we recorded their best intentions at the time, knowing that those intentions were subject to change based on weather and market conditions. From July 8-22, we are going to be revisiting all June Area Tracts where there were corn or soybean acres indicated left to be planted to determine what finally happened in those fields.

Regional Field Office Staff in East Lansing worked diligently late into Wednesday afternoon to prepare UPS packages for the 100+ enumerators who will be revisiting over 1100 tracts across 350 segments in our region. In our rush to get materials out before the holiday, we generated enumerator memos and training materials based on what little information was available to us at the time. By the time we had received the final worksheets at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon, changing the enumerator memo and instructions to match the materials received would have meant delaying getting the packages to enumerators. Electronic copies of updated instructions will be posted to the Purdue Site. Highlights of some of the changes are as follows:

- The Project Code for the re-interview survey has been changed to **167**. Initially we were told that we would still be using Project Code 124, but that officially changed today (Friday, July 5).
- The instructions note that the last day to ship forms back to the Regional Field Office is July 22. In addition to the forms, we will also need the photos returned to East Lansing so that we can make sure that any field boundaries that needed to change as a result of changed planting intentions get modified before the photos are either filed or sent back out for Objective Yield.
- As with the June Survey, please do not send questionnaires to East Lansing in photo boxes. All enumerators should have received enough overnight UPS labels to ship questionnaires and photos separately.
- As with the June Survey, please send questionnaires to East Lansing as they are completed. Please do NOT hold on to questionnaires until the last minute, as we are on tight deadlines to reprocess the information once it arrives.
- The example of the worksheet layout provided was based on a 2015 survey conducted in Western Corn Belt States which focused on unplanted Soybeans and Sorghum and not on Corn. An updated example of the worksheet, as well as additional examples on what to do with unplanted corn, are on the Purdue site. Look for the links for “Area Re-Interview” in the *Paper Surveys* listings of the GLR Home Page.
- The enumerator memo refers to the 9901 and 793 box values from the June Area Survey. These have been updated in the documentation to reflect the “June Area Response Code” and “Section D Completion Code”.
- Please write notes and comments on the worksheets explaining any situations which may need clarification. Please also write good notes if you are unable to determine what happened in those selected fields.

Other important information:

- About three quarters of the 100+ packages were shipped to enumerators on Wednesday afternoon July 3 before the 3:30 p.m. pickup time. The remaining packages will be sent out today (July 5).
- Please be certain to review the contents of your packages carefully. They should include the enumerator memo, instruction sheets with examples, assignment listings with operator comments, the worksheets on which you are to record the final plantings and make your comments, extra Section D Supplements to help determine how fields may need to be split as a result of changed intentions, new UPS Overnight Shipping labels and the photos for the segments being revisited.

- Some of the photos had to be “fixed” after they arrived at the office because of how data were recorded on the original Section D forms. The most common issues that had to get “fixed” were fields that had 5 or more acres of waste, farmsteads which contained items other than simply the farmstead, fields which had both waste and woods, fields with two crops that wasn’t a double cropping situation, and fields with both idle land and cropped land. If you have any questions about what was recorded on the original tract questionnaires, please contact the Regional Field Office in East Lansing and the records can be pulled.
- The scope of this survey is limited to just the Area tracts where acreage left to be planted was recorded. No “list” records were included as the June Crops APS (List) Survey didn’t ask about acreage left to be planted, even though several enumerators did write good notes about what was left unplanted.
- Although assignment listings are available on the iPad, all work for this survey must be done on paper.
- The Corn and Soybean Objective Yield samples in Indiana and Ohio, which are based on field level data recorded in Section D of the June Area Survey, are being delayed until the Re-Interview Survey is complete to be certain that the fields sampled for OY were actually planted to the target crops.

Please feel free to contact your NASDA Coordinator if you have any questions.

Due Date Reminders:

As a reminder, the following surveys have final submission dates coming up in the next few days:

- July Ag Yield: Must be submitted by Saturday July 6 at 11:59 p.m.
- July Cattle: Must be submitted by Tuesday July 9 at 11:59 p.m.
- July Milk: Must be submitted by Tuesday July 9 at 11:59 p.m.
- ARMS 1: Must be submitted by Friday July 12 at 11:59 p.m.

NASS Suspends Data Collection for Honey Bee Colonies Survey

The Quarterly Colony Loss Survey, which would have been conducted this week, has been suspended. The annual *Honey Bee Colonies* report, which is still scheduled for release on August 1, will contain data from the January 1 and April 1 surveys. For more information, touch [HERE](#).

Independence Day

Hope everyone had a safe and happy holiday!

