

## Friday Feedback for Thursday, December 23, 2021

### January 1 Survey Packets On Their Way!

Enumerator and supervisor packets containing survey information for the January 1 Surveys were shipped via UPS as follows:

- Indiana: Monday 12/20 and Tuesday 12/21
- Michigan: Tuesday 12/21 and Wednesday 12/22/2021
- Ohio: Tuesday 12/21 – Floriculture Only

Barring any shipping delays due to the busy Christmas season, you should be receiving these packets by Friday 12/24. If any enumerators expecting a packet do not receive one by Friday, then please contact your NASDA Coordinator or the Regional Field Office.

The remaining survey materials for Ohio enumerators have been delayed due to problems with the questionnaires and other technical difficulties, but should arrive before data collection for the January 1 surveys begins on December 30. Any other unanticipated delays will be communicated to the supervisors by Brooke.

### Floriculture Odds and Ends – Collom/Laird

Included in the packets being sent to enumerators this week are labeled paper questionnaires for the Commercial Floriculture Survey. Although there is a CAPI instrument available for the Floriculture survey, all data for this survey should be collected on paper INCLUDING refusals and inaccessible. CAPI listings should only be used for monitoring the check-in status of completed questionnaires and should NOT be used for data collection. Please review the information at this [LINK](#) for more information about data collection procedures for this survey.

All paper questionnaires, including completed forms, refusals, and inaccessible operations, must be returned to the Regional Field Office. Floriculture is a unique survey where all non-response must be estimated. To do that, it is much easier for us to have the paper forms in hand.

There are training materials for the Floriculture survey available on the Purdue GLR Website. Please note that some of the training materials that were produced by the NASS Training Group have not yet been updated from last year, but the changes to the survey between last year and this year are very minor, so the information should still be fairly relevant.

### Overtime for Fruit Chem – Goings/Miyares

If you need to work overtime for the Fruit Chemical Use Survey (FCUS), please be sure to have the hours preapproved by both your supervisor and by Paul.

Please review the last two weeks' editions of the Friday Feedback for more information about extensions to FCUS data collection and bubble sheet requirements for Michigan operators completing the ARMS II or FCUS.

<p><b>Other Information</b></p> <p>We will update this info when HQ's 2022 versions are available, so some of the plant types may be excluded in these old training documents, but the sections and content are still relevant/similar to last year</p>
<p><b>Interviewer Manual</b> (Updated 12/21/2021)</p> <p><b>Field Instructions</b></p> <p><b>2021 HQ Price and Survey Info</b> (will update when 2022 version is available)</p> <p><b>2021 HQ Survey Training</b> (will update when 2022 version is available)</p> <p><b>2021 Enum Training Video (Will update when new content is available, but still has relevant information)</b> (will update when 2022 version is available)</p> <p><b>NASDA Training Info</b> (Info may not yet be available try typing "flori" in the search box)</p>

## **Disconnect Reminders - Miyares**

The procedures for handling disconnects for the January Surveys remain the same as in previous cycles. Please enter “Bad Ph” in the Attempted Call Log for any records where the phone number is bad. We will be querying the CAPI system on Wednesday January 5 looking for records with “Bad Ph”. Regional Field Office staff will conduct disconnect research on these records. Any updates we find will be updated in the “Enumerator Notes” and should be visible on these records no later than Friday January 7. Please do not submit records as “inaccessible” because of a disconnected phone number until research has been complete and we are able to determine that no new numbers are available. If one of the new numbers provided works, please be sure to update the contact information in CAPI. If some of the numbers do not work, please let us know through comments so we can make notes about bad numbers to not send out again.

## **Reopening Just a Little Bit More**

On Monday evening, December 20, NASDA Headquarters sent a memo to field enumerators to let them know that beginning January 3, 2022, some limited, in-person interviews in certain survey programs would be allowed. A copy of the memo can be read by clicking or tapping [HERE](#).

We are still waiting for specific guidance from our Survey Administration Branch regarding which specific survey programs will allow for face-to-face enumeration during this new phase. For now, the only records being considered for face-to-face interviews include a limited number of “high impact” records for ARMS II (44 total for the region, to be completed by January 14) and ARMS III (15 total for the region). NASDA Coordinators and Supervisors will be discussing these records specifically over the next few weeks and coming up with a plan for handling them. While we do expect more surveys, including ARMS III, will allow for limited personal interviewing, no decisions have been made on what might be possible at this time. We ask that you stay in communication with your supervisors and NASDA coordinators over the coming weeks.

The memo from NASDA also laid out several guidelines for in-person interviews that might take place while we are in this reopening phase, including the following:

- In-person interaction with respondents is limited to enumerators who are fully vaccinated ([as defined by CDC](#)) and have submitted all necessary documentation in iSolved.
- In-person interaction with respondents will be by appointment only (no cold visits).
  - Prior to meeting, the enumerator will need confirmation from all parties that they are not exhibiting (or have not recently exhibited) any COVID-19 symptoms.
  - Enumerators are required to wear masks during the entirety of the meeting.
  - Interviews should be conducted outdoors or in areas that allow for social distancing
- In-person interaction is limited to high-impact, critical, and/or special handling records identified by HQ or RFOs.
- Enumerators may request to opt out of in-person activities without fear of reprisal.
- PPE reimbursement is available to all employees.

## **Field Office Holiday Schedule**

With both Christmas and New Year’s Day falling on Saturdays this year, all NASS Offices will be closed on Friday, December 24 and Friday, December 31 in observance of the two holidays. The offices will be open between Monday, December 27 and Thursday, December 30; however, there will be no edition of the Friday Feedback published next week. Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season!

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, December 17, 2021**

### **Special Thank You – Johnson/Tolbert/Kalaus**

As the December Survey Cycle has wound down to a close, we wanted to send a special THANK YOU to all of the enumerators who have worked tirelessly over the past several weeks to get through what has been an extremely busy month. For the eight surveys which had due dates in December (Crops APS, Hogs, Dry Beans, Popcorn, Mint, Potato Stocks, Vegetables, and Hemp), our region's enumerators have gone through over 5,800 forms in CAPI, more than three times the number of records sent to the call centers, and our response rates continue to stay above those of the call centers.

These last two years, and especially the last two months in particular, have been challenging for all of us. Please know that we have heard your comments, concerns, frustrations and gripes, and are doing our best to communicate these to NASS and NASDA Management. We wish there was more that we could do for you to show our appreciation for you and your tireless efforts to help us achieve our mission of providing timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to agriculture. We know that the work we do in the regional office would be impossible without your efforts to collect data on our behalf. Let us all hope that 2022 can bring us back to a level of normality in both our work and home lives.

### **County Estimates Survey Update – Miyares/Cooper**

As the December surveys have wrapped up, we can switch our attention to the County Agricultural Production Survey (CAPS). Data collection for this survey will continue until January 17. At this point, we don't plan on removing any completed CAPS records from the CAPI listings unless requested by a supervisor, or if we need to start targeting specific counties for data collection and remove others which have already met publication criteria.

Please note that any operations in the CAPS sample that are matched with one of the January surveys (Cattle, Milk, Sheep & Goats, etc.) will be made unavailable in CAPI between 12/23 and 12/30 in order to give those operators a bit of a break before January Survey calling begins. It will also reduce the likelihood that we will be contacting an operator separate times for both surveys within the same week. The CAPS records should still be visible in the CAPI listings, but will be grayed out so that they cannot be opened.

### **Fruit Chem Extension/Bubble Sheet Procedures – Goings/Miyares**

Data collection for the Fruit Chemical Use Survey is being extended to January 21. All work must either be submitted in CAPI or shipped to the National Operations Divisions (NOD) to be keyed and scanned (if more than 50 chemicals were reported applied) no later than January 21.

For surveys you are able to complete before the end of the calendar year, please be sure to get any accompanying bubble sheets sent to the Regional Field Office so they can be processed for 2021. We need to get the information submitted to MDARD shortly after the new year if we want the credits to get counted towards 2021. For interviews completed after January 1, any completed bubble sheets may have to be processed for 2022 credits.

Please review last week's edition of the Friday Feedback for more information about the bubble sheet requirements.

### **Looking ahead to ARMS III – Erickson**

This year's ARMS III Surveys are scheduled to be mailed to respondents on December 27, with a follow-up mailing scheduled to take place on February 7. There will be three versions of the ARMS III questionnaire this year. These include the normal "Cost and Returns Report", a special version for dairy producers, and a special version for corn producers who were included in the ARMS II sample. Follow-up enumeration will take place between early February and mid-April.

The training model will be very similar to ARMS II. There will be a series of video presentations recorded by NASS staff from across the country posted to the Purdue site by mid-January. Mini-schools will be facilitated by NASDA Supervisors between late January and early February. Our goal is to have training materials and assignments shipped to enumerators on or around January 14. More information will be available as we get closer to that date.

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, December 10, 2021**

### **Impact Farms Identified in December Agricultural Survey – Miyares/Weber**

Thanks to everyone for their efforts on the December Agricultural Survey. We've got about one more week left in data collection and we're making great progress so far.

In order to maximize survey coverage, records that would be considered to have "high impact" on the survey indications have been identified and marked. A "high impact" farm is one where an operator may be one of the top five producers in the state for a certain targeted commodity on the survey. Comments have been added to these records to indicate which operators are impact farms. If you have one or more of these records in your CAPI listings, please give these records the highest priority in your data collection attempts this week.

### **Upcoming Due Dates**

With several surveys going on, it can be very easy to lose track of when the last date to submit records in CAPI for each survey should be. Please be mindful of upcoming due dates for the following surveys:

- Hemp Production Inquiry: Friday, December 10
- Vegetable Inquiry: Sunday, December 12
- Mint Inquiry: Monday, December 13
- December Crops APS/December Agricultural Survey: Thursday, December 16
- Dry Bean Inquiry: Thursday, December 16
- Popcorn Inquiry: Thursday, December 16

### **Bubble Sheet Reminder – Michigan Chemical Use Survey Respondents – Miyares/Goings/Weber**

If Michigan enumerators have any completed "MDARD Recertification Seminar Records" (also known as "Bubble Sheets") that were filled out with ARMS II or Fruit Chem respondents, please make sure we get those forms back to the Regional Field Office before the end of the calendar year. Fortunately, we do not need to get them signed by the operators this year, but we do need all of the information that would normally be collected on those forms. including the applicator license number, the first and last name of the license holder as printed on the card, the applicator type (private or commercial) and the category for the credits to be awarded (1A, 1C, Private Core, Commercial Core). Any bubble sheets received after the new year may need to have credits counted towards next year. If you have any questions about the bubble sheets or the procedures, please reach out to John or Paul at the Regional Field Office.

## **Checked In ARMS Removed from CAPI Listings – Miyares/Weber**

In order to alleviate some clogging of records on the CAPI listings during this busy data collection period, we have turned off any ARMS II records that were submitted in CAPI on or before December 6. We have left on everything else in the event that an operator sampled for both ARMS and a December 1 Survey might be able to complete both at the same time, or if an operator calls you back and wants to complete the ARMS. As a reminder, data collection for ARMS should be paused until after data collection for the December surveys are over, and then it can continue until January 14.

## **New Agroforestry Survey Coming in the Spring**

Agroforestry is the intentional integration of agriculture and forestry. America's working lands — farms, ranches, and forests — are facing increasing pressures to maximize production for a growing population while minimizing the impacts to wildlife, soils, water, and other ecosystem services on which we depend. The expansion of crops and other agricultural activities is generating a greater need for these production and protective services. Agroforestry has tremendous potential to restore and enhance ecosystem services critical to meeting these needs.

Very limited information is available on how prevalent agroforestry is in the United States and more specifically, which practices are utilized. The purpose of the survey is to develop a National and State-level inventory of the above agroforestry practices on farms and ranches in the United States. Information collected for various agroforestry practices, including windbreaks, shelterbelts, and hedgerows; silvopasture; riparian forest buffers; forest farming; and alley cropping, will be used to provide an indication of how well established the practice is, the benefits of the practice, and challenges for the establishment and management/maintenance of the practice.

While a significant percentage of the forms will be called from the NASS Data Collection Centers (DCCs), there will be a percentage of forms marked for data collection in CAPI. The data collection time frame coincides with the ARMS III timeline. More information will be provided as we get closer to the date.

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, December 3, 2021**

### **Another, Longer, ARMS II Extension – Miyares/Weber/Tolbert**

Thanks to everyone for all of your efforts so far with ARMS II. We know it hasn't been easy, but as with other surveys, you all have stepped up to the challenge.

Our headquarters has asked regional field offices to extend data collection on ARMS II until January 14 in hopes of finding operators who would be more willing to complete the survey now that harvest is essentially complete. The goal of the extension would be to increase response rates for ARMS II nationally.

The Regional Field Office is recommending a PAUSE for ARMS II data collection between December 7 and December 20. During this pause for ARMS II, GLR enumerators should focus efforts on other December 1 Surveys during this time frame, including Crops APS, Hogs, CAPS, Dry Beans, Mint, Popcorn, Potato Stocks, Fruit Chem, Veg, and Hemp.

Once we resume data collection on December 20, we will ask supervisors to work with enumerators who have called operators several times to closely look at their samples to determine if having the record called from a different phone number would increase the likelihood of response during the supplemental data collection period.

We do realize that some enumerators have started to submit ARMS II forms as either inaccessible or soft refusal. We ask that enumerators refrain from doing that at this time unless you are certain that the operator is not going to complete the survey at all. All hard refusals should still be submitted in CAPI with comments. We would also

like to work with supervisors to reactivate any records that were previously submitted as inaccessible or as soft refusals that could benefit from additional attempted contacts into early January.

For the time being, enumerators should hold on to all paper ARMS II forms, including blank ones, until they are told to either destroy them or send them to the National Operations Divisions (NOD) to be scanned and filed.

There are a significant number of ARMS II forms that are matched with January Livestock Surveys and Row Crop CAPS. The regional office is still trying to determine the best strategy for handling these records, taking into consideration respondent burden and coordination of forms. We also do not know how the extension of ARMS II data collection will impact the timeline for ARMS III at this time. We will share more information as it becomes available.

Data collection activities for the Fruit Chemical Use Survey in Michigan will continue as planned. Supervisors and enumerators are reminded that any expected overtime must be pre-approved by your NASDA Coordinator.

Please feel free to contact Ty Tolbert, John Miyares, or your NASDA Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Disconnect Reminders**

The procedures for handling disconnects for the January Surveys remains the same as in previous cycles. Please enter “Bad Ph” in the Attempted Call Log for any records where the phone number is bad. We will be querying the CAPI system between Monday 12/6 and Tuesday 12/7 looking for records with “Bad Ph”. Regional Field Office staff will conduct disconnect research on these records. Any updates we find will be updated in the “Enumerator Notes” and should be visible on these records no later than Thursday December 9, with the highest priority given to surveys due earlier. Please do not submit records as “inaccessible” because of a disconnected phone number until research has been complete and we are able to determine that no new numbers are available. If one of the new numbers provided works, please be sure to update the contact information in CAPI. If some of the numbers do not work, please let us know through comments so we can make notes about bad numbers to not send out again.

### **Looking for Volunteers to Provide Enumerator Testimonials – Erickson/Miyares**

The Cross-Regional Collaboration Team that is developing training materials for ARMS III is seeking enumerators interested in being a part of a training video where fellow NASDA staff can provide support and share ideas as to what strategies have worked well for getting complete reports by phone for longer surveys. Last year, a similar video was created by the Northern Plains region that included interviews with enumerators from Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. This year, the hope is to include enumerators from all over the country. Interviews would take place and be recorded over Zoom, then a team of editors would put together the video as a montage. If you are interested in participating in this project, please reach out to your supervisor or your NASDA Coordinator by Wednesday, December 8.

### **Michigan Performance Awards – Goings**

Congratulations to the following Michigan enumerators who earned performance awards for their hard work and dedication in 2021.

- Tonya Langdon
- Ken Rauscher
- Linda Newcomb
- Nohemi Barajas
- Roy Vanover
- Bob Haskin

- Kelly Mitchell
- Cathy Collins
- Pete Snell
- Charissa Kelly