

## **Friday Feedback for November 22, 2019**

### **Government Shutdown Averted for Now – Kalaus**

President Trump signed a short term spending bill on November 21 to avoid another government shutdown on November 22. The short term spending bill, known as a continuing resolution, funds the government at current levels through December 20. The White House and Congress will try to negotiate a deal before the December 20 deadline. We will keep NASDA staff informed as the situation changes.

### **ARMS II Wraps Up while FCUS Continues**

The Regional Field Office has received several Fruit Chemical Use Survey (FCUS) forms coded as “inaccessible” in the last few days. For these forms, we’re not certain if they were coded this way because the operator will not be available before the end of the survey, or if the enumerator sent the form back early thinking that we needed it back at the same time as the ARMS II forms, which were due back via UPS on November 20. As a reminder, data collection for the FCUS may continue into December, with the last day to ship completed forms to East Lansing being December 20. FCUS Forms that were sent back as inaccessible may be returned to the field for further attempts if the situation is not clear.

Thank you to everyone for your efforts to get the ARMS II Forms sent back to the Regional Field Office on time. As of 11:00 a.m. on November 22, all ARMS II forms have been accounted for.

### **Late Harvest Adds Challenges**

This has been an extremely frustrating growing season for farmers. Spring rains delayed planting of row crops into late June (and in some cases early July) with many growers electing not to plant anything and take an insurance payment for prevented planting. Dry weather throughout August hindered crop development, while wet weather in the early fall slowed harvest progress. Most recently, an early onset of winter in the northernmost parts of our region put an end to attempts to complete harvest before spring.

As data are collected for the December Surveys, please be sure to take detailed notes and enter comments regarding any unharvested acres and the operator’s intentions for those acres. The December Agricultural Survey asks questions specifically about unharvested acres of corn and soybeans. It is important for us to know whether those acres are going to be eventually harvested, even if not until springtime, or if they will be abandoned due to damage from cold and snow.

Due to delays in harvest progress this season, NASS will continue the National Weekly *Crop Progress* report for beyond the last currently scheduled date of November 25. Crop Weather reporters will continue to submit reports locally for a December 2 report, which will include crop progress and condition information for the week ending December 1, 2019. Summarized statistics will published in a National release, but state-specific releases will not be published after November 25. NASS will evaluate the harvest progress for all crops each week to determine how long to continue the report.

### **December Surveys Begin**

There are seven big surveys starting up right after Thanksgiving, including the December Agricultural Survey, Row Crop CAPS, December Hogs, Mint, Dry Beans, Popcorn, and Potato Stocks. Field kits were shipped to enumerators with survey information this week, and other survey information can be accessed through the GLR Home Page. Please pay attention to the due dates for each individual survey, and make sure that any matched surveys are completed by the earliest of the deadlines.

As noted in previous editions of the Friday Feedback, budgets are getting tighter as we approach the end of the year. **It is critical that your time sheets be completed on a daily basis in iSolved** so that we can keep track of available funds. As a reminder, all forms with a green Telephone Icon in your CAPI listings should be contacted

by telephone and not visited without prior authorization of your supervisor, and NO mileage expenses may be billed to Project Code 944 (Row Crop CAPS).

### **Always Read Friday Feedback**

Over the past year, the Surveys Team at the Great Lakes Regional Field Office has increased resources to make sure that the weekly Friday Feedback newsletter contains important current and relevant content and information for our NASDA Staff. In recent weeks, the Surveys Team has become concerned that not all active enumerators are taking the time to review the Friday Feedback on a weekly basis. To that end, we are going to have a contest for a prize drawing. To qualify for the contest, send an e-mail to [John.Miyares@usda.gov](mailto:John.Miyares@usda.gov) before noon on Monday November 25 2019. Include in your email message that you read this week's Friday Feedback.

Ironically, due to the Thanksgiving Day holiday next week, we will not be posting a Friday Feedback on 11/29. However, please look for our weekly Friday Feedbacks to resume on 12/6.

### **Thanksgiving**

It goes without saying, we are thankful to our entire NASDA staff for the work you do throughout the year. You collect the data needed to publish accurate, timely and useful statistics in service to agriculture. This year has been especially challenging with adjusted due dates and sample sizes, delays in material availability, cutbacks in training opportunities, shortened data collection windows, and problems with the updating of iPads to the new MDM system. Throughout the year, even while expressing your frustrations, you have maintained your professionalism and continued to work hard to get the job done, which given the challenges is as much as we can ask for. From our family to yours, we wish you all the best for this Thanksgiving season.



## Friday Feedback for November 15, 2019

### Possible Government Shutdown – Hurlbut

USDA is currently being funded by a “Continuing Resolution” which is set to expire on Thursday November 21 at midnight. If a spending bill or a new continuing resolution is not passed by then, several government agencies will shut down, including NASS. If that happens, all NASDA work must cease immediately until a new continuing resolution or funding bill is passed. With that in mind, all enumerators should make sure their time sheets are kept up-to-date on a daily basis, as enumerators may be asked to submit timesheets early.

Also, in the event of a shutdown, DO NOT ship NASDA work via UPS to our office (or anywhere else for that matter), be it paper questionnaires, iPads, supplies, personnel paperwork, etc., until agency funding is restored. We ask that in the event of a shutdown, you stay informed about the status of the government via normal news outlets and social media (using personal devices only; agency iPads must remain off during any funding lapse). We will notify supervisors immediately when the situation changes. We will also post a message in the “Office Updates and Alerts” section of the Purdue website when the shutdown ends. If you have questions of an immediate nature that need to be answered while the office is closed, please contact Charlie Ingram at 202-296-9680.

### ARMS II Due Date Reminder – Miyares

Enumerators working the ARMS II Survey are reminded that the last day to ship questionnaires to East Lansing is Wednesday, November 20. We need to be able to account for all of the questionnaires before Thanksgiving. Please remember that all paper forms must be shipped back to the office, even if they are not complete. If there are forms you have sent along to either your supervisor or to East Lansing that not showing up on your CAPI listings as “mail complete”, then please contact your supervisor and/or NASDA Coordinator.

### Encounter a Bad Telephone Number? – Jones

During the process of data collection, if you encounter a bad telephone number, and the operator/operation has several numbers listed, be sure to indicate which number is the “bad” one. When enumerators leave thorough remarks detailing these situations, it greatly speeds-up and eases the workload later.

### Fruit Chemical Use Survey Odds and Ends – Goings/Miyares

It was brought to our attention that in the Pesticide Application Table in Section D, the question asked in column 9 is not correct. The question should read, “What percent of the rows were covered?” and should NOT include any reference to Air Blast Sprayers. In short, this column should have an answer for every pesticide application and the part highlighted in yellow should be ignored.

9  
What percent of the rows were covered with an  
airblast application?  
100 All Rows  
50 Every Other Row  
— Other  
Percent

Also, in section E, question 22, please pay attention to the wording of the question where it asks, “Which of the following methods of spraying did this operation use to make...applications” that herbicide applications are specifically excluded from the list.

Finally, we’ve received some reports back from respondents indicating that their orchards and/or blueberry fields are being “managed” by another operation like a contractor or a fruit management company. If you are told this, then the office is going to need some further clarification on the arrangement that the operator has with the contractor/management company.

- Is the management company making ALL of the day to day decisions for the fruit on that operation to the point where the company would claim that acreage as their own if they were filling out their own FCUS form?
- Is the operator paying the management company for services like spraying and harvesting and then selling his/her own crop, or is the management company paying the operator his share of the fruit sales minus any expenses?
- If the fruit management company has the spray records, can we get a consent form signed to get permission to collect those records from the fruit management company?

Ideally, we want to try to get as many good reports as possible. At the same time, if a fruit grower is essentially a landlord, we'd like to clean up the lists. If we get forms back that simply say, "Everything is done by company X", and we can't get spray records from company X, then that form may need to be coded as a refusal.

### **International Tolerance Day**

International Tolerance Day, always November 16<sup>th</sup>, is an annual event first proclaimed in 1993 by the UN General Assembly. Countries around the world celebrate this day, by holding conferences, fairs and other events to teach the meaning and importance of tolerance, and encourage individuals and groups to practice tolerance, respect and dignity. According to then UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon: "The United Nations promotes tolerance as a matter of its fundamental identity. When tolerance is upheld, we encourage the world to emulate those fine examples. When tolerance is threatened, we must speak out."



## **Friday Feedback for November 8, 2019**

### **November Ag Yield Response Rate Best in Nation**

We would like to thank all of the Great Lakes enumerators for their amazing efforts this month with the November Ag Yield Survey. Our regional response rate for this survey was up 14.2 percent from a year ago. Michigan led the region's increase with a 19.3 percent improvement over last year while Indiana went up by 14.6 percent and Ohio's response rate rose by 8.5 percent. This month was the sixth time this year that the Monthly Ag Yield survey achieved an improved response rate from last year, and the fourth time that the response rate for the region exceeded 80 percent! In fact our region had the highest overall response rate and the highest state response rates when compared to the rest of the country!

This month's report, released Friday November 8 at noon on the NASS Website, will contain updated yield estimates for corn and soybeans for our region. Final acreage and production estimates will be published in the Annual Crop Production report, scheduled to be released on January 10, 2020. Having solid response rates helps to strengthen the estimates we publish in service to agriculture. Great job once again, and thank you!

### **Changes to County Estimates Program**

Severe budget cuts to the County Estimates program have forced the Regional Office to make some very difficult decisions regarding this year's County Agricultural Production Survey (CAPS) for Row Crops:

- Almost all of the records are being coded for telephone enumeration only. In fact, no forms are scheduled to be personally enumerated (visited) unless the form is matched with another ongoing survey scheduled to be field enumerated, and any mileage incurred must be billed to the matched survey and not to the CAPS.
- There will be no multi-county data broken out for our larger operations this year on either December Crops APS or Row Crop CAPS.
- A forced break in data collection is being imposed between December 23 and December 30, during which time no data collection for CAPS can take place. Data collection will resume on December 30 with the start of the January Livestock Surveys

More information will be provided when December 1 Survey Assignments are sent out later this month. Please feel free to contact your supervisor or your NASDA Coordinator if you have any questions.

### **Census of Horticulture**

The Census of Horticulture will begin in January 2020. The sample size for our region is approximately 4,100. The majority of data collection is expected to be through mail and data collection centers. There will be some very limited field follow up for the largest floriculture and horticulture operations. More information will become available in late December. Stay tuned.

### **Michigan Fruit Inventory – Part 2**

There will be a data collection follow-up for the MI Fruit Inventory - Part 2, starting in mid-January and going until the end of March. This project covers grapes, cranberries, strawberries, hops, brambles, and, perhaps, Saskatoon berries. We will have a teleconference on this before data collection starts.



## **Veterans Day**

Veterans Day falls on the second Monday in November this year. This federal holiday is celebrated every year on November 11, regardless of the day of the week it falls on. First recognized as Armistice Day in 1919, Veterans Day marks the date when Germany and the allies signed a 1918 agreement to cease World War I hostilities. The fighting ceased on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, according to the Department of Veterans Affairs. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day, saying: "To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory." In 1938, Congress passed a law to mark November 11 as a legal holiday. In 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed a law that changed the name to its current form.



## Friday Feedback for November 1, 2019

### More ARMS II/FCUS Updates

A few new items recently discovered involves how records that don't spray pesticides at all should have the OPMP questions coded

- For ARMS II, if no pesticides are used on the selected field, Questions 17 through 24 as well as question 28 in Section E should be left blank. However, be sure to still answer item 25 on page 16, as we can still determine whether or not there are hedgerows in the field.
- For FCUS, if no pesticides are used on the operation, you should leave questions 20 – 24 as well as question 28 blank in Section E. Even though the instructions above question 20 ask about spraying done on the entire operation, including target and non-target crops, our HQ has decided that we're only interested in this information if target crops were sprayed.
- We've seen a number of FCUS forms come back with question 29 left blank. We're not clear if that is indicating that there is no communication with any of the different sources is taking place or if the question was skipped. Since there is no "none of the above" option, please put a note in the margin indicating that it is "none of the above".

Finally, if the respondent indicates that the selected field in ARMS or the fruit blocks in FCUS were custom sprayed, and you did get information from the custom sprayer for Section E, please be sure to send back a copy of the signed consent form with your completed questionnaires. If consent is not provided, then filling in code 99 (for Don't Know) or putting DK's in the margins is appropriate along with a note that this information could not be obtained from the custom sprayer.

### Save the Date!

We have just signed contracts for the upcoming ARMS III Training Workshops in each of our three states. They are scheduled to take place as follows:

#### INDIANA

Cambria Hotel & Suites

18592 Carousel Lane

Westfield, IN 46074

Week of January 27, 2020

#### OHIO

Embassy Suites

2700 Corporate Exchange Dr

Columbus, OH 43231

Week of February 3

#### MICHIGAN

Best Western

2209 University Park Drive

Okemos, MI 48864

Week of February 10

More details regarding arrival times and school itineraries will be coming as we get closer to the dates.

### Hemp Production

Hemp production has recently been recognized by USDA as a covered commodity. If you're not familiar with hemp production, Farm News Five recently put together an update on harvest. If you have a few minutes it's an interesting watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fy3DjVe2YO4>

### Time Change

Remember to set your clocks back an hour on Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

