

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

### **MARCH 1 SURVEY PACKETS DELAYED – Miyares**

As of noon today, the Regional Field Office has not yet received the March 1 Agricultural Survey and Hog Report questionnaires. As a result, the shipping of enumerator packets with assignment listings, blank questionnaires, and survey information has been delayed. We will ship the survey packets out to the field as quickly as possible after we receive the blank questionnaires.

Meanwhile, we will make the listings available in MOST and encourage enumerators to review the survey information posted to the GLR website. If you have questions or concerns, please contact your supervisor or your NASDA Coordinator.

### **The New CAPI System Will Arrive Soon! – Lawson/Laird**

We received word that the new CAPI system to replace MOST will be rolled out around April 1<sup>st</sup> (No fooling!) Training materials developed by NASS HQ will be accessible via the iPads and are expected to include training videos, a manual, and a built-in help screen within the new CAPI application. More information regarding home study will be provided by the Regional Field Office as we get closer to the rollout. Stay tuned for specific details that should be available by Friday March 8.

### **ARMS III Updates and Website Additions – Miyares/Erickson**

At the recent ARMS III supervisor trainings, we received requests to have definitions of the four “environmental markets” described in Version 1, Section G, Question 4 made available. These definitions have been added to the “Updates and Lessons Learned” file at the top of the ARMS III page on the GLR website.

It was brought to our attention that this year’s respondent booklets did not include copies of the Value Codes used in section L or the Lender and Loan codes used in Section J. A standalone document with this information has been posted to the GLR website’s ARMS III page. It’s titled “Code Tables”. If enumerators require hard copies of these documents for use with ARMS III interviews, please make a request through the web form. As a reminder, these codes were included in the ARMS III questionnaire, but not in the respondent booklets.

The Regional Field Office received several hard copies of the ERS Publication “America’s Diverse Family Farms”, but they arrived too late to be included in your pre-school kits. An electronic copy of the file has been posted to the GLR website. If an enumerator would like to have hard copies of this document, please make a request through the web form.

We received notification from HQ about a number of records that were inadvertently not mailed to respondents. These include primarily Op Dom 45 operations and operations where a target switch has taken place since June 1st. There are 26 such records in our region. A comment was placed into “Office Notes” regarding these records and it should be visible in MOST.

### **What’s the Story with Cash Rents?**

The Cash Rents Survey is back in 2019 after taking the Census year off, with an approximate sample of 22,000 across the region. Questionnaires were mailed to respondents this month, and a follow-up mailing is scheduled for next month. Follow-up phoning for non-response will begin in Late April/Early May. Information about the Cash Rent survey should be available on the GLR website within the next few days.

You may see an indication on a questionnaire label or in MOST that a sampled operator for ARMS III or March Hogs is also in Cash Rents. Unless the respondent requests help in completing the Cash Rents Survey, enumerators are encouraged to remind respondents to mail in those forms on their own if they haven’t already done so rather than to try to complete the Cash Rents survey with the respondent. The current number of matches

between ARMS III and Hogs with Cash Rents is too high to allow for field enumeration on all of the forms as was done in past years. Historically, the Cash Rents survey has a high mail response rate and with phoning for Cash Rents beginning near the end of the ARMS III data collection window, a decision was made to keep the data collection for ARMS III and Cash Rents separate.

You may also see an indicator in MOST that a March Ag respondent was also sampled for Cash Rents. As in past years, the March 1 Agricultural Survey will incorporate the Cash Rent questions in order to reduce respondent burden. When completing the March Ag interview, please be sure to ask all questions on the form, including the Cash Rent questions, even if you do not see an indication that the operator is in the Cash Rents survey.

The only reason not to ask the Cash Rent questions on the March Ag Survey questionnaire is if the respondent indicates that they are not renting land from others (cell 902 = 0). If the respondent refuses the Cash Rent questions, do NOT enter your own estimates.

### **Oscar Night 2019**

On February 24, The Academy of Motion Pictures, Arts and Sciences awards the Oscars every year for the very best in Motion Pictures over the past year. While there are many awards ceremonies over the year, the Oscars are the most coveted.

Many people make a television party for the evening, preparing foods and snacks, boning up on the nominees, and friendly guessing and betting as to who will be the winners. Historical facts of past Oscars and winners become popular "Did you know" conversations in work, on radio talk shows and at home.

People watch the awards to see what the actors and actresses will wear as much as they do to see who wins. The next day there will be lists and talk about the best dresses, the worst dressed, and the least dressed.



## Friday Feedback for February 15, 2019

### Destroy Old BRM Envelopes Still in Circulation – Miyares/Hurlbut

It was brought to our attention that there are enumerators in our region still using Business Reply Mailers (BRM's) addressed to our former P.O. Box either to mail in survey work to the office or to give to respondents to mail completed surveys to our office. Enumerators should be reminded that ANY Business Reply envelopes containing ANY P.O. Box are no longer valid and should be destroyed. Our office no longer maintains a P.O. Box or the permit allowing us to use those envelopes that had the P.O. Box address on it. There is a strong risk that any materials sent to our office using those envelopes with a P.O. Box on them will not arrive. Don't wait, destroy them now.

The office's mailing address is now **3001 Coolidge Road, Suite 400, East Lansing, MI 48823**. If you need BRM's with this new address on them to give to respondents so they can mail back their own completed questionnaires, please request them from the Regional Field Office. As a rule, survey work that needs to be shipped to the Regional Field Office should be sent to the office via UPS and not through U.S. Mail. Please contact your supervisor or your NASDA Coordinator if you have any questions.

#### Old BRM Envelope FAQ

1. Do we destroy old BRM envelopes showing a PO Box address? Yes.
2. When do we destroy these envelopes? Now

### Supervisor ARMS Workshops

Thank you to all who participated in and helped put together these workshops. This was a big undertaking put together in a very short window. It is not ideal to train for such a complex survey this way, but everybody involved has shown a positive attitude. I think we are well on our way to a successful ARMS III season.

### Presidents Day

Presidents Day is an American holiday celebrated on the third Monday in February; Presidents Day 2019 occurs on Monday, February 18. Originally established in 1885 in recognition of President George Washington, the holiday became popularly known as Presidents Day after it was moved as part of 1971's Uniform Monday Holiday Act, an attempt to create more three-day weekends for the nation's workers. While several states still have individual holidays honoring the birthdays of Washington, Abraham Lincoln and other figures, Presidents Day is now popularly viewed as a day to celebrate all U.S. presidents, past and present.



## Friday Feedback for February 8, 2019

### 2019 Information Security Awareness (ISA)

Each year, all NASS staff (including NASDA enumerators) who have access to NASS computer systems (including MOST and the iPad) are required to be trained on computer security. Due to the recent shutdown, the due date for completing this training is now February 15. There is a security document to be read and a quiz to pass that will certify you are properly trained in security. Please contact your supervisor and/or your state's NASDA coordinator if you are unsure of your 2019 security status. [2019 Information Security Awareness Document](#)

### Bad Weather

I know we are all glad to be working again but a reminder, **Drive Carefully**. The weather has been cold (frigid) with icy roads and poor visibility. If you have to go out use extreme caution.

### Office Status During Bad Weather

How accessible is the office when bad weather hits? You should be able to reach someone in any condition. In Michigan, office staff get an extra two hours to get to the office if the East Lansing schools close. They can also opt to telework. If the office closes, those who are telework-ready must telework, and their phones should be forwarded. The office may close, but there still should be people working. The main difference is that you may not be able to reach people through the main line, having to dial their extension directly. In Indiana and Ohio, Jamie and Brooke have discretion to act accordingly based on their local conditions with accessibility the priority. Call Kif (517)324-5304 if you have any concerns about communications with the offices during bad weather.

### Happy Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day, also called Saint Valentine's Day or the Feast of Saint Valentine, is celebrated annually on February 14. Every year, across the United States and in other places around the world, candy, flowers and gifts are exchanged between loved ones, all in the name of St. Valentine.



## Friday Feedback for February 1, 2019

### **Best Laid Plans** – Miyares/Hurlbut

The five-week lapse in funding, followed by a week of frigid weather, has caused disruptions on so many levels. We are excited to be back, although we are still trying to process and determine how we are going to manage to complete eight weeks' worth of work in the next three weeks. Decisions are being made as quickly as possible on the best way to complete all of the survey work that was missed. We appreciate your patience as we do our best to bring things back to normal. Please check for regular updates on the Purdue site and be sure to communicate with your supervisors and/or NASDA Coordinators regarding work. Here is a brief summary of what we can tell you at this time:

- Most of the reports that were supposed to be published in late December and throughout January have been rescheduled. Data collection timelines are being rescheduled to allow for surveys that were never completed to be done over the next few weeks so that these reports can be issued. Without itemizing all of the new dates for each individual survey, the Rule of Thumb you can use is that if it's in MOST, you can work on it. Survey dates are being updated in MOST and on the Purdue site. If you have any questions, please check with your supervisor or your NASDA Coordinator. Projects being restarted include January Cattle, January Sheep & Goat, January Milk Production, Row Crop CAPS, Vegetable Chemical Use, Bee and Honey, Quarterly Colony Loss, Floriculture Production, Census of Aquaculture, Irrigation and Water Management Survey, February Potato Stocks, and February Turkeys Raised. There is no longer a backlog of mail to check in, so data collection status should be current.
- The March Agricultural Survey, March Hog Survey, and Cash Rents Survey will follow their expected timelines; although pre-survey materials may not arrive to enumerators until near the first of March.
- The ARMS III State Workshops have been canceled. In their place, we will be holding supervisor workshops in each state on February 14 and 15, to be followed by mini-schools during the last two weeks of February. Data collection will begin on or around February 28, to coincide with the start of the other March 1 Surveys, and should continue tentatively until April 22.
- The electronic data reporting site (EDR) was taken down during the recent shut down. The decision has been made to leave it up if the government shuts down again. This will leave another avenue of response when enumeration is not possible.
- The 375 hour per quarter cap will remain in place. This should not be a problem barring another shut down, as catch-up work shouldn't spill into the next quarter.

An updated schedule of NASS releases can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nass.usda.gov/Newsroom/Notices/2019/01-30-2019.php>.

The Census of Agriculture release will be delayed, but the latest official announcement does not set a specific release date.

### **Super Bowl Weekend**

Super Bowl LIII, February 3rd, is an American football game between the two-time defending American Football Conference champion New England Patriots and the National Football Conference champion Los Angeles Rams to determine the champion of the National Football League for the 2018 season. Not everyone likes football, but everyone seems to enjoy the commercials!

