

Friday Feedback for Friday, September 25, 2020

New CAPI Instrument Coming This Weekend – Lawson

HQ plans to push out a **new CAPI instrument on Sunday** September 27th which will incorporate some changes and fixes necessary to accommodate the upcoming Fall Chemical Use Surveys. All enumerators **need to be logged out of CAPI by 9:00 p.m.** Users should be able to log back in on Monday morning, but may need to download and install the updated CAPI applications on the iPad from Apps@Work. Charge time to project code 380 to reinstall the apps if necessary. No need to update the URL or download again if using a home computer. See the [CAPI Dashboard](#) for specific details.

Objective Yield Odds and Ends: – Erickson

Thanks to everyone for your continued hard work on the Objective Yield Survey. This year has been more challenging than most, but with your efforts, we've been getting great cooperation with operators, and response rates have been very good.

Although it may feel like the OY season has just begun, this year's crops have been maturing very quickly and harvest has already begun in a few areas of the region. Be sure to stay in contact with the operators you are working with regarding their harvest plans. You might be asked to drop everything on a moment's notice in order to collect harvest data from your sample fields before the operator goes in and harvests them. The regional office has already received calls from operators asking how to contact enumerators so the work they've started wouldn't get lost.

As a reminder, be sure to submit your Form B's on a daily basis and make sure the Form B date matches the date on the ID cards. Data collection for this month runs from Thursday 9/24 through Thursday 10/1. In order to accommodate Form-B's that are completed late in the day on 10/1, the last day to submit data into CAPI has been extended to Friday 10/2.

Finally, we've received very few Form A's in the past three weeks, good or bad, and we know there should be some out there. The current stop date for Form A's in CAPI is currently set at 9/30, but if needed that can be extended. Please try to get those Form A's into CAPI as soon as possible, and be sure to communicate with your supervisors if you have any operators that you have not yet been able to complete a Form A for.

Again, thanks to everyone for all that you do, and if you have any questions, be sure to reach out.

Keeping UPS Costs Under Control – Bowman/Kalaus

As you are probably aware, the price of UPS shipping has been rising sharply in the past two years, and regional offices have been asked to do everything possible to keep those costs under control. One way that field offices have been doing this has been to make sure that packages sent to enumerators have everything they are going to need in them for an entire month's worth of survey work. The cost of sending out survey materials for three surveys in one package would be the same as it would for sending out a package with just one or two pieces of paper in it. Where possible, we are going to consolidate the work rather than send out separate packages for each survey.

To that end, we want to remind enumerators to avoid sending UPS packages to the Regional Field Office with just one or two pieces of paper in it, especially if the paperwork being sent isn't time sensitive and doesn't have PII on it. If you have just one or two out-of-business forms that need processing, much of that information could be handled over the phone if you are concerned about them getting processed right away. If the paperwork does not require an immediate need, it can be sent at a later time when we can fill the package up a little more and justify the UPS expense. If you're not sure on how best to proceed, please contact the person at the regional office you are sending the work to so the materials can be sent in the most efficient manner.

Friday Feedback for Friday, September 18, 2020

Do NOT update the iPad iOS – Lawson

Apple just released the latest iPad operating system iOS 14. This is a major update and HQ needs time to test any effects it might have on the CAPI system. Do NOT update the iPad. If a pop up message appears, select “Close” or “Details” and “Cancel”. Do NOT select “Later” or it will update automatically during the overnight hours.

Camera Usage Guidelines for CAPI Devices:

As referenced in last week’s edition of Friday Feedback, the camera is now active on all CAPI devices in an effort to improve communication and training options for Regional Field Offices and NASDA. Due to recent additional discussions about the need to improve all aspects of RFO/NASDA/Respondent communications during these challenging times, the usage of the camera feature will not be restricted to only the ZOOM application.

Users must still adhere to confidentiality and data security protocols. Specifically, stakeholders (including enumerators) will be responsible for making sure that all aspects of CIPSEA (Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act) and security protocols are carefully followed. Unlike CAPI questionnaires where the data entered are stored only temporarily in the memory of the device, photos, screenshots, and/or video are stored permanently on iPad hard drives. This is a potential security vulnerability. Therefore, the following mitigation steps should be taken to address security concerns about usage of the camera on CAPI iPads:

1. Enumerators should read and sign the updated NASDA device usage document (on iSolved).
2. No photos, screen shots, or videos should be saved permanently on the device.
3. No photos, screen shots, or videos should reveal any PII (Personally Identifiable Information) or sensitive information.
4. Open the camera roll once a week and delete all saved screenshots, photos, or videos.
5. Do not log into iTunes on any CAPI device. This has always been the rule from the beginning or with Apple devices used for CAPI. Photos or other media taken can potentially be shared and/or stored on other Apple devices or sent to the Cloud.
6. Immediately report any lost or stolen devices to the proper officials.

If any of the above guidance should change, we will keep you informed.

Disconnects Reminders – Price/JonesWe’ve had some good success so far with enumerators using the Attempted Call Log in CAPI to record “Bad Phone” numbers discovered while calling, and we want to encourage more people to do this as it allows the office staff to quickly identify records that require research before we get too far into the survey period. Your efforts in this area will help us to maintain the best farmer lists possible.

The GLR’s Disconnect Research Team (Jamie, Lisa, and Marty) would like to remind enumerators to make sure that at least the last four digits of the bad phone number are specified when in the comment. In the event that there are multiple phone numbers, recording the last four in your comments will help the reviewer know which phone number is disconnected and which number to remove. If the operator has listed two phone numbers where the last four digits are the same, but perhaps the three-digit prefix or three-digit area code are different, then you may need to record the full ten-digit number in order to eliminate confusion. If there is only one phone number on the record, and the last four you record are different from what we’re seeing on ELMO, then we know that the phone number has already been researched, perhaps on a different survey.

ARMS II/VCUS Training Plans – Save the date! – Miyares/Goings/Cooper

Plans for the Agricultural Resource Management Survey Phase II (ARMS II) and the Vegetable Chemical Use Survey (VCUS) are coming together, although a bit later than normal in order to accommodate changes to survey procedures necessary to allow for efficient data collection by telephone. This is what we can share so far regarding training for these surveys, which will be structured like a State School, just administered remotely.

- Packages containing samples and study materials, including interviewer manuals and blank questionnaires, are scheduled to be shipped to enumerators the week of October 5.
- A series of recorded video presentations created by NASS Statisticians will be posted to the Purdue/GLR website for all enumerators to watch as part of their self-study.
- The “home study quiz” will also be moved away from paper to an on-line format, broken down into multiple parts to correlate with each video. Once a video is reviewed and the corresponding chapter in the Interviewer’s manual has been read, you will click on a link which will open up a mini-quiz for the materials you just reviewed. Results of the quiz will then be shared with your supervisor and NASS Staff.
- All enumerators will participate in a live teleconference facilitated by the Regional Field Office staff. The dates for these state-specific teleconferences are as follows:
 - Michigan Enumerators: Thursday October 15, 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
 - Indiana Enumerators: Thursday October 15, 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
 - Ohio Enumerators: Friday October 16, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Dial-in numbers and access codes will be provided in the pre-survey kits going out the week of October 5. If you are unable to attend your state’s teleconference, please reach out to your supervisor or NASDA Coordinator.

- Enumerators will be meeting with their supervisors by phone at some time between October 16 and October 25 to go over answers to the quiz, review administrative items and review survey issues specific to your geographic area. These are intended to be more like “breakout sessions” rather than mini-schools.
- You will also be provided with practice exercises that can help familiarize you with the new CAPI instruments being developed for this survey. These practice exercises can be used in conducting practice interviews by telephone with your supervisor or with another enumerator.
- Once your supervisor has certified you have been fully “trained” for the survey and you have participated in a teleconference, you can begin data collection on the surveys. ARMS II data collection will run until November 25 while VCUS will continue until December 30.

Friday Feedback for Friday, September 11, 2020

Encouraging Response Rates Continue

Despite the challenging conditions under which we're currently working, response rates for both the Ag Yield and Objective Yield surveys were very strong this month. The response rate for this month's Ag Yield Survey exceeded 80 percent for the region, with increases from last year seen in both Michigan and Ohio. Meanwhile, the current response rate for the combined Corn and Soybean Objective Yield survey is already over 80 percent and could increase as more operators are contacted to complete a late Form A.

The management and staff of the Great Lakes Regional Field Office want to thank and commend all of the enumerators who have been working diligently to complete these surveys, in many cases reaching out to respondents by phone, text, and email to get the job done. We understand that this hasn't been easy, but many people have stepped up their efforts and have done amazing work in the process.

Cameras on iPads Activated, But...

NASS Leadership has approved enabling cameras on all NASS iPads managed by USDA in order to allow the Zoom application with the video option to be used for enumerator training sessions.

Please note that the video option is only approved for Zoom training at this time. The iPad camera cannot be used for any other purpose. All enumerators who use CAPI iPads will need to read and acknowledge a statement regarding appropriate use of the camera. More information will come out at a later date detailing security protocols.

At this time, Regional Field Office management is not planning to facilitate any Zoom training in the immediate future, but will be taking the time to explore options and test capabilities on a small scale over the next few months to see what might be possible to do using Zoom.

Upcoming Due Date Reminders:

The following surveys have due dates coming up in the next few days:

- September Hog Report: Final Submission in CAPI by Saturday Night 9/12 before 11:59 p.m.
- September Turkeys Raised: Final Submission in CAPI by Sunday Night 9/13 before 11:59 p.m.
- September Crops APS: Final Submission in CAPI by Tuesday Night 9/15 before 11:59 p.m.

As a reminder, please be sure to work with your supervisors regarding records that are to be submitted as "Saved for Review" to make sure they can go through the "Final Submission" process by the deadline.

Deputy Director to Leave GLR

It is with mixed emotions that we inform you that Great Lakes Region Deputy Director Kif Hurlbut has accepted a position with NASS's IT Division. In his new position, Kif will serve as a technical lead with an influential role in forming the tools that NASS will be using in the future. As you know, Kif has worked with the Survey group for the last couple of years and has been a strong advocate for enumerators. We appreciate his support for the survey program and wish him well in his new position. Prior to becoming a Deputy, Kif served as a Group Leader in the Indiana Field Office, and has also worked in Alabama and Colorado Field offices as well as with the NASS IT Field Services Section. Kif is expected to begin his new role on September 27. Congratulatory messages can be sent by email to Kif at Kiflam.Hurlbut@usda.gov.

Friday Feedback for Friday, September 4, 2020

Addressing Missing Phone Numbers and “Field Only” forms

When the moratorium on personal interviews began, and we thought this would be a temporary situation that would last only three weeks, Regional Field Office Staff were continuing to make records available in CAPI with no phone numbers or were coded for personal enumeration. This was done with the hope that those records could still be personally enumerated before the survey was over if personal interviews were once again permitted. As this situation has continued on longer than many have expected, the Regional Field Office will be changing its approach.

- All September 1 Survey sample that have no phone number has been removed from the CAPI listings effective September 3.
- Starting with the October 1 Surveys, records that do not have a phone number will be coded as “Mail Only”
- Records that are coded for Field Enumeration (DCM 26, 30, or 70) that have comments that explicitly state that the operator will not complete a survey over the phone will be coded as “Mail Only”. However, if the operator’s response history shows a recent willingness to conduct surveys over the phone, or if there is no explicit comment that says that telephone enumeration should not be used with the operator, then those surveys will be pushed out for assignment to be attempted by phone.

Enumerators are strongly encouraged to submit comments with CAPI completes or refusals to let Field Office staff know which of their historically “personal interview only” operators are willing to be cooperative with telephone interviews or not.

Ag Yield Due Date Reminder

Please don’t forget that all completed records for the Ag Yield survey must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, September 7. As a reminder, inaccessible operators do not need to be submitted unless you have a comment to submit that needs to be captured back to that record regarding your attempted contacts. Also, operators you are unable to contact by phone, even after leaving multiple messages to call you back, should not be coded as “refusals”, but rather as inaccessible. The refusal code should only be used if respondents tell you directly that they don’t want to do the survey or the respondent tells you to call back later and you can never connect with them.

Labor Day – Monday September 7

Labor Day, always the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.

The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The Central Labor Union held its second Labor Day holiday just a year later, on September 5, 1883.

By 1894, 23 more states had adopted the holiday, and on June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed a law making the first Monday in September of each year a national holiday.

The Regional Field Office will be closed on Monday September 7 in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

