

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, January 28, 2022**

### **Unexpected Change for ARMS III – Erickson/Miyares**

ARMS III Samples for all three versions will be visible in enumerator CAPI listings later today, January 28. Unless specifically requested by your supervisor, labeled paper questionnaires were sent this week to supervisors to be distributed at upcoming mini-schools. As a reminder, you will be using the CAPI listings to keep track of your sample (what's checked in and what's not) and to enter refusal, inaccessible, and out-of-business reports. Records with positive data will be shipped to the National Processing Center (NPC) in Jeffersonville, IN by either you or your supervisor after they have been reviewed. Please be sure to communicate with your supervisors regarding how these records are to be handled.

Normally, operations that were non-respondents to ARMS II are removed from the ARMS III samples before contacts are attempted. We received word last week that USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) does not want to do that this year. The extension in data collection for ARMS II meant that those operators who did not complete ARMS II could not get pulled out of the December 27 mail file for ARMS III, nor were they removed from the January 18 postcard follow-up mailing, and ERS decided to just let everyone stay in the sample for the second mailing as well. Consequently, for the first time ever, refusal and inaccessible operations for ARMS II are available to contact for ARMS III this year.

To assist in identifying these records, either a handwritten note or a label has been placed on all of the ARMS III Corn forms (yellow questionnaires) indicating what the response status was for ARMS II (refused, inaccessible, held, out-of-business). Please communicate with your supervisors regarding the best approach for handling these records. Do not simply submit those Phase III records as non-response without your supervisor's approval. Remember, every situation will be different; someone who was not willing to do ARMS II over the phone might be willing to do ARMS III face-to-face, if that option is available. Unfortunately, comments from the Phase II reports are still being reviewed and are not yet available at this time. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we move through the continual changes for this survey.

### **March Crops APS: The First Shall be Last – Miyares**

The March Agricultural Survey goes under many names, including the March Quarterly Agricultural Survey (QAS), The March Crops Acreage Production and Stocks (APS) Survey, and the March Crops/Stocks Survey. Data collected on this survey provide the first indications for intended acreage for row crops and hay for the new year, updated indications for acres of winter wheat to be harvested in the new year, and indications of whole grains and oilseeds stored on farm. A few years ago, cash rent questions were added to the form in order to reduce respondent burden for those operators sampled for both the March Agricultural Survey and the Annual Cash Rents Survey. Operators who report intentions to harvest winter wheat on the March Crops APS Survey will form the sampling population for the Wheat Objective Yield survey to be conducted in Ohio later this year.

Did you know that even though the March Crops/Stocks Survey is the first Quarterly Agricultural Survey of the new year, it is actually the last quarterly survey conducted in the NASS sampling year? Based on the timing, NASS will update the control data on our List Sampling Frame (LSF) to account for data collected from all surveys conducted between February of 2021 and January of 2022. This will allow us to include data from the January Livestock Surveys and Row Crop CAPS, which will give us a complete picture of agricultural activity from the past year. Once the major updates to the control data are reviewed, operations are classified and stratified for different surveys, meaning that we determine which surveys each operation is eligible for based on the types of crops grown, livestock present, farm size, value of sales, and the active status for each operation. This process takes place during February and March, while the March Agricultural Survey is going on. New survey samples are then marked in the Enhanced List Maintenance Operations (ELMO) system around the first of April, with the first major quarterly survey drawn for the new year being the June Agricultural Survey. The June survey then serves as the base survey for the sampling year, with each successive survey being a follow-on through the March quarter. Thus, the first quarterly survey of the year is also the last of the survey year.

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, January 21, 2022**

### **ARMS III Training Packets are Coming! – Erickson/Miyares**

Packages containing training material for the upcoming ARMS III were picked up by UPS from the regional office yesterday. The packages contain the Interviewer Manual, the home-study quiz, several blank questionnaires and respondent booklets, extra screening and out-of-business supplements, a training checklist, the editing guide, cheat sheets for helping to calculate inventory assets, marketing expenses, and checking grain income, door hangers, and other promotional material for the survey. Enumerators who will be working ARMS III should expect to see these packages by Monday or Tuesday. If you are expecting a package and do not receive it by Wednesday morning, please reach out to your supervisor.

Labeled questionnaires are not included in these packages. Enumerators will receive your assignments at your upcoming mini-schools or will have them sent to you in the next week. There were delays in receiving the questionnaires from NPC and it is taking a while to get them all sorted and identified as being eligible for field enumeration or being phone only.

The ARMS III Page on the Purdue GLR Website is now live and can be found at this [LINK](#). The site contains a wide variety of survey documentation and supporting information for the survey and will be heavily relied upon as both a resource bank and a training platform.

As we have done with recent surveys, we have posted several training videos covering the content of the questionnaire, but also videos discussing how ARMS data are used, and strategies for convincing operators to complete the survey. The videos were created by a team of statisticians from several NASS regions working collaboratively to provide the best training videos possible. Please take the time to review all of the videos and complete your home-study quizzes BEFORE your mini-school. This will allow more time to be taken at your mini-school to focus on practice exercises, data collection strategies, and forms management.

In addition to time spent at mini-schools, enumerators will be allowed eight hours of home study to review materials in the training packets, become familiar with changes in the questionnaire, watch training videos, and complete the home study quiz. Enumerators assigned work for more than one version of the questionnaire may be authorized an additional two hours for each additional version assigned.

### **Leftover Bubble Sheets – Goings/Weber/Miyares**

If Michigan enumerators have leftover MDARD Recertification Seminar Records (i.e., Bubble Sheets) that they did not use for either ARMS II or the Fruit Chemical Use Survey, they can be returned to the office to be used another year. If possible, please ship them in a package with material you were planning on sending to the office anyway (for example, with floriculture questionnaires) in order to save on UPS costs.

### **Floriculture Update - Collom**

The Commercial Floriculture Survey seems to be going very well so far. We have about 25 percent of the forms back, and all of the work we have seen come in from the field so far has been excellent. If you haven't started phoning on Floriculture, this may be a good time to start, as greenhouse operators will begin to get much busier as we get closer to Valentine's Day.

### **NACS - Saffell**

The National Agricultural Classification Survey (NACS) is conducted periodically between Census years for the purpose of identifying new farmers as well as active farmers that are not on our List Sampling Frame. Eighty-five thousand NACS questionnaires were mailed out to potential operators at the start of the year in our region, and follow-up phoning will take place from the Regional Call Centers throughout the spring. No local phoning is expected for the NACS; however, you may end up finding someone while doing your own survey work that might have received a NACS. If an operator who you regularly speak to for NASS Surveys received a NACS and asks

you what to do with it, please encourage them to mail it in with a note on it that says “DUPLICATE”, so that we can cross reference that person to someone already on our list. If they received more than one form, all forms should be mailed back. Those we can eliminate as duplicates will help us clean up our list before we begin work on the 2022 Census of Agriculture. The Census Mailing List (CML) will be set by September 1, and census forms will be mailed out at the end of this year.

## **Friday Feedback for Friday, January 14, 2022**

### **Vaccination Update**

Yesterday, the Supreme Court struck down an OSHA rule that would have required private companies with more than 100 employees to be fully vaccinated from COVID; however, the rule was not permanently killed. Instead, the justices blocked the rule while they consider litigation against the requirement. Separately, the portion of the presidential executive order that would have mandated federal contractors to be vaccinated from COVID was struck down last month, but there are still separate cases still being litigated regarding federal contractees and cooperators who receive federal funding having to abide by vaccine mandates. NASDA is continuing to monitor federal requirements regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, as these court decisions suspending the mandates could still be overturned.

So where does that leave us? Currently, there is NO vaccine requirement for NASDA employees to continue working for NASDA; however, NASDA is strongly encouraging employees to be vaccinated and asks that vaccinated enumerators uploaded their COVID-19 Vaccination Record cards to iSolved in the event that the federal contractor mandate is upheld. If NASDA does become subject to a vaccine mandate, employees will be able to request a medical or religious exemption. Details about exemption requests will be provided once more is known about whether the vaccine mandate will be upheld.

At the top of the [Purdue GLR Home Page](#), we have posted a copy of the instructions for uploading vaccination cards to iSolved.. You can also access those instructions by clicking or tapping [HERE](#). Additionally, based on our understanding, only fully vaccinated employees who have uploaded their cards to iSolved will be permitted to participate in face-to-face enumeration activities.

Please contact your NASDA Coordinator or Katherine Kimball if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Face-to-Face Data Collection Opportunities for ARMS III Expanded – Erickson/Miyares**

The regional office was notified yesterday that the total number of records eligible for personal enumeration for ARMS III in our region has been expanded to 2000, up from the initial fifteen records identified earlier and discussed in the December 23 edition of Friday Feedback. The records being selected have been identified as having a significant “impact” on the ARMS III data set. The records will not necessarily be the records with the largest value of sales, but will be ones that are influential towards meeting a number of commodity targets across a range of farm sizes. We will be working with supervisors to make sure these forms can be easily distinguished and are assigned to enumerators eligible to travel.

There will be very strict guidelines put into place for records to be personally enumerated:

- 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.
- The first contact to the operator must be made by phone. No mileage can be authorized until the operator has agreed to the visit and an appointment has been scheduled.
- Prior to the meeting, the enumerator will need confirmation from all parties that they are not exhibiting, or have not recently exhibited, any symptoms or signs of illness.

- Masks must be worn at all times during interviews and meetings with the operator. As a reminder, PPE reimbursement is available to all enumerators.
- Social distancing guidelines must be followed where possible.

More information regarding safety guidelines will be coming from NASDA in the next few weeks.

As a reminder, enumerators may request to opt out of in-person interviews without fear of reprisal. Even with 2000 records designated as eligible for personal enumeration, there will still be 1500 records in our sample that are to be contacted by phone only. Once we receive the labeled questionnaires at the regional office, we will be marking each form to indicate which are eligible for field enumeration and which are not.

### **Upcoming Due Dates**

- The last day to submit records for ARMS II in CAPI is Friday, January 14. ALL records must be submitted in CAPI, be they completes, refusals, or inaccessible. Please review last week's edition of the Friday Feedback for more information.
- The last day to submit records for Quarterly Colony Loss and Row Crop CAPS is Monday, January 17.
- The last day to submit records for Fruit Chem in CAPI is Friday January 21. Any Fruit Chem records with more than 50 pesticide applications (more than one supplement) being shipped to St. Louis for keying must be in the UPS by January 21.

### **Friday Feedback for Friday, January 7, 2022**

### **Upcoming Due Dates**

- The last day to submit records for Cattle, Sheep & Goats, and Milk Production is Tuesday, January 11.
- The last day to submit records for ARMS II in CAPI is Friday, January 14.
- The last day to submit records for Quarterly Colony Loss and Row Crop CAPS is Monday, January 17.
- The last day to submit records for Fruit Chem in CAPI is Friday January 21. Any Fruit Chem records with more than 50 pesticide applications (more than one supplement) being shipped to St. Louis for keying must be in the UPS by January 21.

### **Winding Down of ARMS II, Impacts on ARMS III**

Thanks to everyone for your continuing efforts to get through ARMS II. We've started to see more complete reports come through in the last few days, and the data continue to look good.

Data collection for ARMS II will continue until January 14. As a reminder, all incomplete ARMS II records must be submitted in CAPI as either refusals or inaccessible. If you were able to speak to the operator, a partner, or a spouse about the survey at least once, but were just never able to set up a time for an interview, or if they kept putting you off, please code that as a refusal. If you never were able to contact a person to even introduce the survey, then code the record as inaccessible. When submitting the forms, please be sure to include all of the administrative coding, including the response code, respondent code (if refused) and the mode code (by phone, in person).

As most of you are aware, operators who do not complete ARMS II are generally removed from the sample for ARMS III. Because of the extension of data collection for ARMS II into January, that hasn't happened yet. Consequently, everyone who was in ARMS II was mailed an ARMS III Corn Version form. I don't know that it

will hurt if respondents mail back their ARMS III form, but assuming they will be taken out of the sample by the end of January, we're not planning on doing any follow-up contacts for those records.

### **New USDA Insurance Option for Corn Farmers in our Region**

USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) has announced details of its Post Application Coverage Endorsement (PACE) in certain states for 2022 for non-irrigated corn, providing coverage for producers who "split-apply" nitrogen. PACE would provide payments for projected yield lost when producers are unable to apply the post nitrogen application during the V3-V10 corn growth stages due to field conditions created by weather. The program is available in 11 states, including Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio, as supplemental coverage for Yield Protection (YP), Revenue Protection (RP), and Revenue Production with Harvest Price Exclusion Policies. The first sales closing date to purchase insurance is March 15, 2022. For more information, visit [RMA's Conservation Webpage](#), which has frequently asked questions, a fact sheet, and other resources.