

Friday Feedback for Friday, May 19, 2023

June Survey Packets on their Way! – Collom/Courser

UPS Packages containing June 1 Survey materials for enumerators were shipped from East Lansing on Thursday, May 18. The packages include materials for June Crops APS, June Hogs, ARMS 1, Potato Stocks in Michigan, and the Cherry Production Forecast in Michigan. Enumerators should receive their packages no later than Monday, May 22. If you do not receive your package and are expecting work, please contact the Regional Field Office and we will do our best to track it down.

Ag Yield questionnaires and listings were not printed this month unless the sampled Ag Yield operation was matched with a known June Area tract. Listings for Ag Yield can be found in CAPI, and copies of the questionnaire are available for viewing on the Purdue GLR website.

June Area Odds and Ends – Goings/Miyares

There have been some questions asking for clarification on question 3 of the Technology Use Section regarding how one defines access to the internet. The question itself is ambiguous because it asks whether the operator has had access to the internet within the last 12 months, but the Yes/No questions below the question specifically refer to the operation having access to the internet or not. The question is going to be rewritten for the next time this section is asked in 2025, but for now, the interviewer's manual does say that public access internet is a valid reason to answer question 3 with a "yes". What I would recommend is if you find an operator whose only access to the internet is off the operation (for example, through a public library or a local college), then that should be clarified in Question 4 by specifying that the access is through "other" means. This is going to be one of those cases where, "when in doubt, fill it out," and leave good notes.

Another question that comes up every year is about when it is okay to change the name of the tract operator and not assign a new tract letter. There are very few exceptions to this, and most of them assume that the same person is still operating the tract. The only changes allowed have to be "minor name changes", such as inserting a middle initial, adding a suffix (Jr, Sr, III, etc.), or correcting a minor spelling error of the first name (Louis versus Lewis, Cathy versus Kathy, etc.). If the last name of the operator changes, perhaps through marriage or divorce, a new tract letter must be assigned to the tract. The only other exception would be if the tract operator last year was unknown or missing, and you are able to identify the person operating the tract. When in doubt, we recommend you err on the side of caution and create a new tract letter just in case. If your segment already has the maximum number of tracts allowed (99), please contact the office to discuss options on how to proceed.

Finally, we have been asked to provide clarification about the Tiers for June Area Data Collection and what it means for your work. Tier 2 records, including primarily non-ag tracts and tracts with very little ag, are available to complete in CAPI as early as May 20. Tier 3 records, which are typically operators with some combination of row crops, small grains, hay, grain storage, or cattle, are available to complete in CAPI on May 30. In any given segment, there could be tracts in either Tier. If you are personally enumerating a segment and have the opportunity to complete an interview with a Tier 3 operator before May 30, you may do so; however, if an operator reports that they haven't finished planting and planting intentions may change depending upon weather and field conditions, please make a point to recontact the operator before data collection ends to be able to get accurate planted acreage data. As a rule, planted acres and grain stocks should not be collected more than two days prior to the survey reference date (June 1). Please check with your supervisor if you have questions or concerns.

Cash Rents Update – Weber/Miyares

The Regional Office completed its analysis of the Cash Rent survey responses and have found that we have already received enough positive reports to publish more than a majority of the counties in our region. We also have seen our data collection budget dwindle to almost nothing in the past two weeks, as enumerators have shifted their focus towards Cash Rents. Consequently, we have had to make the difficult decision to turn off records in counties deemed publishable so that we can focus exclusively on records in counties where additional reports are necessary. Previously completed reports have also been removed from CAPI in order to reduce slowness in the

system and clutter in the listings. If you see that you still have Cash Rent records in your CAPI listings, those are records that we need your help in getting additional reports.

Some enumerators have also reached out asking why some of the CAPI start dates for Cash Rents have been moved to May 30. This is because those Cash Rent records are matched with other June 1 Surveys and we want to avoid calling operators for Cash Rents one week only to call them again for a June 1 Survey the following week. Please review your CAPI listings carefully so we can make sure to avoid potentially embarrassing multiple contact situations. Thank you for your understanding.

Fruit Inventory Update – Saffell/Rolewicz

The GLR has exhausted all of its funding for data collection for the Michigan Fruit Tree Inventory Survey, and no additional funding is expected. Please return all paper forms, block prints, comment sheets, and any other inserts to the regional office in East Lansing as soon as possible. Thank you for your efforts on this project.

Several Surveys Starting May 30

The June Survey Cycle is one of the busiest of the year, and this year is no exception. The following surveys all have May 30 as their start date:

- Cherry Production Forecast (Michigan Only): May 30 – June 5
- June Ag Yield: May 30 – June 5
- Potato Stocks (Michigan Only): May 30 – June 7
- Area Ag Tracts, Tier 3: May 30 – June 8 (with all data in CAPI by June 9)
- June Crops APS: May 30 – June 14
- June Hog Report: May 30 – June 14
- ARMS Phase 1: May 30 – July 12

When so many surveys are going on, it can be difficult to keep track of everything. Please take the time to look at your listings to identify matched records ahead of time so that contacts can be coordinated, and operators will feel like they are only completing one survey, and not 2 or more. Please also pay close attention to the ending dates for each of these surveys. Ag Yield and the Michigan Cherry Forecast end first, so it would be best to complete all matches with these surveys before the June 5 deadline.

Thoughts on my way out the door... - Miyares

So, today (May 19) is my last day working for the Great Lakes Region, and I'm somewhat saddened that it's about to end. While I have explored other opportunities with NASS outside of the region in the past, I've always come back to the Great Lakes Region. This time is different, and it is going to take a while for me to get used to that idea.

It has been my extreme pleasure and honor to work with so many great people, both in the office and out in the field. I will miss working with enumerators and supervisors, trying to make your jobs easier any way I could. I will miss developing training workshops and videos for field enumerators. I will miss the early breakfasts in Okemos, MI, the lunches at diners in Anna, OH, and the happy hour social gatherings at hotels in Fort Wayne, IN. Most of all, I will miss writing and editing this newsletter each week, as it has been one of the few ways I have been able to keep in touch with people over these last three hard years. As I depart for the National Operations Division, I will bring with me your challenges and frustrations and share them with those who have the ability to make our systems work better for you.

In closing, I want to thank every NASDA enumerator for everything that you do in support of the NASS Mission. Being an enumerator is not an easy job, but I know many of you are very passionate about your work, and as I have said many times, we in the office cannot do what we do without everything that you do for us. Please know that even when the going gets tough, you are appreciated. Thank you.

Friday Feedback for Friday, May 12, 2023

Getting Survey Results for Operators

On most NASS surveys, operators are asked if they would like to receive a copy of the survey results and are asked to provide an email address where we can send them; however, there is a percentage of the farmer population in our region that does not use email and doesn't want to hunt down survey results on our website. Please note that the Regional Office has the ability to send hard copies of survey results by US mail to a limited number of respondents. If you have an operator who wants or needs this, please enter a comment in CAPI stating that the operator wants to be mailed a hard copy of the results of the survey. Staff at the regional office can print copies of the state-specific news release that comes out the day after the survey results are release and mail the operator what they would like.

May Ag Yield Response Rate Improves – Miyares

We would like to thank all of the Great Lakes enumerators for their efforts this month with the May Ag Yield Survey. Our regional response rate for this survey is 80.3 percent, up 10.2 percent from a year ago. This marks the first time since 2019 that the regional response rate for May Ag Yield was above 80 percent. Having solid response rates helps to strengthen the estimates we publish in service to agriculture. Great job, and thank you!

Cash Rents Update – Weber/Miyares

We have identified a number of operations sampled for the Cash Rents survey that haven't completed their form yet that are matched with the June Surveys (both Area and List). In order to prevent operators from getting calls on Cash Rents while enumerators are field enumerating June Area, we are going to transfer the Cash Rent forms to the enumerator working the June Area segment on Monday May 15 and change the CAPI dates so that they can't begin those until May 30. Turning these forms off in the short run will give respondents a break from getting many calls on cash rents knowing we're going to need them for the other June Surveys.

We have also identified several hundred ARMS 1 records that are matched with incomplete Cash Rents forms. Because we do not have the funds to coordinate these together, we are going to be changing the start date on those ARMS 1 records to June 29 for both CATI and CAPI so that operators may be contacted for each survey separately. This will also give those respondents more time to mail in or complete the ARMS 1 online.

The Regional Office is also going to be analyzing response rates by county to determine if there are counties where we already have enough information to publish cash rent rates at the county level. For those where we do, cash rent records will be turned off in CAPI and at the call center so that enumerators can focus efforts on records in counties where additional completed reports are necessary. While we do not like removing records from calling during an active survey, doing so will allow us to better use what limited funds we have available for this project. Please note that this may also mean that we will be diverting records from the call centers to local enumerators so that more attention can be paid to these records. Supervisors will be sent a list of counties needing special attention early next week.

Reviewing Comments Before Interviews

Some June Area segment envelopes will include a purple comment sheet which specifies particular things to pay attention to when enumerating the segment. Other sheets attached to the segment envelope will identify tracts that may be matched with other ongoing NASS Surveys; due to limited resources, however, paper comment sheets were NOT inserted with individual tract questionnaires for the June Area survey. Field enumerators will need to review comments in their CAPI listings. Often, there are comments about changes that happened over the last year that can only be made in June. Sometimes a comment will contain questions that require an answer from you asking to clarify the status of the operation or involvement of partners. Sometimes a comment will include information about an operation that helps with follow-on surveys (two horses and pasture only; CRP only). Some comments might reference previous negative interactions with respondents that might help you decide whether to attempt a personal contact at all, or whether to complete the tract questionnaire by observation only. All in all, it is very important that all comments be read prior to enumeration.

CAPI Update Rescheduled to Friday- Tolbert

Yesterday, you were informed about an upcoming CAPI Update scheduled for Thursday. This update did not run due to an error at HQ. The update is rescheduled for today, Friday May 12th starting at 9 p.m. E.S.T. Below are HQ instructions sent to your supervisor this morning.

Instructions from HQ:

All enumerators should logout of CAPI by Friday, May 12th at 9 p.m. E.S.T. All active iPads on configured on InTune will receive this push.

The push will include:

- Updated Applications
- June Area Fixes
- iOS issue fix with NEXT Button

Enumerator Task

Enumerator (and stat test) devices should be fully charged by the push time and date stated above. A good practice is to leave the CAPI iPad on the charger when an application push is expected. This will ensure best results for the push to be received and downloaded successfully. An active cellular signal or connected WIFI is also needed. After the push, enumerators may use CAPI via the icons on their iPad home screen. Note that if enumerators are, or have been using the URL instead to log into CAPI, make sure they fully logout of the CAPI Production URL on Safari, close all open Safari tabs, swipe Safari closed, then clear Safari website history under “Settings/Safari”. After opening the new downloaded CAPI Apps, be sure to tap “Clear Preferences” on the CAPI login screen before login. A detailed push a reminder on the CAPI Dashboard.

Friday Feedback for Friday, May 5, 2023

Upcoming Due Dates

There are a few surveys with due dates coming up very shortly. Please keep in mind the following important dates:

Survey	Enumeration Dates	Project	Team Lead
Ag Labor	April 19 – May 9	956	Ann Courser
Maple Syrup (MI)	April 28 – May 11	192	Janiece Presberry
May Ag Yield	April 29 – May 8	128	John Miyares

The complete list of ongoing and upcoming surveys is updated monthly and can be found on the Purdue GLR website at this [LINK](#).

Reminder: Do you Need Supplies for June Area? – Goings/Miyares

Most of the survey materials for the June Area Survey were shipped to enumerators in early March, including the aerial photos, photo pens and pencils, magic erasers, as well as the interviewer manuals and other survey information. Knowing some people may have used some of their supplies during prescreening and may need

more, we can ship additional June Area supplies upon request when we send out the other June 1 Survey information during the week of May 15. If you need anything, please submit a request for materials or supplies using the [NASDA Order Form](#) on the Purdue Site by May 10.

Survey Spotlight: Quarterly Hog Reports

The Hog Inventory surveys provide detailed inventory of breeding and marketing hogs and the future supply of market hogs on a quarterly basis. Hog owners, including contractors, are the target population. All hog operations with capacity to raise breeding or market hogs are eligible to be sampled for the Quarterly Hog Surveys. A sample of hog operations from the NASS List Sampling Frame (LSF) is supplemented by a sample of area tracts to ensure complete coverage. All states are included in the December Hog survey while producers in the largest 30 producing states are surveyed during the following three quarters in March, June, and September. Hog operations who own hogs in more than one state report their inventories by state so that the hogs and pigs are allocated to the proper state.

The data gathered in the Quarterly Hog Inventory Survey allow NASS to measure and report conditions and trends in the U.S. Pork industry over the course of the year. The information is used by all sectors of the industry, including producers themselves, to help make sound and timely business decisions.

As of March 1, there were 72.9 million hogs and pigs on U.S. farms, up slightly from the previous year, but down two percent from the previous quarter. Of the total inventory, approximately 8.2 million hogs and pigs were on farms in the Great Lakes Regional states of Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. Iowa hog producers account for the largest inventory among the states, at 23.4 million head, followed by Minnesota with 8.9 million head and North Carolina with 8 million head.

Friday Feedback for Friday, May 26, 2023

June Area Odds and Ends – Goings/Kalaus

There have been questions about entering agriculture data for minor ag tracts (CRP only, horse and pasture only, no row crops or hay, no storage capacity, no cattle) into CAPI prior to May 30. Minor ag tracts for old segments can be entered into CAPI starting May 20. However, anything that's in a new segment, even a minor ag segment, can't be added until May 30.

HQ provided clarification to question 3 of the Technology Use Section regarding how to define access to the internet. This is a change from last week's Friday Feedback. Access to the Internet in this question is defined as on the farm/ranch or the operator's residence. If the operator's or partners' access to the Internet is only at libraries or other public information centers, the answer should be coded 'No'. The Ag Surveys Interviewers Manual has been updated and posted to the NASDA-Purdue website.

New Summer Interns

Hi! My name's Nathan Rosenblum, I'm a rising senior at Boston University studying applied mathematics, and I'm so excited to work with NASS this summer as a statistician in training! I have a passion for mathematics and especially it's applications in agriculture and environmental sciences. Outside of my academic interests, I spend my free time hiking, playing bass guitar, and reading (I especially love science fiction). I'm very excited to be working with NASS this summer and expanding my statistical background.



Hello, my name is Hussein Hajalie. I am a senior at Michigan State University majoring in Crop and Soil Sciences. I worked last summer for Bayer Crop Science as a Summer Research Assistant, and I am very excited to work here as an intern for NASS in the Great Lakes Region field office and hope I can really help the agency out. For leisure time, I enjoy watching TV and lots of reading. Again, I am very excited to work here at NASS and extremely grateful for the opportunity.



Office Closed Monday

The Great Lakes Regional Office will be closed on Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day.