

June surveys seek production info

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USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service is surveying thousands of farmers across Nebraska to get a clearer indication of the production and supply of major commodities for 2010.

"With the 2010 growing season now in full swing, we can start to get a more complete picture of how things are shaping up for the agricultural sector," said Joe Parsons, director of the NASS Nebraska Field Office. "We'll be looking at what crops have been planted, what commodities are in storage and how much livestock is in inventory."

Parsons explained that NASS will gather this information through two major mid-year surveys: the June Area Survey and the June Agricultural Survey.

"For the area survey, we visit randomly selected tracts of land and interview the operators of any farm or ranch on that land," he said. "We collect information on crop acreage—including biotech crops, as well as grain stocks, livestock inventory, cash rents, land values, and value of sales.

"For the agricultural survey, which we also call the 'crop/stocks survey,' we contact producers by mail, phone or personal visit. We ask them to provide information on their total acreage, acres planted to specific commodities—including biotech varieties, and quantities of grains and oilseeds stored on-farm."

This information will be a critical component of several key national reports, including the annual Acreage report and the quarterly grain stocks report, both to be released on June 30.

Survey data also contribute to NASS's monthly and annual crop production reports and various other crop and livestock-related publications, all of which are available online at www.nass.usda.gov.

"Especially in these uncertain economic times, farmers and the rest of the agricultural industry

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need timely, accurate data on the current state of U.S. agriculture,” Parsons said. “The information collected through our mid-year surveys can help producers, suppliers, traders, buyers, export customers and others to make sound and informed business decisions.”