**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**National Agricultural Statistics Service**

***2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey***

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What is the USDA Certified Organic Production Survey?**

Under a cooperative agreement with USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA), NASS will conduct the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey to gather detailed production and marketing information on certified organic farming in the United States. The information published as a result of the survey will be used by RMA to improve Federal crop insurance programs for organic crops, as required by the 2008 Farm Bill. The data will help determine the numbers and varieties of organic crops insured and develop new insurance approaches.

**Why is the Organic Production Survey important?**

This survey provides certified organic producers an opportunity to showcase their contributions to U.S. agriculture and help ensure the continued ***growth and*** ***sustainability*** of organic farming in the United States. From the 2008 Organic Production Survey, NASS reported the average production expenditures are higher for organic farms ($171,978) than for all farms nationwide ($109,359). Knowing the disparity in cost of production, this new information will help the USDA re-evaluate Federal crop insurance programs to ensure USDA certified organic producers receive equitable insurance rates and programs for the food and fiber they produce.

**How is the Organic Production Survey conducted?**

From December 2011 – April 2012, NASS will conduct the survey nationwide targeting farm operators known by NASS and USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service to produce USDA organically certified crops and/or livestock. NASS will collect information on certified organic production including acres planted, acres harvested, quantity harvested, quantity sold, value of sale, marketing practices and more for field crops, vegetables, fruits, tree nuts and berries, livestock, poultry and livestock products. Producers can respond by mail, Internet, telephone or personal enumeration with a NASS representative. Completing the survey online via NASS’s secure Web-based response system at [www.agcounts.usda.gov](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov) is strongly encouraged. Online response saves the respondent time and saves money on return postage and data entry. Participants need the ID number printed on the mailing label of their survey form to respond online.

**Why should I participate in the Organic Production Survey?**

Your response will help shape decisions regarding farm policy, funding allocations, availability of goods and services, community development and other key issues. For example:

* RMA’s Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) will use the information published to provide better insurance coverage for organic crops, as required by the 2008 Farm Bill.
* USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service will use the detailed data on agricultural products produced using organic practices to enhance programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
* USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service will use the information to evaluate the potential expansion of the Market Access Program to allow for more exports of organic agricultural products.

**Will my information be kept confidential?**

By law (Title 7, U.S. Code and CIPSEA, Public Law 107-347) individual information will be kept confidential.

**Where can I get more information about the Organic Production Survey?**

For more information on the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey visit [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov) or call (800) 727-9540.