



3410-20

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Agricultural Statistics Service

Notice of Intent to Request an Early Revision and Merger of two Currently Approved Information Collections.

AGENCY: National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 this notice announces the intention of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to request revision to the currently approved information collection, the Bee and Honey survey docket (0535-0153). In addition NASS plans to merge this docket with the currently approved Colony Loss survey docket (0535-0255). Revision to burden hours will be needed due to a changes in the size of the target population, sample design, and the inclusion of the Colony Loss surveys.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER] to be assured of consideration.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by docket number 0535-0153, by any of the following methods:

- E-mail: ombofficer@nass.usda.gov. Include docket number above in the subject line of the message.
- Efax: (855) 838-6382.

- Mail: Mail any paper, disk, or CD-ROM submissions to: David Hancock, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2024.
- Hand Delivery/Courier: Hand deliver to: David Hancock, NASS Clearance Officer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 5336 South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-2024.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: R. Renee Picanso, Associate Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, (202) 720-4333. Copies of this information collection and related instructions can be obtained without charge from David Hancock, NASS - OMB Clearance Officer, at (202) 690-2388 or at ombofficer@nass.usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Honey and Honey Bee Surveys.

OMB Control Number: 0535-0153.

Expiration Date of Approval: December 31, 2018.

Type of Request: Intent to revise and extend a currently approved information collection for a period of three years and to merge another approved group of surveys (Colony Loss Surveys) into this request.

Abstract: The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to prepare and issue state and national estimates of crop and livestock

production, livestock products, prices, and disposition; as well as economic statistics, environmental statistics related to agriculture, and also to conduct the Census of Agriculture.

In this request for renewal of the Bee and Honey (0535-0153) docket, NASS will incorporate the two surveys (operations with fewer than 5 colonies and operations with 5 or more colonies) conducted under the Colony Loss (0535-0255) docket with the honey production surveys included in this docket. The operations with 5 or more colonies will continue to receive quarterly loss questionnaires and an annual honey production survey. The operations with less than 5 colonies will receive one combined, annual questionnaire that contains the same questions as asked under the currently approved dockets. The sample is adjusted so that the same group of operators who qualify for the honey survey also qualify for the loss survey.

The title of this revised docket will now be Honey and Honey Bee Surveys.

As pollinators, honey bees are vital to the agricultural industry for producing food for the world's population. USDA, NASS has found that during 2015, colonies losses by quarter ranged from 12 to 18 percent. Overall, from January 1, 2015 to January 1, 2016, the total number of colonies in the United States decreased by 8 percent.

Additional data is needed to accurately describe the costs associated with pest/disease control, wintering fees, and replacement worker and queen bees. USDA and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in consultation with other relevant Federal partners, are scaling up efforts to address the decline of honey bee health with a goal of ensuring the recovery of this critical subset of pollinators. NASS supports the

Pollinator Research Action Plan, published May 19, 2015, which emphasizes the importance of coordinated action to identify the extent and causal factors in honey bee mortality.

Authority: These data will be collected under the authority of 7 U.S.C. 2204(a). Individually identifiable data collected under this authority are governed by Section 1770 of the Food Security Act of 1985, 7 U.S.C. 2276, which requires USDA to afford strict confidentiality to non-aggregated data provided by respondents. This notice is submitted in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3501, et seq.) and Office of Management and Budget regulations at 5 CFR part 1320. NASS also complies with OMB Implementation Guidance, “Implementation Guidance for Title V of the E-Government Act, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA),” *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 115, June 15, 2007, p. 33362.

Estimate of Burden: Public reporting burden for this collection of information for operations with five or more colonies is estimated to average 20 minutes per response for the annual Bee and Honey survey and 10 minutes per respondent for the quarterly Colony Loss Survey. Operations with less than five colonies will receive the newly combined questionnaire (Bee and Honey and Colony Loss) which is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. Publicity materials and instruction sheets will account for 5 minutes of additional burden per respondent. Respondents who refuse to complete a survey will be allotted 2 minutes of burden per attempt to collect the data.

Respondents: Farmers.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 22,500.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: With an estimated response rate of approximately 80%, we estimate the total burden to be approximately 9,200 hours.

COMMENTS: Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, technological or other forms of information technology collection methods.

All responses to this notice will become a matter of public record and be summarized in the request for OMB approval.

Signed at Washington, D.C., July 5, 2017.

Hubert Hamer
Administrator.

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