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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Agriculture will submit the following information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 on or after the date of publication of this notice. Comments are requested regarding: (1) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received by [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION]. Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website *www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain.* Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments'' or by using the search function. An agency may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

TITLE: Agricultural Surveys Program – Substantive Change

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0535-0213

SUMMARY OF COLLECTION: General authority for these data collection activities is granted under U.S. Code Title 7, Section 2204 which specifies that "The Secretary of Agriculture shall procure and preserve all information concerning agriculture which he can obtain . . . by the collection of statistics . . .". The primary objective of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is to provide data users with timely and reliable agricultural production and economic statistics, as well as environmental and specialty agricultural related statistics. To accomplish this objective, NASS relies on the use of diverse surveys that show changes within the farming industry over time.

NASS is requesting a substantive change to the 2027 June Area Survey and Agricultural Coverage Evaluation Survey (ACES) data-collection instruments. ACES is conducted only during the Census of Agriculture reference year, which occurs every five years. Because the June Area Survey and ACES collect substantially overlapping information, NASS plans to use a modified ACES questionnaire for both surveys in 2027.

The modified questionnaire will retain selected June Area Survey questions to ensure that all required data items are collected. Using a common questionnaire for both data collections will improve census coverage, increase operational efficiency, and reduce respondent burden by coordinating related data-collection activities.

NASS is requesting revisions to the race and ethnicity questions for both the June Area Survey and ACES. In light of OMB's March 27, 2026 announcement of a one-year extension to submit an Action Plan for compliance with the updates to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, *Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*, NASS will use the 1997 standards in Agricultural Surveys Program and will use the delayed deadline to continue developing implementation plans for the 2024 standards. Updating the race and ethnicity questions consistently across both questionnaires will support efficient data collection, reduce potential respondent confusion, and maintain consistency for census coverage purposes.

NEED AND USE OF THE INFORMATION: The surveys provide the basis for estimates of the current season's crop and livestock production and supplies of grain in storage. Crop and livestock statistics help develop a stable economic atmosphere and reduce risk for production, marketing, and distribution operations. These commodities affect the well-being of the nation's farmers, commodities markets, and national and global agricultural policy. Users of agricultural statistics are farm organizations, agribusiness, state and national farm policy makers, and foreign buyers of agricultural products but the primary user of the statistical information is the producer. Agricultural statistics are also used to plan and administer other related federal and state programs in such areas as school lunch program, conservation, foreign trade, education, and recreation. Collecting the information less frequent would eliminate needed data to keep the government and agricultural industry abreast of changes at the state and national levels.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Farms and Ranches

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS: 596,600

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES: Reporting: Quarterly; Semi-annually; Monthly; Annually

TOTAL BURDEN HOURS: 207,289

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