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Census of Agriculture Data Helps Quantify Arkansas's Largest Industry

LITTLE ROCK, AR – Farmers have until February 5 to respond to the Census of Agriculture, which provides valuable data to federal and state agriculture leaders in shaping farm policies and programs. The USDA's [National Agriculture Statistics Service](#) (NASS) launches the survey to American producers across the U.S. every five years to look at land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, and income and expenditures.

"The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data for every county in the nation," says Eugene Young, Regional Director USDA-NASS. "We work hard to make the survey accessible and convenient for farmers, and have staff ready to assist with questions or problems while completing any part of the process."

In addition to the Census of Agriculture, NASS conducts hundreds of surveys each year on issues including agricultural production, economics, demographics and the environment. Recent NASS data revealed Arkansas was fifth in the U.S. among states with the highest gross cash income from commercial farms, showing \$1.3 million in 2016 (see infographic, [here](#)). Further data revealed record high years in Arkansas for soybean and cotton yield in 2017 (find 2017 crop production year presentation slides, [here](#)).

"Agriculture is Arkansas's largest industry and it is important that we have reliable data to quantify the many ways that our diverse production contributes to the economy," says Arkansas Agriculture Secretary Wes Ward. "The Census of Agriculture, and other annual surveys conducted by NASS, provide invaluable data that helps us to understand how to best serve our farmers and ranchers throughout the state

To participate in the Census of Agriculture farmers and ranchers receive a questionnaire by mail. They can choose to complete the survey in print or electronic format. A full resource guide is available [here](#) with Census questions, instructions, and more. Find the 2012 Census of Agriculture Report, [here](#). Findings from the 2018 Census of Agriculture is predicted by NASS to be available by spring of 2019.

The Arkansas Agriculture Department is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Learn more: www.aad.arkansas.gov.

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