



Make Wisconsin Agriculture Count in the 2012 Census

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EDITORS: At [ftp://ftp.datcp.state.wi.us/media](http://ftp.datcp.state.wi.us/media), there are two resources for your reporting. One is to a 1:27 video with Secretary Brancel talking about the importance of the Ag Census. Use it as you see fit either as is on web and TV or taking portions for sound bites. The second is a :30 radio public service announcement (PSA) produced by the USDA with Secretary Brancel. Radio reporters, please see that your public affairs person has access to this or whoever schedules PSA's.

MADISON – Number of farms. Gallons of milk produced. Amount of livestock. Total Christmas trees harvested. Average age of a farmer. Type of vegetables grown. These Wisconsin facts and much more are only available in the Census of Agriculture, and now is the time to update that information.

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) encourages farmers to complete their 2012 Census forms. The Census is taken every five years by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service.

“The Census of Agriculture is the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data for every county across the nation,” said DATCP Secretary Ben Brancel. “By completing your 2012 Census, government leaders, agribusinesses and trade associations will have the information needed to make good decisions impacting agriculture and our rural communities.

The Census of Agriculture is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. The Census looks at land use and ownership, operator characteristics and production practices. A farm is any place that produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products during the 2012 Census year.

Census data allows farmers to make informed decisions about their operation and agricultural companies to determine how to best serve agricultural producers. Communities use the information to focus their services, and legislators use the Census to shape farm policies and programs.

“Agriculture is a huge economic driver in Wisconsin, and the information collected will be used at the local, state and national level in planning for our future,” added Brancel. “Make sure your farm is counted by completing the 2012 Census this winter. The better the information, hopefully the better the decisions.”

Farmers should watch for the census form to arrive in the mail. The Census needs to be completed by mail or online at www.agcensus.usda.gov by February 4. Information collected by the Census is kept confidential.

For more details about the Census of Agriculture, call toll-free 888-4AG-STAT or 888-424-7828.

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