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National Agricultural Statistics Service

The National Agricultural Statistics Service prepares estimates and reports on production, supply, price, and other items necessary for the orderly operation of the U.S. agricultural economy.

The reports include statistics on field crops, fruits and vegetables, dairy, cattle, hogs, sheep, poultry, aquaculture, and related commodities or processed products. Other estimates concern farm numbers, farm production expenditures, agricultural chemical use, prices received by farmers for products sold, prices paid for commodities and services, indexes of prices received and paid, parity prices, farm employment, and farm wage rates.

The Service prepares these estimates through a complex system of sample surveys of producers, processors, buyers, and others associated with agriculture. Information is gathered by mail, telephone, personal interviews, and field visits.

The 45 State-Federal offices, serving all 50 States, and the national office prepare weekly, monthly, annual, and other periodic reports for free distribution to the news media, Congress, and survey respondents. The reports are available to others free on the Internet, or on a subscription basis. Information on crop and livestock products appears in about 400 reports issued annually. Cooperative agreements with State agencies also permit preparation and publication of estimates of individual crops and livestock by counties in most States.

The Service performs reimbursable survey work and statistical consulting services for other Federal and State agencies and provides technical assistance for developing agricultural data systems in other countries.

For further Information, contact the Executive Assistant to the Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250–2000. Phone, 202–720–5141.

Natural Resources and Environment

This mission area is responsible for fostering sound stewardship of 75 percent of the Nation's total land area. Ecosystems are the underpinning for the Department's operating philosophy in this area, in order to maximize stewardship of our natural resources. This approach ensures that products, values, services, and uses desired by people are produced in ways that sustain healthy, productive ecosystems.

Forest Service

[For the Forest Service statement of organization, see the *Code of Federal Regulations,* Title 36, Part 200.1]

The Forest Service was created by the Transfer Act of February 1, 1905 (16 U.S.C. 472), which transferred the Federal forest reserves and the responsibility for their management from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture. The forest reserves were established by the President from the public domain under authority of the Creative Act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1103). The protection and development of the reserves (which became the national forests in 1907) are governed by the Organic Act of June 4, 1897, as amended (16 U.S.C. 473–478); the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of June 12, 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528–531); the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601–1610); and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (90 Stat. 2947). The Weeks Law of March 1, 1911, as amended (16 U.S.C. 480), allowed the Government to purchase and exchange land for national forests.

Objectives The Forest Service has the Federal responsibility for national leadership in forestry. As set forth in law, its mission is to achieve quality land management under the sustainable, multiple-use management concept to

meet the diverse needs of people. To accomplish this goal, it has adopted objectives which include:

—advocating a conservation ethic in promoting the health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forests and associated lands;

—listening to people and responding to their diverse needs in making decisions;

—protecting and managing the national forests and grasslands to best demonstrate the sustainable, multiple-use management concept;

—providing technical and financial assistance to State and private forest landowners, encouraging them toward active stewardship and quality land management in meeting their specific objectives;

—providing technical and financial assistance to cities and communities to improve their natural environment by planting trees and caring for their forests;

—providing international technical assistance and scientific exchanges to sustain and enhance global resources and to encourage quality land management;

—assisting States and communities in using the forests wisely to promote rural economic development and a quality rural environment;

—developing and providing scientific and technical knowledge, improving our capability to protect, manage, and use forests and rangelands; and

—providing work, training, and education to the unemployed, underemployed, elderly, youth, and the disadvantaged.

National Forest System The Service manages 155 national forests, 20 national grasslands, and 8 land utilization projects on over 191 million acres in 44 States, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico under the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield. The Nation's tremendous need for wood and paper products is balanced with the other vital, renewable resources or benefits that the national forests and grasslands provide: recreation and natural beauty, wildlife habitat, livestock forage, and water supplies. The guiding principle is the greatest good to the greatest number in the long run.

These lands are protected as much as possible from wildfire, epidemics of disease and insect pests, erosion, floods, and water and air pollution. Burned areas get emergency seeding treatment to prevent massive erosion and stream siltation. Roads and trails are built where needed to allow for closely regulated timber harvesting and to give the public access to outdoor recreation areas and provide scenic drives and hikes. Picnic, camping, water-sport, skiing, and other areas are provided with facilities for public convenience and enjoyment. Timber harvesting methods are used that will protect the land and streams, assure rapid renewal of the forest, provide food and cover for wildlife and fish, and have minimum impact on scenic and recreation values. Local communities benefit from the logging and milling activities. These lands also provide needed oil, gas, and minerals. Rangelands are improved for millions of livestock and game animals. The national forests provide a refuge for many species of endangered birds, animals, and fish. Some 34.6 million acres are set aside as wilderness and 175,000 acres as primitive areas where timber will not be harvested.

Cooperation With the States The Service provides national leadership and financial and technical assistance to non-Federal forest landowners, operators, processors of forest products, and urban forestry interests. Through its cooperative State and private forestry programs, the Service protects and improves the quality of air, water, soil, and open space and encourages uses of natural resources on non-Federal lands that best meet the needs of the Nation, while protecting the environment.

Cooperative programs are carried out through the State foresters or equivalent State officials, who receive grant funding under the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101). Cooperators at the State and local levels provide the delivery system for most State and private forestry programs.

Grant funds and technical assistance are available for rural forestry assistance,

forestry incentives, insect and disease control, urban forestry assistance, rural fire prevention and control, organization management assistance, State forest resource planning, and technology implementation.

The Service also cooperates with other USDA agencies in providing leadership and technical assistance for the forestry aspects of conservation programs.

The Service's State and private forestry program staff also ensure that the Service and its cooperators keep abreast of the best knowledge and technology in carrying out its programs, and they help to develop technology transfer plans for implementing research results for a broad range of potential users.

Forest Research The Service performs basic and applied research to develop the scientific information and technology needed to protect, manage, use, and sustain the natural resources of the Nation's 1.6 billion acres of forests and rangelands. This research is conducted through a network of 8 forest experiment stations, a Forest Products Laboratory, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, including research work units at 77 project locations throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Pacific Trust Islands. Under the authority of the McSweeny-McNary Act of May 22, 1928, as amended and supplemented (45 Stat. 699), research is often performed in cooperation with many of the State agricultural colleges. The Forest Research Service's strategy focuses on three major program components: understanding the structure and functions of forest and range ecosystems; understanding how people perceive and value the protection, management, and use of natural resources; and determining which protection, management, and utilization practices are most suitable for sustainable production and use of the world's natural resources.

International Forestry In response to the U.S. commitment to support natural resource conservation around the world, Congress established the International Forestry Division within the USDA's Forest Service. Its mandate is to provide assistance that promotes sustainable development and global environmental stability, particularly in key countries important in global climate change. This mandate includes a national goal for sustainable management of all forests by the year 2000, investigating research topics with implications for global forest management, and sharing resource management experience with colleagues around the world.

Responsibility for global stewardship is shared by the entire Forest Service. The Forest Service's Office of International Forestry mobilizes support of all Forest Service units—Research, National Forest System, State and Private Forestry, Administration, and Programs and Legislation—to work with other governmental agencies, nongovernmental groups, and international organizations in four major international areas: strategic planning and policy development, training and technical assistance, research and scientific exchange, and disaster relief.

Human Resource Programs The Service operates the Youth Conservation Corps and the Volunteers in the National Forests programs and participates with the Department of Labor on several human resource programs that involve the Nation's citizens, both young and old, in forestry-related activities. Included in these programs are the Job Corps and the Senior Community Service Employment Program. These programs annually accomplish millions of dollars worth of conservation work, while providing participants with such benefits as training, paid employment, and meaningful outdoor experience.

Field Offices—Forest Service

	Address
National Forest System Regions [1]—Regional Forester	
1. Northern	Federal Bldg. (P.O. Box 7669), Missoula, MT 59807
2. Rocky Mountain	740 Simms St. (P.O. Box 25127), Lakewood, CO 80225
3. Southwestern	517 Gold Ave. SW., Albuquerque, NM 87102
4. Intermountain	324 25th St., Ogden, UT 84401
5. Pacific Southwest	630 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94111
6. Pacific Northwest	333 SW. 1st Ave. (P.O. Box 3623), Portland, OR 97208
8. Southern	1720 Peachtree Rd. NW., Atlanta, GA 30367

Field Offices—Forest Service—Continued

	Address
National Forest System Regions [1]—Regional Forester	
9. Eastern	310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53203
10. Alaska	Federal Office Bldg. (P.O. Box 21628), Juneau, AK 99802
Forest and Range Experiment Stations—Director	
Intermountain	324 25th St., Ogden, UT 84401
North Central	1992 Folwell Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108
Northeastern	Suite 200, 100 Matson Ford Rd. (P.O. Box 6775), Radnor, PA 19087–4585
Pacific Northwest	333 SW. 1st Ave. (P.O. Box 3890), Portland, OR 97208
Pacific Southwest	1960 Addison St. (P.O. Box 245), Berkeley, CA 94701
Rocky Mountain	240 W. Prospect Ave., Fort Collins, CO 80526
Southeastern	200 Weaver Blvd. (P.O. Box 2860), Asheville, NC 28804
Southern	701 Loyola Ave., U.S. Postal Service Bldg., New Orleans, LA 70113
Forest Products Laboratory	1 Gifford Pinchot Dr., Madison, WI 53705
State and Private Forestry Areas [2]—Director	
Northeastern	370 Reed Rd., Broomall, PA 19008
International Institute of Tropical Forestry	Guadecanal St. (Call Box 25000), Rio Piedras, PR 00928

[1] There is no Region 7.
[2] In Regions 1 through 6, 8, and 10, State and private forestry activities are directed from regional headquarters.

For further information, contact the Public Affairs Office, Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 96090, Washington, DC 20090–6090. Phone, 202–720–3760.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

[For the Natural Resources Conservation Service statement of organization, see the *Code of Federal Regulations,* Title 7, Parts 600 and 601]

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), formerly the Soil Conservation Service, has national responsibility for helping America's farmers, ranchers, and other private landowners develop and carry out voluntary efforts to conserve and protect our natural resources. The Service is USDA's technical delivery arm for conservation.

Conservation Technical Assistance This is the foundation program of NRCS. Under this program, NRCS provides technical assistance to land users and units of government for the purpose of sustaining agricultural productivity and protecting and enhancing the natural resource base. This assistance is based on the voluntary cooperation of private landowners and involves comprehensive approaches to reduce soil erosion, improve soil and water quantity and quality, improve and conserve wetlands, enhance fish and wildlife habitat, improve air quality, improve pasture and range condition, reduce upstream flooding, and improve woodlands. Every year, more than 1 million land users receive these technical services, which are channeled through nearly 3,000 conservation districts across the United States and its territories.

Natural Resources Inventory The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) is a report issued every 5 years on how well the Nation is sustaining natural resources on non-Federal land. This report contains the most comprehensive and statistically reliable data of its kind in the world. The Inventory provides data on the kind and amount of soil, water, vegetation, and related resources; the effects of current land use and management practices on the present and future supply and condition of soil, water, and vegetation; and the changes and trends in the use, extent, and condition of these resources. Inventory data and analytical software are available to the public on CD–ROM.

National Cooperative Soil Survey The National Cooperative Soil Survey provides the public with local information on the uses and capabilities of their soils. The published soil survey for a county or other designated area includes maps and interpretations that are the foundation for farm planning and other private land use decisions as well as for resource planning and policy by Federal, State, and local governments. The surveys are conducted cooperatively with other Federal, State, and local agencies and land grant universities. The Service is the national and world leader in soil classification and soil mapping, and is now expanding its work in soil quality.

Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting Program This program collects snowpack moisture data and forecasts seasonal water supplies for streams that derive most of their water from snowmelt. It helps farm operators, rural communities, and municipalities

manage water resources through water supply forecasts. It also provides hydrometeorological data for regulating reservoir storage and managing streamflow. The Snow Supply Program is conducted in 11 Western States and Alaska.

Plant Materials Program At 26 plant materials centers across the country, NRCS tests, selects, and ensures the commercial availability of new and improved conservation plants for erosion reduction, wetland restoration, water quality improvement, streambank and riparian area protection, coastal dune stabilization, biomass production, carbon sequestration, and other needs. The Plant Materials Program is a cooperative effort with conservation districts, other Federal and State agencies, commercial businesses, and seed and nursery associations.

River Basin Surveys and Investigations This program involves NRCS with Federal, State, and local agencies in river basin surveys and investigations, flood hazard analysis, and floodplain management assistance. It addresses a variety of natural resource concerns: water quality, water conservation, wetlands protection, agricultural drought, rural development, municipal and industrial water needs, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Public Law 83–566 Small Watersheds Program The Small Watersheds Program helps local sponsoring groups to voluntarily plan and install watershed protection projects on private lands. These projects include flood prevention, water quality improvement, soil erosion and sediment reduction, rural and municipal water supply, irrigation water management, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and wetlands restoration. The Service helps local community groups, government entities, and private landowners working together using an integrated, comprehensive watershed approach to natural resource planning.

Public Law 78–534 Flood Prevention Program This program applies to 11 specific flood prevention projects covering about 35 million acres in 11 States. It provides help in flood prevention, water management, and reduction and erosion sedimentation. It also can help in developing recreational facilities and improving fish and wildlife habitat.

Emergency Watershed Protection Program This program provides emergency assistance to safeguard lives and property in jeopardy due to sudden watershed impairment by natural disasters. Emergency work includes quickly establishing a protective plant cover on denuded land and stream banks; opening dangerously restricted channels; and repairing diversions and levees. An emergency area need not be declared a national disaster area to be eligible for help under this program.

Great Plains Conservation Program This program (GPCP) helps bring about long-term solutions to natural resource problems in the 10 Great Plains States. It is aimed at total conservation treatment of entire farms or ranches. Participation in GPCP is voluntary and provides technical assistance and a long-term cost-share contract between the participant and NRCS. The program has been effective in addressing the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and the needs of American Indian farmers and ranchers. In addition to providing significant erosion and sediment reduction benefits, it addresses problems related to water quality, wildlife habitat protection, and other environmental concerns.

Resource Conservation and Development Program This program (RC&D) is a locally driven program—an opportunity for civic-oriented groups to work together sharing knowledge and resources in solving common problems facing their region. The program offers aid in balancing the environmental, economic, and social needs of an area. A USDA coordinator helps each designated RC&D council plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation, water management, community development, and environmental enhancement.

Rural Abandoned Mine Program This program (RAMP) helps protect people and the environment from the adverse

effects of past coal-mining practices and promotes the development of soil and water resources on unreclaimed mine land. It provides technical and financial assistance to land users who voluntarily enter into 5-to-10-year contracts for the reclamation of eligible land and water.

Wetlands Reserve Program Under this program, USDA purchases easements from agricultural land owners who voluntarily agree to restore and protect wetlands. Service employees help these owners develop plans to retire critical wetland habitat from crop production. The primary objectives are to preserve and restore wetlands, improve wildlife habitat, and protect migratory waterfowl.

Water Bank Program The Service helps landowners protect, improve, or restore wetlands by identifying eligible lands, helping owners develop conservation plans, and implementing necessary land treatments. Through 10-year rental agreements between USDA and landowners, the Water Bank Program protects important nesting, breeding, and feeding areas for migratory waterfowl. Other benefits of the program include water conservation, erosion control, flood control, and landscape beautification.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program This voluntary incentive program supports the Nation's commitment to water quality in the Colorado River, which provides water to more than 18 million people in parts of seven Western States and Mexico. NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to control salt loading in the Colorado River from both natural and human-caused sources. Among the remedies used are management practices to prevent irrigation-induced erosion.

Forestry Incentives Program This program helps to increase the Nation's supply of products from nonindustrial private forest lands. This also ensures more effective use of existing forest lands and, over time, helps to prevent shortages and price increases for forest products. The program shares the cost incurred by landowners for tree planting and timberstand improvement.

Farms-For-The-Future Program This program guarantees USDA loans and subsidizes interest on State loans to purchase agricultural land or development rights to preserve vital farmland resources for future generations. The money also can be reinvested by the States to generate earnings for future farmland protection efforts.

For further information, contact the Office of Public Affairs, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013. Phone, 202–720–3210.

Graduate School, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Fourteenth Street and Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20250
Phone, 202–401–9129

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