

**COLD STORAGE**

OMB No. 0535-0001

**B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

- 1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.**

The potential reporting universe for the Capacity Survey is defined as all warehouses artificially cooled to a temperature of 50 degrees Fahrenheit or lower where food products generally are placed and held for 30 days or more. Also included in the universe are specialized storage facilities meeting the 30 day requirement such as fruit houses, dairy manufacturing plants, frozen fruit and vegetable processors, and poultry and meat packing plants. Excluded are stocks in refrigerated space maintained by wholesalers, jobbers, distributors, and chain stores; locker plants containing individual lockers; meat packer branch houses; and frozen food processors whose inventories are turned over more than once a month.

The capacity survey universe includes all operations that have facilities that have the potential for storing food items, but may be setting idle or used to store non-food items. Decreased coverage on the Capacity Survey (the removal of the fruit storage facilities) lowered the universe count from 2,850 to 1,700. Stocks reported to a State agency are excluded from the monthly response burden calculation.

Any fruit and/or juice data that are obtained by NASS from the US Apple Association and the Florida Department of Citrus Grower's Co-Op are not included in the burden or response rate calculations, since NASS does not conduct any surveys for these items.

The 1,700 operations will be contacted with the Capacity Survey to determine which operations fit the criteria listed above to be included in the monthly Cold

Storage Survey. The sample size for the capacity survey is larger than the monthly as some operations that qualify as long term storage facilities, do not carry items of interest on the monthly survey. These facilities are not contacted on the monthly survey unless a change occurs in which the facility starts to carry items of interest. Out of the 1,700 operations that were contacted with the capacity survey, only 1,089 operations fit the criteria to be included in the monthly Cold Storage Survey. Many of the larger cold storage operations have multiple locations in multiple States. Data for the 1,089 locations were reported by 846 respondents. During the Capacity Survey we will determine if a location is part of a larger operation and can be reported by a centralized or headquarters location. In order to minimize burden on respondents we allow them to report the data in the manner that is the most convenient for them (combined reports or individual locations).

Number of Completed Reports in 2012

Survey	Questionnaire ID	No. of States	Sample Size	Frequency	Response Rates for 2008	Response Rates for 2012	Commodity Coverage for 2012
<b>Voluntary Surveys</b>							
Monthly Cold Storage Report	080056B	44	1,089	12	66%	78%	86%
Monthly Apple Storage Report	200570-42	1	115	12	73%	67%	89%
Refrigerated Storage Capacity	80060-RB	44	1,644	0.5	77%	81%	97%
<b>Mandatory Surveys</b>							
Monthly Cold Storage Report <sup>1/</sup>	080056B	44	303	12	95%	95%	97%

<sup>1/</sup> Cold Storage became mandatory in 2008 for plants that have butter or cheese stored in their location.

- 2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:**
- **statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection,**
  - **estimation procedure,**
  - **degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification,**
  - **unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures**

The monthly Cold Storage currently uses primarily e-mail to obtain data. On or around the 24<sup>th</sup> of each month about 11 companies representing 150 facilities query their inventory systems for the information asked for on the questionnaire and then send in the spreadsheet or text file to NASS via e-mail. The files are reformatted and appended to the regular keyed data file. With hundreds of firms/branches being asked for data on 100 items, this spreadsheet-based method is the most efficient. These data account for 65 percent of total tonnage.

For all other operations, the questionnaires are mailed using the US Postal Service. Some of the operations that receive the questionnaires by mail will

respond by email, but the majority of them will respond either by Fax, US Postal Service or by telephone.

Modes of data collection include mailing of questionnaires, telephone follow-up, limited face-to-face enumeration, and electronic e-mail correspondence. Each State Field Office is responsible for utilizing the resources available to them to maximize response rates while minimizing respondent burden and out-of-pocket expenses.

All plants are accounted for each month on a current basis. A "missing reports" program identifies plants with large storage facilities or those storing specialty items which need telephone follow-up. Reports received after the preliminary estimates have been published are used to revise the preliminary estimates and are included in the following month's summary.

NASS follows the confidentiality rules established for the Census of Agriculture. There must be at least two operations that report data for any given item and no operation can account for 70% or more of the total data. If these parameters cannot be met for any State or Region, then the data will be included on the US level only.

- 3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.**

Twelve Regional Field Offices, acting as regional data collection centers, maintain lists of all cold storage warehouses in their region. With all of the large quantity or specialty items accounted for each month, the report provides a reliable summary of cold storage inventories of food products.

NASS personnel who attend the International Association of Refrigerated Warehouses annual meeting in Washington, D.C., include the cold storage commodity and survey statistician, as well as senior NASS management. This annual event provides the opportunity to meet with cold storage industry executives and discuss cooperation on the cold storage survey with their companies.

Since Field Office Directors are specifically charged with the responsibility for raising response rates where needed, Headquarters offers guidance and suggests techniques such as industry association contact, pre-survey letters, publicity materials, thorough follow-up, and refusal conversion training.

**Estimating Procedures:** Data for reporting firms are added to estimates for non-reporting firms to obtain regional and National totals. Estimates for non-reporting firms are obtained by multiplying the previous month's figure by a percent change from the previous month. The percent change is calculated for each item from totals of the current and previous month summed from firms that reported both months.

**4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.**

No testing is done.

**5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.**

Survey design and methodology are determined by the Statistical Methods Branch, Statistics Division; Branch Chief is Dave Aune, (202)720-4008.

Sample sizes for each State are determined by the Editing and Questionnaire Branch, Census and Survey Division; Branch Chief is Scott Cox (202)720-6201.

Data collection is carried out by NASS Field Offices; Director for Eastern Field Operations is Norman Bennett (202)-720-3638. Director for Western Field Operations is Kevin Barnes (202)-720-8220.

The NASS commodity statistician in Headquarters for the Cold Storage Surveys is David Colwell in the Poultry and Specialty Commodities Section, Livestock Branch of Statistics Division; Branch Chief is Dan Kerestes (202)720-3570. Commodity statisticians are responsible for coordination of sampling, questionnaires, the Estimation Manual, data collection, data processing, Field Office support, national and regional summaries, analysis, presentation to the Agricultural Statistics Board for final estimates, and publication.

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