



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA to Conduct First Wide-Scale Survey of Organic Agriculture

How It is Changing the Face of U.S. Agriculture

WASHINGTON, April 23, 2009 – This spring, USDA will conduct the first-ever, wide-scale survey of organic farming in the United States, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said today, to find out how the growth of organic farming is changing the face of U.S. agriculture.

“The Organic Production Survey is a direct response to the growing interest in organics among consumers, farmers, and businesses,” said Vilsack. “This is an opportunity for organic producers to share their voices and help ensure the continued growth and sustainability of organic farming in the United States.”

2007 Census of Agriculture counted more than 20,000 U.S. farms engaged in organic production.

The survey will look at many aspects of organic farming during the 2008 calendar year – from production and marketing practices, to income and expenses. It will focus not only on operations that are currently engaged in organic production, but also on those making the transition to organic agriculture.

The results will help shape future decisions regarding farm policy, funding allocations, availability of goods and services, community development and other key issues. In addition, the information can help producers make informed decisions about the future of their own farming operations.

USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will mail the survey in early May to all known organic producers in the United States, who are asked to respond by June 17. NASS will publish results in winter 2009.

Participants can mail back their forms or complete the survey online at www.agcensus.usda.gov. Survey participants are guaranteed by law (Title 7, U.S. Code) that their individual information will be kept confidential. NASS uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes data only in tabulated totals.

For more information about the Organic Production Survey, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (800) 727-9540.

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