**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. ***What is the Census of Aquaculture?***

The Census of Aquaculture is a follow-on study to the Census of Agriculture and is the only comprehensive source of information about the U.S. aquaculture industry. NASS will collect detailed information about the aquaculture industry for 2013. Data to be gathered include production methods, water acres and sources, production, sales, point of first sale outlets, and aquaculture distributed for restoration, conservation, enhancement or recreational purposes.

1. ***Why is the Census of Aquaculture important?***

Last conducted for 2005, the 2013 Census of Aquaculture serves as the foundation for many decisions about the sustainability and growth of the U.S. aquaculture sector. The results will help aquaculture organizations and producers assess the current state of this important part of the U.S. economy.

1. ***Who uses Census of Aquaculture data?***

Census data are used by all those involved in the aquaculture sector – federal, state and local governments, agribusinesses, trade associations, producers and many others.

* Growers can use Census data to help make informed decisions about the future of their own operations, including whether or not to expand production, and to compare production volumes and pricing points with state and U.S. averages.
* Aquaculture businesses and suppliers use the facts and figures to determine the locations of facilities that will serve producers and plan for the production and marketing of new products.
* Legislators use Census numbers when shaping policies and programs, and evaluating and determining government funding and resources.
* Extension and university representatives use the data to determine research needs and justify research funding and programs to develop new and improved methods of aquaculture production and profitability.
1. ***How is the Census of Aquaculture conducted?***

NASS will mail questionnaires for the 2013 Census of Aquaculture to aquaculture operations in mid-December 2013 to collect data for the 2013 calendar year. Completed forms are due by January 15, 2014. Producers can return their forms by mail or can fill out the Census online via a secure website at [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

1. ***Must I respond to the Census of Aquaculture?***

Yes. The Census of Aquaculture is part of the Census of Agriculture Program which is required by United States law (Title 7, U.S. Code). All those who receive a Census report form are required to respond even if they did not operate a farm in 2013.

1. ***Why must I complete another Census after just completing the Census of Agriculture?***

NASS is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture. A survey specific to aquaculture will further the accuracy and depth of knowledge about the nation’s aquaculture industry. As a result, your response will help ensure that policymakers and industry officials have reliable information to advocate for the needs of the U.S. aquaculture industry.

1. ***Is the information an individual provides kept confidential?***

Yes. Respondents are guaranteed by law (Title 7, U.S. Code, and CIPSEA, Public Law 107-347) that their individual information will be kept confidential. NASS publishes data only in tabulated totals. The report cannot be used for purposes of taxation, investigation or regulation. The privacy of individual Census records is also protected from disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act.

1. ***What if I only have a small operation, do I have to fill out a Census form?***

The Census of Aquaculture is the responsibility of *every* grower, regardless of the size of operation. For Census purposes, an aquaculture operation is any place from which $1,000 or more of aquaculture products were produced and either sold or distributed during the Census year. In addition to operations with sales of $1,000 or more, operations that produced an estimated value of $1,000 or more of aquaculture products and released or distributed their production for purposes of restoration, conservation, enhancement or recreation are also included in the Census. Operations that qualify based on production without sales include federal, state and tribal hatcheries.

1. ***What if I lost my Census of Aquaculture form?***

If you need more information, or need help completing your Census form, call toll-free (888) 424-7828 or visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

1. ***When will 2013 Census of Aquaculture results be released?***

NASS is scheduled to release the results of the Census of Aquaculture data in October 2014.

1. ***Where can I find Census of Aquaculture data?***

Census of Aquaculture data is available through the local NASS field office in your area and online at [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov) or [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov). For additional information on the Census of Aquaculture and other NASS census and surveys, call the Agricultural Statistics Hotline at (800) 727-9540.