



Brancel Hopes All Farmers Sign Up for the Census

Release Date: April 18, 2017

Contact: Bill Cosh, Communications Director,
608-224-5020, William2.Cosh@wisconsin.gov

MADISON – A lot has changed in the last five years since 2012 when the last Census of Agriculture was taken. That’s why Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Ben Brancel hopes that all farmers will sign up to receive this year’s 2017 Census.

“The Census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data in the nation,” explains Brancel. “Census data really shows Americans how significant agriculture is to the country and the world, providing food, fuel and fiber for all of us.”

It is important for farms of all sizes and from all segments of agriculture to complete the Census. A farm is any place from which at least \$1,000 of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. Even small plots of land in rural or urban areas that grow fruit, vegetables or food animals may qualify.

Data is collected on land use, operator characteristics, production practices and more. The 2017 Census of Agriculture will include new questions about military veteran status and expanded questions about marketing food directly to consumers.

“Census data is used by local governments, agribusinesses, ag lenders, state leaders and federal officials,” said Brancel. “Accurate data allows us all to make informed decisions when forming farm policies and planning budgets for the future.”

Sign up for the Census at www.agcensus.usda.gov by June 30. Census forms will be mailed to farmers in December. Farmers will be able to complete the Census by mail or on the internet. The online form will be more user-friendly in 2017, automatically calculating totals and skipping questions that are not pertinent.

For more information, call the National Agricultural Statistics Service at (888) 424-7828.

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