

Strategic Key Messaging

A Key Message Guide for Communicating the Value of
Statistics Internally and among External Partners

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UNECE Workshop on
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National Agricultural Statistics Service



Welcome!

Today we will cover...

- USDA NASS History, Mission, Values
- Our Challenge
- Project Goals
- Research-based Strategies
- Key Messaging and the Guide
- Additional Tools
- Launch Activities
- Measuring Results



Our History

First Agricultural Statistics

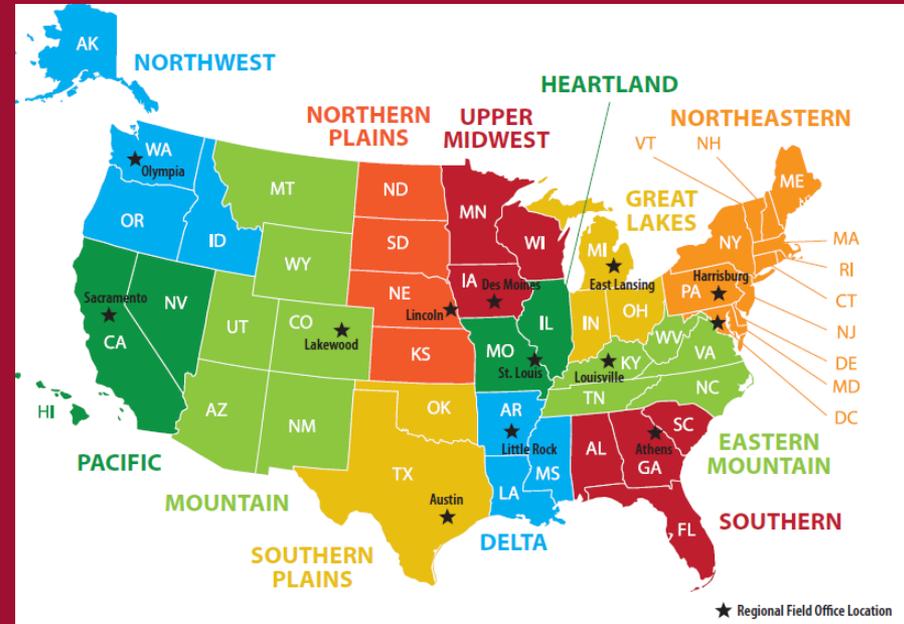
- 8 survey questions to 5 states in Aug. 1791
- Focused on land values, prices, crop yields

Introduction of NASS

- Established in 1863
- First report on crop conditions

NASS Today

- More than 800 personnel
- Serving all 50 states and Puerto Rico
- Centralized data collection and processing



Our Mission and Values

The NASS mission is to *provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.*

Our Core Values:

- Policy relevance
- Objectivity
- Credibility
- Trust
- Commitment



Our Challenge...



Declining Survey Participation

- We rely on producers to complete our surveys and enable us to accurately reflect the nation's agriculture
- Farmers and ranchers don't understand why their participation is important



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Communications Goals...

- Raise the perceived value of USDA NASS and its products and services in order to increase survey participation as well as awareness and use of data.
- Assess our situation and update Agency communications plan.



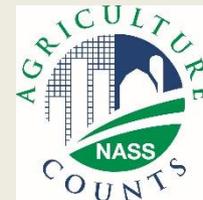
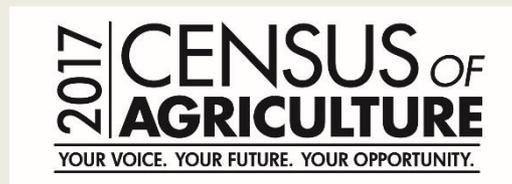
Research-based Strategies...

- Reviewed existing materials
- Facilitated working sessions with NASS staff – (2)who we are, where we are now, brand awareness; and (1) brand strategy session
- Researched media and analytics
- Conducted interviews with stakeholder and enumerators
- Additional audience research



Insights and Findings

- **Brand Identity** – Who we are is unclear to some
- **Survey and Data Value Proposition** - NASS is struggling to explain why their surveys and data matter and to quantify their value.
- **Target Audiences** – Need to better segment our audiences



Research-based Strategies...

- Promote the link between USDA and NASS
- Demonstrate that NASS data is an important “ingredient” used by others for a host of products, services, decisions and outcomes – NASS data:
 - *Enables decision-making*
 - *Can be used to create products such as research studies, media articles, forecasts, and farm reports*
- Answer the key questions: *Why should I care? What does the NASS brand mean to me?*



Key Messaging...

Helps us:

- Refresh our core brand identity.
- Have a foundation of messaging tied to our communications strategy.
- Support and guide efforts to be consistent when talking about NASS.
- Increase audience understanding of NASS as a valuable resource.
- Ultimately help increase response rates and use of data.



Our Core Message

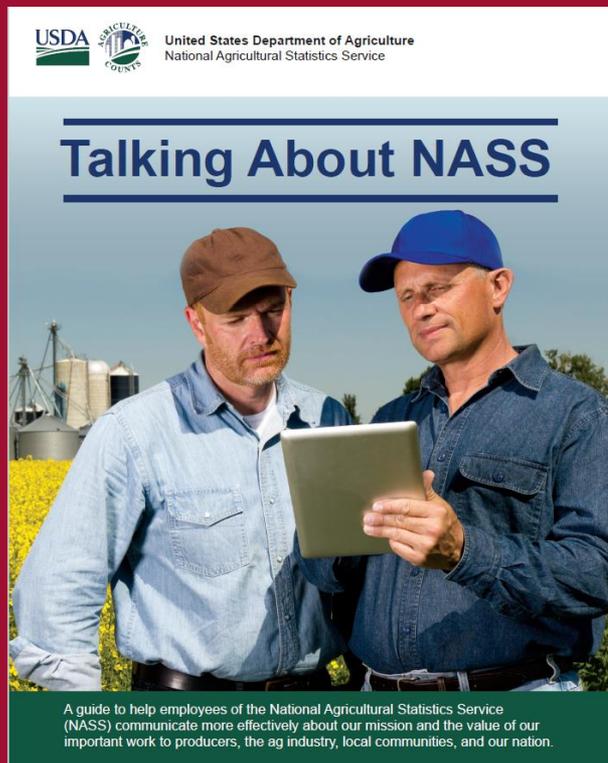
NASS is committed to providing useful agricultural data to help you work smarter.

Working smarter means you are able to ***use reliable facts and figures to make well-informed decisions that eliminate guesswork, reduce risk, and improve profitability.***



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The Key Messaging Guide



Talking About NASS

A comprehensive and convenient quick reference guide to provide clear, consistent answers to common questions about NASS.



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Making it Easier to Talk About NASS



- The Talking About NASS guide:
 - Includes key facts about NASS—who we are, what we do and who uses NASS data
 - Features consistent messaging and language
 - Is designed to be flexible, with content that can be mixed and matched to tell the NASS story
 - Was developed as two different versions and distributed in both print and digital



Making it Easier to Talk About NASS (cont'd)

About NASS
PowerPoint...

NASS Exhibit...

The collage features several elements:

- Top Left:** USDA logo and text: "United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service" and "www.nass.usda.gov".
- Top Center:** Main poster with the headline "Work Smarter with USDA Data" and an image of two men in a field looking at a tablet.
- Top Right:** A woman sitting in front of a herd of cows.
- Middle Right:** A map titled "CROPLAND DATA" showing land use across the United States. A legend below the map categorizes land into Agriculture (Corn, Cotton, Rice, Soybeans, Other Crops/Land, Pasture/Pasture-Land, Forest) and Non-Agriculture (Barren, Other Cropland, Developed, Forest, Wetland, Irrigated, Water, Wetland, Perennial Cropland).
- Bottom Left:** A group of people, including a man in a cap, working in a garden.
- Bottom Center:** A young child holding a small dog in a field.
- Bottom Right:** A man in a cap examining a corn cob in a field.



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Launch Goals and Activities

To Create
Launch
Excitement...

Leadership launches new communications tools to reinforce the effort and consistent brand messaging.

- Launch with video to debut Talking About NASS guide and PPT presentation tool
- Follow-up activities:
 - Email promotions
 - Contest to reinforce use of the guide and provide examples for practical application
 - Trade show materials
 - Develop future support tools – testimonials, etc.



Launch to Staff and Enumerators

If you've ever struggled to explain what we do at NASS. . .
Or to describe the value of our work and how it impacts
the daily lives of farmers and ranchers, *you are not alone!*



Check out the [video](#) announcing the new **Talking About NASS** guide to help us all tackle this challenge.

This comprehensive and convenient quick reference guide [\[link\]](#) provides clear, consistent answers to common questions about NASS.

The new **Talking About NASS** guide makes it easier because:

- ▶ It features consistent messaging and language that we should all use.
- ▶ It's comprehensive and covers a range of topics to discuss with different audiences.
- ▶ It's convenient. Keep it at your desk, or on your laptop or iPad.



Download yours from the NASS Portal now!

And look for your hardcopy, coming soon.



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- Email Campaign
- Video
- Guide
- Follow up on use



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Distribution and Use

External

- 7,000 printed
- Enumerators - training
- Partners – one-on-one meetings and personal mail with cover letter.
- On website

Internal

- 1,000 printed
- On Intranet

New Employees



Measuring Results

Developing an Evaluation Plan to:

- Quantify how and when staff are using the tools
- Determine how well messaging is being pushed out
- Measure the impact of refreshed messaging and tools



Thank You...



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www.nass.usda.gov

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Session 4: Tailored Communication
Strategies and Frameworks



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