

PURPOSE

The Census of Agriculture for Puerto Rico provides comprehensive data about Puerto Rico's agricultural production, operators, and land use at the municipio and region levels. Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g, requires this census. The Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture and other agricultural organizations assisted NASS with the census.

COVERAGE

All places from which \$500 or more of agricultural products were sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census period. In 1998, over 19,900 farms were counted producing crops and livestock sales of almost \$600 million.

CONTENT

Provides data on cuerdas (acreage) in farms, crop acreage and quantities harvested, sales by crop type, land use, irrigation, livestock inventories, value of livestock sold, type of farm organization, other farm-related income, operator characteristics, chemical use, farm expenses, machinery and equipment, hired workers, and value of land and buildings.

FREQUENCY

The first census was conducted in 1910 and every 10 years until 1950. (A special census was conducted in 1935 by the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration.) Censuses after 1950 were conducted in 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1978, and 1982. After the 1982 census, censuses were conducted in 1987 and 1992.

METHODS

The 1998 Census of Agriculture for Puerto Rico was a mail-out/mail-back census of all known farm operators. Area sampling was used to account for operators who failed to respond or were not on the mail list. The list of known operators was composed of farms from the 1993 census mail list and additional mail lists supplied by the Puerto Rico authorities and private businesses. After removing duplicate names from the final list, each of these operators was sent a census form. To ensure complete coverage, personal enumeration of sample areas was used to estimate activities of non-list and non-response farms.

A memorandum of understanding outlines the responsibilities of the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in conducting the census. NASS opened a field office in Puerto Rico and managed the conduct of the census. The Commonwealth contributed input to the questionnaire content, aided in constructing the mailing list, provided personnel to collect the data, assisted in analyzing the results of the census, and helped with publicity.

PRODUCTS

The 1998 Census of Agriculture for Puerto Rico is available as a printed report and on the Internet.

USES

The Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture and Extension Service use data to benchmark their own data. The Puerto Rico Planning Board uses data for input in decisions regarding government planning and legislation. The Federal Emergency Management Agency uses data to assist in damage assessment in cases of natural disasters. Agricultural producers use published statistics to determine possible markets for their goods or location for production. Agricultural consumers use information on quantities of products produced and availability for export.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Provides the only recognized source of consistent and comparable data on Puerto Rico's agricultural activities at the municipio level.

CHANGES

The 1998 Census of Agriculture for Puerto Rico is the first to use the year in which it is conducted as the reference year in its title. This represents a change in name only. The 1992 Census of Agriculture for Puerto Rico was conducted in the summer of 1993, and yet was referred to as the 1992 census. In the 1998 census tables, the data from the 1992 Census of Agriculture are referenced as 1993 data.

The five agricultural regions used for the 1992 Census of Agriculture were redrawn into seven regions for the 1998 Census of Agriculture. Because of these changes in the make-up of the regions, there are no regional 1993 data in the tables, and the data user will see "N/A" to indicate that the data are not available.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the tables:

- Represents zero

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

(N/A) Not available

(Z) Less than half of the unit shown

cwt - Hundredweight

sq ft - Square feet