Training and Empowering Staff to Localize and Extend Communications

Teresa White, Public Affairs Office Deputy Director
USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service

UNECE Expert Meeting on Dissemination and Communication of Official Statistics
Virtual Meeting 14 October 2021
Welcome!

Today we will cover...

Our experience empowering state statisticians to promote NASS products and services locally.

- Identifying the challenges
- Determining the needs
- Collaborating on solutions
- Results
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.

Many strategies and tactics, including training staff, providing tools and templates, and empowering staff to conduct local outreach and promotion through:

- Attend industry events
- Place advertisements
- Write and place articles
- Use social media (create graphics)
- Build relationships with influencers/partners/stakeholders
- Distribute news releases and build media relations
NASS Structure

• More than 800 personnel – around 50% are located in field offices in almost every state and 50% are in Washington, D.C.
• One state statistician in each state
• State statistician work was mostly statistical in the recent past.
• Now state statistician work is mostly outreach and public relations.
Identifying the Problem

• Talked with staff about experiences to identify challenges and priorities.

• Interviewed customers/audience about NASS, their needs, and how they get information.

• Reviewed our previous efforts and results.
Identifying the Problem

Communications Plan Research

• Little trust in government agencies, especially in Washington D.C.
• Messages weren’t resonating well
• Communications must be local
• Need to partner with local organizations to encourage response
• NASS staff wants and needs training
Determining the Needs

Communications Plan Research

• Decentralize communications away from D.C.-issued messages to localized, collaborative content close to the producer.

First steps:
• Designated HQ-level Public Affairs Liaisons to provide guidance and technical assistance
• Conducted trainings/webinars
• Developed step-by-step instructions for tools and other promotion efforts
• Created FO Exchange sharing site
Determining the Needs

- Branded digital and print-ready products to use as is or to localize with images and/or data
- Identify and train on accessible, user-friendly software
- Video and audio content
- Talking points/messages to localize
- Photo and video library
- Media lists
- Storytelling – connecting with NASS data
- Strengthening partnerships with stakeholders, increasing communications

Find Common Needs and Prioritize
Collaborating on Solutions

Training topics:
- Media Interviews 101
- Pitching the Media
- Canva for Graphics
- Good Photos/Good Design
- Videos On The Go

Coming soon:
- Storytelling 101
- Social media
- Building/Managing Media Lists

…and more…
Collaborating on Solutions

Buttons for social media, e-signatures, and other uses.
Collaborating on Solutions

← Templates and instructions for Zoom backgrounds
↓ Easily customizable
Collaborating on Solutions

AUTUMN AG STATS
In 2020, farmers in the United States produced...

- 3.4 million gallons* maple syrup
- 783 million LBS. cranberries
- 7.5 billion LBS. onions
- 693.1 million LBS. squash

*Production for 2021
Source: USDA NASS.
Collaborating on Solutions

ATTENTION CATTLEMEN!

Watch for your USDA Cattle Inventory survey in the mail in late December. Please complete the questionnaire by mail or online at agcounts.usda.gov by January 16.

Your information will help update cattle herd estimates for Arkansas and the nation.

Thank you in advance for responding. For more information about this survey, visit nass.usda.gov.

← Traditional print ad, customizable
↓ Ad template w/video

Begin your government career with NASS!

SIGN UP FOR A SESSION TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WORKING FOR USDA NASS

www.linktosignup.com
Collaborating on Solutions

National Agricultural Statistics Service (@usda_nass - Jun 25)
Pennsylvania inventory of all hogs and pigs on June 1, 2021 was 1.36 million head, down 4% from June 1, 2020, but up 1% from March 2021. 
#AgStats @PAAgriculture @PAFarmBureau @PennAgIndustry

King Whetstone Retweeted
National Agricultural Statistics Service (@usda_nass - Aug 26)
Frequently Asked Questions for @usda_nass’s 2021 Hemp Acreage and Production Survey are now available. The survey will collect information on the total planted and harvested area, yield, production, and value of #hemp in the United States. Learn more: nass.usda.gov/go/hemp

Show this thread

mark schleusener Retweeted
Illinois Farm Bureau (@ILFarmBureau - Jun 3)
Farmers, if you received a @USDA June survey in the mail don’t forget to complete it. Surveys are due June 14th. You can complete it online here: bit.ly/3bWlYw
@statguymark

Show this thread

United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Collaborating on Solutions

Did you know, it’s not too late to sign up to be counted in the 2022 Census of Agriculture? The Census of Agriculture provides the only source of comprehensive, agriculture data. Your future, your opportunity. Sign-up:

What is a Farm?

Agricultural Statistics Service. I am the state statistician for the great states of...
Collaborating on Solutions

← Report covers
↓ Newsletters

MARYLAND PESTICIDE SURVEY STATISTICS

2020 REPORT

USDA NASS-NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE

NERO Times-Quarterly

A Word From the Regional Director

Welcome to the first issue of the Northeastern Regional Field Office e-Newsletter, by the name of “NERO Times” prepared by Megan Jones. The aim of this publication is to keep you updated with all the happenings in the Northeast Region and the agency.
Collaborating on Solutions

Localized Content and Coverage

Inaugural hemp survey to start in October

WASHINGTON, DC - This October, USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service will mail its first Hemp Acreage and Production Survey. The survey will collect information on the total planted and harvested area, yield, production, and value of hemp in the United States.

In October, USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service will mail its first Hemp Acreage and Production Survey to growers.

The 2021 survey will collect information on the total planted and harvested area, yield, production and value of hemp in the United States. The survey will provide needed data about the hemp industry to help growers, regulatory agencies, state governments, processors and other industry entities.

Growers may complete the survey online or may fill out and return the survey by mail using a provided return envelope.

For more, visit https://bit.ly/2V08opV.
Collaborating on Solutions

Placement of Articles in Local Partner Outlets (not paid)

The Importance of Responding to NASS Surveys

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports covering virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture.

If you receive a survey questionnaire, please respond quickly and online if possible.

The results of the surveys help determine the structure of USDA farm programs, such as soil rental rates for the Conservation Reserve Program and prices and yields used for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs. This county-level data is critical for USDA farm payment determinations. Survey respondents also help associations, businesses and policymakers advocate for their industry and help educate others on the importance of agriculture.

NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

NASS data is available online at nass.usda.gov/Publications and through the searchable Quick Stats database. Watch a video on how NASS data is used at youtube.com/watch?v=m-4zghh28Io&feature=youtu.be.
Collaborating on the Solutions

NASS SURVEYS Are Online!
Convenient, Fast and Secure
RESPOND TODAY.
www.agcounts.usda.gov

NASS SURVEYS Are Online!
Convenient, Fast and Secure
RESPOND TODAY.
www.agcounts.usda.gov

NASS SURVEYS Are Online!
Convenient, Fast and Secure
RESPOND TODAY.
www.agcounts.usda.gov

RESPOND TODAY.
www.agcounts.usda.gov
Collaborating on Solutions

MS Teams
- Idea sharing
- File repository
- Accessible to all
Looking to the Future

Adjust and Strengthen our Strategy

- Track results – part of performance standards
- Evaluate effectiveness
- Continue templates, tips, tools, and trainings – build capacity
- Strengthen the network and best practice community
Thank You...

Teresa White
Public Affairs Office Deputy Director
U.S. Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Teresa.white@usda.gov

www.nass.usda.gov
www.youtube.com/usdanass
@USDA_NASS
Training and Empowering Staff to Localize and Extend Communications

Teresa White, Public Affairs Office Deputy Director
USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service

UNECE Expert Meeting on Dissemination and Communication of Official Statistics
Virtual Meeting 14 October 2021