

## **Feasibility study - How to better promote NASS products and services**

Kristen Lenhardt (USDA, United States)

[Kristen.Lenhardt@usda.gov](mailto:Kristen.Lenhardt@usda.gov)

### ***Abstract***

This year, NASS began working with a new communications contractor to identify problem areas and strategize tactics to better promote NASS. After a program review, research, and in-depth interviews with NASS employees and external stakeholders, the contractor recommends that NASS pivot a sizable portion of its non-Ag Census-directed outreach to support a matrixed and decentralized approach to outreach and to make a pervasive commitment to audience-driven communication. This is a foundational shift in how NASS communicates to and with partners, requiring care and precision to ensure that audience needs are met without breaking NASS's budget, brand, or delivery promises.

To act upon this new approach to communicating and promoting NASS products, we analyzed the two actions that the contractor recommends: a communications pilot project and storytelling strategies and training. The pilot program will identify a NASS survey or project and then develop a collaborative, cyclical communications strategy with key partners to promote the project. From there, NASS will monitor and measure the effectiveness of a collaborative approach as opposed to a top-down marketing push. The storytelling program would consist of developing a Storytelling 101 training for NASS staff to learn how to collect and convey promotional narratives through the best outreach channels and audiences.