

Chapter 3. Preparatory Operations

GENERAL

Following the completion of the pretest and the questionnaire trial, the Bureau of the Census began final preparatory operations for the enumeration. These operations consisted of constructing the final mailing list, preparing the final drafts of the report forms, identifying the units to receive each type of form, and preparing mailing labels.

Concurrent with these operations there was a publicity program to inform the farmers and ranchers of the need for an agriculture census, how and when it was to be taken, and why a response was important. The publicity program was particularly intensive for the 1969 Census of Agriculture because the method of data collection was a decided change from the method used in preceding censuses of agriculture.

PRECANVASS

General Information

Prior to the census a precanvass was conducted to identify multiunit and large single-unit farming operations, in order to facilitate the prompt and orderly collection of census data from the individuals and organizations operating them. The information collected on the forms enabled the Census Bureau to: (1) Update the name and address file; (2) obtain additional employer identification (EI) or social security numbers; (3) obtain the name and address of subsidiaries or controlling companies; (4) determine if the respondent had in-scope operations in agriculture or agricultural services; and (5) determine the number of separate census reports that would be required.

Phase I

Phase I of the precanvass began in August 1968, and was completed by the end of December of that year. The precanvass form for Phase I (form 69-A20) was sent to all individuals, partnerships, and corporations who in the 1964 Census of Agriculture (1) reported a total value of sales of \$100,000 or more; (2) were classified as abnormal (institutional) farms; or (3) reported 500 acres or more in crossline acreage (land in two counties or more). The list of abnormal farms was visually screened by agriculture specialists and those that were not

judged suitable for routine data collection received special handling, as did all farms with estimated total value of products sold equal to or greater than \$1 million.

A computer listing was made of the cases identified for the precanvass. Using this computer list, clerical personnel in Jeffersonville, Ind., examined the appropriate 1964 portfolios and pulled the A1's.

Approximately 104,000 name and address cards were punched in Jeffersonville from the information on the A1's, and the data were transmitted to Washington via telephone datalink (i.e., a machine in Jeffersonville sending data and one in Washington receiving the data). ZIP codes and unique seven-digit serial numbers were assigned. (This address file was then printed for use during later processing.) After serial numbers had been assigned, labels were generated on the labeling machine and affixed to the report forms for a mailout in late August 1968.

The specifications for the initial and followup mailings for Phase I are shown below.

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Initial mailout: | Date: Aug. 30, 1968 Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, 69-A20 questionnaire (due date Sept. 30), and 69-A21 transmittal letter |
| First followup: | Cutoff date: Sept. 20, 1968 Mailout date: Sept. 24, 1968 Materials: Mailing envelope and reminder notice |
| Second followup: | Cutoff date: Oct. 11, 1968 Mailout date: Oct. 15, 1968 Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, first followup letter, and 69-A20 questionnaire stamped "Second Request" |
| Third followup: | Mailout date: Jan. 2, 1969 (incorporated in mailing of Phase II forms, with a special letter) Cutoff date: Nov. 1, 1968 (for matching to Phase II mailing list) Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, 69-A20 questionnaire stamped "Third Request," special followup letter |

As the report forms were received in Jeffersonville, Ind., they were quickly sorted into processing groups:

1. PMR's (Postmaster returns)
2. Reports with serial numbers, with and without correspondence
3. Correspondence not accompanied by report forms but containing serial numbers
4. Reports or correspondence without serial numbers

The first three groups were checked in, while the fourth group was checked against the master files in an effort to obtain serial numbers.

After they had been checked in, the report forms were reviewed for changes in address, reports of farms no longer involved in agricultural operations or services, and evidence of multiunit or complex organizations. For the last mentioned, addresses were added to the name and address file under the same serial number, but with an added subunit number. Status codes, which indicated whether the operations were in scope or out of scope, were entered, and the files were corrected to show any new information received.

Phase II

Phase II began in January 1969, and was completed by the end of June 1969. The objective of Phase II was to further update the mailing list by canvassing appropriate farm operations found in the 1967 Economic Census, and in the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Social Security Administration (SSA) mailing lists. The form for this phase was mailed to individuals, partnerships, and corporations reporting (1) on the 1967 Economic Census Multiunit Precanvass forms that they had agricultural operations or services (regardless of whether they were in scope or out of scope for purposes of the economic census); (2) on IRS forms 1120 (corporations) with Principal Industrial Activity codes for agriculture or agricultural services; (3) on IRS forms 1120-S (small corporations) with farm indicator codes for tax year 1967; and (4) on SSA forms 943 (farm employers) listing 20 wage items or more in 1967.

After these forms were matched and duplicates removed, the remaining cases were matched against the final file of Phase I returns which reported EI numbers. Duplicates were deleted, and a final total of approximately 25,000 unmatched cases made up the mailing list for Phase II.

As in Phase I, ZIP codes were assigned by the computer where necessary, and the file was sorted by ZIP code. This address file was then printed for use during later processing. Mailout, followup, and processing of receipts were handled the same as for Phase I. The specifications for the initial and followup mailings are shown below.

Initial mailout: Date: Jan. 2, 1969
 Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, 69-A25 questionnaire (due date Feb. 1, 1969), and transmittal letter

First followup: Cutoff date: Jan. 24, 1969
 Mailout date: Jan. 28, 1969
 Materials: Mailing envelope and reminder notice

Second followup: Cutoff date: Feb. 21, 1969
 Mailout date: Feb. 25, 1969
 Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, first followup letter, and 69-A25 questionnaire stamped "Second Request"

Third followup: Cutoff date: Mar. 21, 1969
 Mailout date: Mar. 25, 1969
 Materials: Mailing envelope, return envelope, second followup letter, and 69-A25 questionnaire stamped "Third Request"

Both Phase I and Phase II employed telephone and field followup where required to resolve problems of proper identification of units and of reporting arrangements.

Files from Phase I and Phase II were merged with other 1969 census mailing list files on the basis of EI number or social security number. Any duplicates and all out-of-scope cases were deleted from the general census mailing list.

The data collected in the prec canvass were not tabulated because the primary function of the prec canvass was to improve the coverage and the reporting arrangements for the 1969 Census of Agriculture.

The results of both Phase I and Phase II of the prec canvass indicated that multiunits should receive separate report forms for each unit only when it could be determined from the prec canvass form that the respondent probably did keep separate book records for each unit, including separate information on crop acreage, livestock inventories, machinery, expenditures, and sales.

Another result of the prec canvass was that the report form was changed to ask only if all the respondent's agricultural operations were located in the county shown on the address label and, if not, the name of the principal county and the names of the other counties, because if a single operation was in more than one county, the operator in most cases could not provide separate figures by county.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE CENSUS MAILING LIST

Major Considerations

There were seven major considerations with which the Census Bureau was concerned in developing the agriculture mailing list. These considerations were as follows:

1. Completeness, especially complete or nearly complete coverage of all farms with sales of \$2,500 or more.
2. Avoidance of duplication. Lists used from different sources had to be available in a machine-readable form, with

sufficient identification to permit reasonably accurate and low-cost elimination of duplicates.

3. Minimizing the number of out-of-scope units. It was obviously desirable to minimize collection costs by holding down the number of units which were not active farms in 1969, the census year. This meant that it was necessary to have up-to-date source lists, which had been purged of units no longer active, and to avoid inclusion of large numbers of persons or organizations not actually operating farms, such as those acting only as landlords of agricultural land.

4. Measures of size. Some measure of size, preferably one closely related to gross value of sales, was needed for each unit—

a. To determine which units should receive the short and which the regular farm report form.

b. To identify the very large units which would receive special treatment in the followup of mail nonrespondents and in the data preparation stage of processing the returns.

5. Identification of "multiunits," i.e., companies and other organizations operating more than one farm, so that suitable reporting arrangements could be developed for their individual establishments.

6. Timing. Source lists had to be available sufficiently in advance of the anticipated initial census mailing in January 1970 to allow time for the necessary merging and unduplicating of names and addresses and for preparation of mailing labels.

7. Availability. Arrangements had to be made with the organizations providing the source lists to obtain formal approval for their making these lists available to the Census Bureau, taking into account confidentiality requirements, reimbursement for expenses, and the necessity of avoiding interference with normal use of the lists by the supplier.

The experiences in developing a mailing list for the two-State pretest in 1968 provided extremely useful guidance in planning for the development of the initial census mailing list. Certain list sources were discarded, and arrangements were made with list suppliers to provide additional data needed for census purposes.

The following administrative lists, in the order of highest to lowest priority, were used in establishing the master mailing file. The approximate number of records (listings), before unduplication, are also given. In all cases the listings were for 1968.

1. Multiunit Precanvass File, a file of organizations that reported two units or more in agriculture in the 1968 Precanvass. This file consisted of 1,001 multiunit organizations, covering records for 2,353 individual units. Each record contained a social security number or an EI number.

2. Single-unit Precanvass File, a file of approximately 67,000 records, excluding multiunits, covering large single agricultural operations. Each record contained a social security number or an EI number.

3. IRS Mail, Indexing, and Delinquency (MID) file, a file of all IRS 943 filers with agricultural employees (450,000), all IRS 1065F (partnership) filers (120,000), and all IRS 1120S

(small corporation) filers (35,000) with farm indicator codes. Each of these 605,000 records contained an EI number.

4. IRS 1040 (Individual Income Tax Return) File, a file of all Schedule F's (Farm Income and Expense) and Schedule C's (Profit or Loss from Business or Profession) with a principal business activity code for agricultural operations (3,200,000). Each record contained a social security number or an EI number.

5. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) File, a file of landlords and farm operators enrolled in ASCS programs (4,042,000 for all States). The file contained all units from the ASCS master address file for the Southern States, and only those receiving program payments of \$25,000 or more in 1968, with EI numbers, for all other States.

Approximately 7,915,000 names were contained in all in the above files before computer deletions of duplicates and other deletions of listings for which size indicators and business activity codes did not meet minimum census farm criteria.

The procedure used for unduplicating the files was to match on the basis of social security and EI numbers, since the majority of records contained either one or both numbers. Records were considered duplicated (matched) when one number was identical on both records. When a match was found, the record from the file of highest priority, as shown in items 1 to 5 above, was retained for the mailing file.

Approximately 2,401,000 duplicate records were deleted in preparation of the mailing list. Another 854,000 records were deleted because size indicators and business activity codes did not meet minimum census farm criteria. The merger of the lists resulted in a basic file of approximately 4,660,000 units for the initial mailing list.

Census File Numbers

Because not all of the sources used for the 1969 Census of Agriculture mailing list would contain a distinct identification number, it was necessary to devise an identification and control code number which would be applicable to all cases included in the mailing list, regardless of source. Census file numbers, composed of 10 digits, were devised and assigned to each name and address listing on the census mailing list.

The census file number was composed of two five-digit parts. The first five digits represented the State and county, with each State assigned a two-digit code and each county within the State a three-digit code, i.e., 001, 002, 003, etc. The second five-digits included a four-digit serial number and a check digit. The check digit that completed the census file number provided a mathematical check for quality control of the keying of the data from the report forms. (See chapter 5, page 50, for a discussion of the use of the check digit during data keying.)

For each county, the serial numbers began with 0000 and continued with 0001, 0002, etc. Four digits were used for the serial number since this allowed for a total of 9,999 farms with different serial numbers in any one county. Since it was extremely unlikely that there were 9,999 farms in any one

county, the use of the four-digit serial number allowed for new serial numbers to be added at a later date, such as those used for the supplemental mailings (see chapter 4, page 35, for a discussion of the supplemental mailings).

For example:

| | | | |
|-------|--------|---------------|-------------|
| State | County | Serial number | Check digit |
| 74 | 049 | 9999 9 | |

John and Mary Doe
Rte. 4
Somewhere, Tex. 76936

| | | | |
|-------|--------|---------------|-------------|
| State | County | Serial number | Check digit |
| 61 | 035 | 8888 8 | |

Andrew Agriculture
Rte. 1
Someplace, N.Y. 13832

In the mailing list, each name and address included a ZIP code, which had been assigned to the county in which the appropriate post office (for that ZIP code) was located. The State and county codes for the census file numbers were assigned on the basis of these ZIP codes, even though the addressee may have actually lived in another county or conducted his agricultural operations in another county.

In the case of some out-of-State owners or operators for which the mailing list source had indicated the mailing address of the agricultural operation, the State and county code assigned was that for the agricultural operation, not that for the owner or operator. For example, if an individual lived in New York City and had a cattle ranch in Texas, his IRS return provided the location of his Texas ranch. The census file number assigned was that for Texas, even though the accompanying address and ZIP code were for New York.

The census file number was used to indicate the county and State in which the data were to be tabulated. The file number and the corresponding county name both appeared on the address label. All respondents were asked to indicate on the report form the county of principal agricultural activity. If the respondent reported a county or State different from that listed in the address label, the changes in the county, or State, codes were made during the processing of the forms.

"Must" Cases

From experience gained in previous censuses, it was known that certain farming operations would require special consideration to insure complete and accurate coverage. These agricultural operations, termed "must" cases because it was essential that complete and accurate returns be obtained for them, were those which were large, in terms of gross sales or acreage, or were complex, in terms of the kind of operation. For the 1969 census, these must cases were separated into three categories: Multiunit operations, abnormal (institutional) farms, and other must cases. In addition to the procedures discussed below, all must cases identified prior to the original mailout were sent the

regular A1 report form printed on yellow paper, instead of the buff color used for the other agricultural operations, in order to facilitate special handling during processing.

Multiunits.—A multiunit consisted of two agricultural operations or more, distinctly separate in either geographic location or type of enterprise, controlled by one individual or organization. The multiunits to be included in the 1969 census were identified in the 1968 precensus.

Unique census file numbers were assigned to the headquarters and to each unit of a multiunit for control and processing purposes, although only the headquarters file number was added to the mailing list. The 10-digit census file numbers for multiunits, however, began with the numbers 99 instead of beginning with the digits for the State and county. For any one multiunit, the first seven digits were identical, the eighth and ninth digits indicated the particular unit, and the tenth was the check digit. Two zeros were used to denote the headquarters and mailing address of the multiunit, and each unit was numbered serially thereafter, e.g., 01 for the first unit, 02 for the second, etc. For example:

| | Unit | Check digit |
|--|-----------|----------------|
| 99 111 22 | <u>00</u> | 9 |
| Green Farms Rte. 1 Sometown, Md. 22222 | | |
| 99 111 22 | <u>01</u> | 1 |
| Farm A | | |
| 99 111 22 | <u>02</u> | 3 |
| Farm B | | |
| 99 111 22 | <u>03</u> | 5 |

A package of report forms, one for each unit (only form 69-A1 (120) was used), was mailed to the headquarters of each multiunit, and a leaflet guide and a special letter of instructions were included. All report forms were to be completed and mailed back to the Bureau in one package. Since these places might have been on the mailing list prior to their identification as multiunits, the operators were asked to mark any other report forms received as "duplicate" and to return them with the completed multiunit reports.

Multiunit folders were maintained and used as a control for check-in; the incoming report forms were placed in these folders. This was essential since, contrary to the planned procedure, reports for individual units were often sent separately to the Bureau instead of as one complete package. Also, some reports for individual units which were not operated in 1969 were not returned, with no explanation of this by the multiunit headquarters.

Large operations with separate units in two counties or more that had not been identified prior to the mailout were handled as multiunits when they were discovered during processing.

Abnormal farms.—Places operated as agricultural activities by agricultural experiment stations, Indian reservations, grazing

associations, churches, and other institutional and quasi-institutional organizations were included in the 1969 Census of Agriculture, as they had been in previous censuses. While these places do not always enter their products in the commercial market, they do contribute to total agricultural production in the United States, and a measure of that production would be incomplete without them. Many of these operations are self-sustaining, such as the farms operated by churches and prisons, by providing for some of their own food requirements. Others, such as the Indian reservations and grazing associations, involve vast amounts of land which is used for agricultural purposes by commercial farm operators. The term "abnormal" was used when referring to these operations to distinguish them from the typical commercial farms.

Abnormal farms included in the 1969 census were those identified in the precanvass and in the 1964 census files. The report forms (form 69-A1(120)) sent to these places in the original mailout were assigned the regular State and county 10-digit file number, with no special instructions included in the mailing packet.

Other must cases.—Certain places other than multiunits and abnormal farms were also designated as must cases. These places were identified prior to the mailout from size indicators from the mailing list sources. Generally, those places which had recorded \$100,000 or more in sales or expenses, or 50,000 acres or more in the place operated, were considered must cases.

These must cases received no special handling prior to their receipt in Jeffersonville, except for the use of a special color (yellow) for the report forms. The first five digits of the census file numbers were the State and county numbers, and the mailing packet contained no special instructions.

Priority Codes

Each unit on the 1969 Census of Agriculture mailing list was classified in 1 of 10 categories and assigned codes 0 through 9, referred to as type of priority (TOP) codes. The classification by priority codes served two purposes:

1. To indicate the action to be taken if a mail response was not received for a unit by the time of the designated cutoff date.
2. To provide for the special handling of returns for large and complex agricultural operations in the preedit processing and the verification of key punching.

Before these TOP codes were made, a determination was made for each unit as to whether a standard form or a short form should go to the unit, on the basis of mailing list source and measure of size as shown in the list below. When a unit appeared in two source lists or more, the assignment was made on the basis of the source which appeared first on the following list.

| <u>Mailing list source</u> | <u>Measure of size</u> | <u>Form to be mailed</u> |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Precanvass | -- | Standard |
| IRS 1968 MID | -- | Standard |

| <u>Mailing list source</u> | <u>Measure of size</u> | <u>Form to be mailed</u> |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| IRS 1040F & C for 1968 | a. Gross receipts or total deductions of \$2,000 or more, or both unknown b. All other sample cases | Standard |
| ASCS | a. With EI number b. With SSA number, and ASCS payments in 1968 of \$200 or more c. All other sample cases | Short Standard |
| IRS 1969 MID IRS 1040F & C for 1969 | -- a. Gross receipts or total deductions of \$2,000 or more, or both unknown b. All other sample cases | Standard Short |

Each unit was then assigned to one of the following groups, prior to mailing the census forms:

0. Standard forms for multiunits (must cases), including Hawaii.
1. Standard forms for abnormal farms (must cases), excluding Hawaii.
2. Standard forms for the other "must" cases (excluding Hawaii).
3. Standard forms for other large units (excluding Hawaii).
4. Standard forms for all other units whose indicated value of sales was greater than \$2,500 and less than \$100,000 (excluding Hawaii).
5. Short forms (excluding Alaska and Hawaii).
6. All Hawaii standard forms except those for multiunits and births.
7. Standard forms for all A1 births (i.e., new farm operations) not on the 1969 list.
8. Standard forms for all births on the 1968 list with gross receipts or deductions of less than \$2,500 and on the 1969 list with gross receipts or deductions of \$5,000 or more and not falling in the 50-percent sample.
9. Short forms for births not on the 1968 list but on the 1969 list with gross receipts less than \$2,000.

FINAL PREPARATION OF REPORT FORMS

The design of the 1969 report forms was greatly altered from the design used for the 1964 forms. The new design called for a color scheme with shaded areas, and as few blank areas as possible other than the answer spaces, so that the respondent would be able to see exactly where he was to place his answers or write any remarks.

Once the content was determined, a draft of the questionnaire was sent to the Office of Management and Budget for approval. As soon as the content was approved, the forms were sent to the Government Printing Office which contracted the printing and binding order out to a firm in Detroit, Mich. The Questionnaire Variation Study (QVS) forms were contracted out to a firm in Washington, D.C., for printing and binding. (See chapter 6, page 00, for a discussion of QVS.)

A quality control system was established whereby three Census Bureau employees were able to check on the color scheme of the report forms at the beginning of the printing operation. Sample copies were periodically sent to the Bureau for visual inspection to insure that the printed forms met the desired color scheme.

The result was a set of report forms, form A1 (34), A1 (120), A1 (6), and A2. The A1 (34) and A1 (120) were identical in content but were printed in different colors. The A1 (34), used in the 48 contiguous States and Alaska for farms with expected sales of more than \$2,500 and less than \$100,000, was buff color. The A1 (120), used in the 48 contiguous States and Alaska for all "must" cases, was yellow. The A1 (6) report form, different both in content and color from the A1 (34) and the A1 (120), was blue and used only in Hawaii for all farm operations. The A2, the short form used only in the 48 contiguous States, was buff color. Each of the three A1 report forms was different in color in order to facilitate their separate handling during check-in and manual editing portions of the data processing operation. The QVS forms were printed in green and white with shading, for the same purpose.

The total number of report forms printed in Detroit was as follows:

A1 (34) 9,200,000 (4,700,000, and 4,500,000 file copies).

A1 (120) 140,000 (70,000, and 70,000 file copies).

A1 (6) 24,000 (12,000, and 12,000 file copies).

A2 1,700,000 (no file copies printed).

The total number of QVS forms printed in Washington, D.C., was 144,000 (72,000, and 72,000 file copies). The A1 (34) and A2 forms are reproduced in appendix G.¹

MAILING LABELS AND PACKAGING

Mailing packages for TOP codes 3 and 4 were assembled under special contract by a commercial firm in Iowa. This firm instituted a sampling plan whereby the quality of the assembling operation could be insured. The plan called for a sample of 100 mailing packages (20 clusters of five packages each) to be selected for inspection from each lot of 10,000 packages. The selected sample packages were inspected by using a very sensitive scale balance to determine if there were duplicate or

missing enclosures. The entire lot of 10,000 mailing packages was rejected if four defective packages or more were found in the sample. Each rejected lot was inspected completely, and all defective packages found in the sample were corrected.

Mailing packages for all other standard forms (TOP codes 0, 1, 2, 6, and QVS) were assembled manually in Jeffersonville, Ind. These were inspected 100 percent. Mailing packages for all multiunits were inspected by hand to insure that report forms were included for all units of each multiunit. (This inspection for multiunits occurred after labeling was completed.) All mailing packages for TOP codes 1, 2, 6, and QVS were inspected by means of a shadowgraph (another type of sensitive balance) to detect duplicate or missing enclosures.

Mailing packages for short forms (TOP code 5) were assembled by machine in Jeffersonville. A continuous sampling plan was employed using the shadowgraph. The procedure was as follows:

1. Consecutive packages were inspected until 100 successive error-free packages were inspected.
2. Then a sample inspection of every 50th package was performed and continued until a defective package was detected.
3. Then 100-percent inspection (step 1) was resumed and the procedure was repeated.

There were two types of mailing labels used for the census. These were:

1. Videograph labels generated at the Government Printing Office through an electronic system.
2. High speed printer labels generated at the Bureau of the Census by a computer process.

Virtually all labels for TOP codes 4 and 5 were the videograph type. All other labels were the high speed printer type.

The labels for multiunits (TOP code 0) were applied and inspected manually. Every package was inspected.

Labels were affixed to the mailing packages for single units (TOP codes 1 to 6, and QVS) by machine in Jeffersonville, Ind. A quality control specialist was designated to monitor the machine labeling process to detect any systematic errors in the operation. In addition, the following controls were employed:

1. The first and last 20 packages for each spool (videograph) or bank (high speed printer) of labels were inspected.
2. Inspection consisted of making sure that the proper label (according to TOP code) was affixed to the correct type of report form and that the label was centered correctly and cut properly.
3. Unacceptable labels were discarded and new ones to take their place were typed.
4. The first and last serial numbers of each reel or bank of labels were verified.

¹ Facsimiles of the other report forms used in the enumeration are shown in: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1969 Census of Agriculture. Volume V, Special Reports. Part 13, Data-Collection Forms and Procedures.

PUBLICITY AND INFORMATION PROGRAM

General

Because of the initiation of the all-mail technique of census enumeration, an intensive publicity program was initiated to inform the Nation's agriculture producers and the users of agriculture census data of the change made in the method of data collection.

Feature Stories

Beginning in July 1968, letters were mailed to editors of farm magazines and agribusiness publications and to executive secretaries of agricultural trade associations. These letters notified them of census plans and offered to provide stories for publication in issues published near the time the agriculture report forms would be mailed out.

Most farm magazines and agribusiness publications indicated a need for either a feature article prepared by the Bureau of the Census or for an information packet from which they could prepare their own story. Each article prepared by the Bureau of the Census was individually styled to fit the type, or types, of agriculture in the magazine's circulation area.

These stories were published in either the December 1969 or January 1970 issue, enabling the reader to see the story at or near the same time that he received his report form.

Cover Pictures

Early in 1969, editors of farm magazines were asked if they could use a cover picture, designed to tell the "mail-out/mail-back" census story, for their December 1969 issues. More than 70 agricultural publications requested a picture.

Each magazine editor was asked what type of agricultural activity (dairy, beef, crops, etc.) he wished in the picture. The Bureau of the Census contracted with four photographers to take a number of rural scenes showing a farmer at his mailbox looking at the agriculture census report form. In each case the background depicted a different type of agriculture.

A sufficient number of good photographs were taken to provide each magazine with a photograph of its choice, and one which was different from that provided to editors of farm magazines published or circulated in nearby localities.

The use of the cover picture proved to be an effective means of telling the agriculture census story, since it was seen and readily understood by all subscribers.

Weekly Papers

In October 1969 the Bureau contracted with a news clipping service to prepare a "mat" for ultimate distribution to over 3,000 weekly papers. The mat was composed of a two-column picture and a short five-line caption that explained the census procedure. These mats were provided free to weekly papers for use after December 15, 1969.

Copies of the published newspaper articles were sent to the Bureau by the news clipping service. The Bureau received over 1,200 clippings for all 48 contiguous States. Only two clippings were received for South Carolina, a fact which may have contributed to a very low farmer response in that State—one of the lowest State responses in the country for the 1969 census. The Midwestern States, however, were represented with the largest number of clippings, and farmer response was highest in this area for the census.

Census Rooster

During August 1969, Bureau of the Census personnel determined that it would be helpful to design a symbol to illustrate the 1969 Census of Agriculture. Since this was to be an all mail census, a rural mailbox was felt to be an important item in the symbol. A rooster was added as an animate object representing agriculture. The final symbol selected was a simplified picture of a 1969 Census of Agriculture envelope protruding from a rural mailbox and the rooster on top of the mailbox crowing "Fill it out—mail it back."



This symbol was used—

1. On the cover of the "1969 Census of Agriculture" pamphlet (distributed to professional agriculturists and farmers throughout the 50 States).
2. On the cover of the pamphlet, "How the Census of Agriculture Helps You," (distributed to professional agriculturists and farmers throughout the 50 States).
3. On mats for use in the farm papers and magazines.
4. In three television spot announcements.
5. In television station identification spots.
6. On 11" x 14" posters.
7. In a 35mm slide set—"The 1969 Census of Agriculture."

All farm magazines and rural area newspapers received copies of the rooster mats. In addition, the mats were used by the 2,700 ASCS county offices in their monthly newsletter to farmers in January, February, and March of 1970.

A major farm equipment company and a major agricultural chemical company distributed the 11" x 14" posters to all of their sales outlets. In addition, each of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) county offices received a copy of the poster to display in the office during the data collection period.

Radio

Radio is one of the sources of news used most frequently by farmers. Consequently, the Bureau elected to use this medium to reach farmers and inform them of the census in several ways. Records containing 10-, 30-, and 60-second public service spot announcements were distributed to radio stations in all States; these announcements were used early in the data collection period to encourage farmers to complete and return their report forms at an early date. The USDA distributed to cooperating radio stations a weekly radio tape called "Agriculture—USA;" beginning in November 1969, and monthly through April 1970, a 3½ minute report on the 1969 Census of Agriculture was prepared by the Bureau and included in "Agriculture—USA;" Interviews with the Chief of the Agriculture Division of the Census Bureau explaining why a census is needed, how it was to be conducted, and how the data are used were taped and distributed by the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, the Maryland Department of Agriculture, and the Virginia Department of Agriculture.

Television

Television was used to promote the 1969 Census of Agriculture during the period December 1969 through March 1970. There were 10-, 30-, and 60-second public service spot announcements prepared for use by all television stations serving rural areas. These were animated announcements showing the receipt of the census report forms as well as the completion and return of the report forms to the Census Bureau. The animated spot announcements were used primarily during the mailout period

to alert all farmers and ranchers of the change in the method of collecting data.

Two 5-minute programs were taped for the USDA "Down to Earth" program and distributed to cooperating stations. These programs featured the Chief of the Agriculture Division, who explained why the agriculture census was taken and encouraged all agricultural producers to cooperate. In addition, a series of five daily programs about the census featured the Agriculture Division Chief with each of the State Departments of Agriculture in Maryland, Nebraska, and Virginia.

There were 94 television stations which had Farm Directors. These stations were furnished with a station identification slide which carried the station call letters and the census rooster. A total of nine different 10-, 15-, and 20-second spot announcements were also given to these stations. Each announcement was written to cover a particular phase of the enumeration. The slides and spot announcements were used from December 26, 1969, through March 30, 1970.

Farm Organizations

Most farm families are members of one farm organization or more. The four major farm organizations are the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers Organization, the National Farmers Union, and the National Grange. These organizations are represented on the Census of Agriculture Advisory Committee. All have publications which are mailed to members. Both the Farm Bureau and Farmers Union have radio programs prepared and distributed nationwide. In addition, the Farm Bureau has State offices which prepare monthly publications for distribution to all members.

All four organizations printed census articles in their January 1970 publications, and the Farm Bureau and Farmers Union included census information in their weekly radio programs.

Agriculture Industry

Businesses and industries which supply goods and services to farmers need census data. Because of this, they have an interest in making certain the information collected is as complete and accurate as possible.

Most of these firms publish house organs for internal use, and the firms were encouraged to print census information in their "house organs." The stories printed usually informed their dealers and salesmen about the agriculture census and asked for their cooperation in encouraging farmers to complete and return the report forms.

Other Governmental Agencies

Recognizing the need for informing local people about the census, and the importance of obtaining as complete and accurate data as possible, the Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan, counselor to President Nixon, was designated by the President to encourage all areas of the Federal Government to participate in the 1970 decennial census program, which included the 1969

Census of Agriculture. As a result, all agricultural agencies which had offices at the county level were asked to encourage their employees to help with the census.

The following agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture were asked to assist with publicity for the 1969 Census of Agriculture: (1) The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service; (2) the Federal Extension Service; (3) the Farmers Home Administration; (4) the Soil Conservation Service; (5) the Rural Electrification Administration; (6) the Consumer and Marketing Service; (7) the Farmers Cooperative Service; and (8) the Forest Service. The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through vocational agriculture instructors, and the Office of Economic Opportunity, through rural community action projects, were also asked to provide assistance. These agencies assisted in informing farmers with newsletters, radio programs, magazine articles, and person-to-person discussions. Agencies with personnel stationed in counties conducted classes on the need for and value of the census of agriculture and assisted farmers in completing their report forms.

Rooster posters were distributed to local governmental offices, and two pamphlets, "The 1969 Census of Agriculture" and "How the Census of Agriculture Helps You," were distributed to the farmers through these offices.

35mm Slide Sets

A 35mm slide set, consisting of 42 slides and an accompanying script, was prepared in the fall of 1969 to explain how a census of agriculture is taken and the uses of its data. Copies of the slide set were made available to county agricultural agents and vocational agriculture instructors.

Although the slide set was prepared too late for maximum use for the 1969 Census of Agriculture, the set was updated and has been used throughout the Nation by various farm groups since December 1969 as background for explanation of the uses of the data.

