

## 1999 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE - AMERICAN SAMOA INTRODUCTION

### **HISTORY**

For more than 150 years, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, conducted the census of agriculture. However, the 1997 Appropriations Act transferred the responsibility from the Bureau of the Census to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The 1999 Census of Agriculture for American Samoa is the first census in American Samoa conducted by NASS.

The census of agriculture is taken to obtain agricultural statistics for each county, State (including territories and protectorates), and the Nation. The first U.S. agricultural census data were collected in 1840 as a part of the sixth decennial census. From 1840 to 1920, an agricultural census was taken as a part of each decennial census. Since 1920, a separate national agricultural census has been taken every 5 years.

The 1999 census is the ninth census of agriculture of American Samoa, and the first to be conducted strictly as a census of agriculture. The first eight agriculture censuses in American Samoa, beginning in 1920, were taken in conjunction with the decennial census, and agriculture information was collected only for those households that answered affirmatively to a question about agricultural activities asked at the end of the decennial questionnaire.

### **USES OF THE CENSUS**

The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about American Samoa's agricultural production and the only source of consistent, comparable data at the island level. Census statistics are used to measure agricultural production and to identify trends in an ever-changing agricultural sector. Many local programs use census data as a benchmark for designing and evaluating surveys. Private industry uses census statistics to provide a more effective production and distribution system for the agricultural community. The 1999 Census of Agriculture of American Samoa provides data on production and value of agriculture both for sale and for home consumption. The collection of data for home consumption reflects the importance of this sector of agriculture in American Samoa, where a majority of households provide a portion of their food needs through agricultural activities that may fall outside the commercial marketplace.

## **AUTHORITY AND AREA COVERED**

The census of agriculture is required by law under the “Census of Agriculture Act of 1997,” Public Law 105-113 (Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g). The law directs the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a census of agriculture in 1998 and in every fifth year thereafter, covering the prior year. The census of agriculture includes each State, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and states that the Secretary may include other territories or protectorates in the census program.

The inclusion of American Samoa in the five year agriculture census program was done at the request of the Department of Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs and the Department of Commerce of American Samoa. The census data for American Samoa were collected in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between NASS, the Department of Interior’s Office of Insular Affairs, and the Department of Commerce of American Samoa. It was conducted with the cooperation and assistance of the American Samoa Department of Agriculture and American Samoa Community College - Land Grant.

## **FARM DEFINITION**

The statistics collected in the census represent all places in American Samoa with agricultural operations during the 1998 calendar year. The 1999 farm definition was any place that raised or produced any agricultural product for sale or consumption. Approximately 75% of all households in American Samoa fit this definition. This is a broader farm definition than was used in the past; the 1990 farm definition required a minimum of \$100 in sales, and previous censuses used sales or some minimum number of livestock to qualify as a farm. The 1990 Census of Agriculture also provided data on farms based on the 1980 farm definition for comparability between the two censuses. The 1980 farm definition required a minimum number of livestock on the place, or sales of agricultural products from the place. This publication provides 1999 data for all farms, commercial farms, and noncommercial farms. Commercial farms are defined as those with sales of \$100 or more, and noncommercial farms are those with less than \$100 in sales. Many of the commercial farms produce more for home consumption than for sale, but by virtue of having sales in excess of \$100 are classified as commercial.

## **COMPARABILITY OF DATA**

In general, the type of data from the 1998 census are comparable with those of previous censuses. The major differences in the data result from the disparity in the number of farms, land in farms, and production levels between 1990 and 1999. This disparity is partly due to the broader farm definition used in 1999 and also likely the result of the census of agriculture being conducted separately from the decennial census.

## **TABULAR PRESENTATION**

Tables 1 through 9 show detailed island data for all farms, commercial farms, and noncommercial farms, accompanied by historic data from the previous census. Tables 10 through 23 show selected data items for the three categories of farms, presented by legal districts. Tables 24 through 27 provide 1999 island data cross-tabulated by tenure of operator, size of farm, age of operator, and value of agricultural products sold.

## **SPECIAL TABULATIONS**

Custom-designed tabulations can be developed to individual user specifications on a programming cost reimbursable basis. Inquiries about special tabulations should be directed to Data Lab Administrator, Marketing and Information Services Office, National Agricultural Statistics Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, DC 20250.

## **DISCLOSURE RULES**

In keeping with the provisions of Title 7, United States Code, no data are published that would disclose the operations of an individual farm. However, the number of farms in a given size category or other classification is not considered a disclosure, so this information may be given even though other information is withheld.

## **DOLLAR VALUES**

All dollar values presented in this report are in current dollars, i.e., 1999 data are in 1999 dollars and 1990 data in 1990 dollars. The dollar values have not been adjusted for changes in price levels between census years.

## **REFERENCE PERIODS**

Inventories of livestock, poultry, and machinery and equipment are the number on hand at the time of enumeration. Crop production, crop and livestock sales, and expense data are for the 12-month period between January 1 and December 31, 1998.

## **ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS**

The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the tables:

- Represents zero.
- (D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.
- (NA) Not available.
- (X) Not applicable.
- (Z) Less than half of the unit shown.