



NASS Surveys Have Direct Impact on Critical Farm Programs

Mark Schleusener

Illinois Field Office
USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service

November 23, 2016

farmdoc daily (6):222

Recommended citation format: Schleusener, M. "NASS Surveys Have Direct Impact on Critical Farm Programs." *farmdoc daily* (6):222, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, November 23, 2016.

Permalink: <http://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/2016/11/nass-surveys-impact-critical-farm-programs.html>

The NASS mission is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U. S. Agriculture. Crop yield forecasts tend to be our most well-known publications, but NASS measures agriculture in many different ways, ensuring that the full scope of agriculture is accounted for. NASS surveys the hog and pig industry, the total cattle herd and cattle on feed, fruit and vegetable production, and the vast overall economic impact of agriculture across Illinois and the rest of the United States. We even measure maple syrup!

As harvests reach their end, NASS uses two major surveys to measure crop production around the country. In Illinois, the *County Agricultural Production Survey – 2016 Row Crops* was mailed to more than 8,000 producers in October. Results from this project will be used to make county level estimates of acreage, yield, and production for corn, soybeans, sorghum, alfalfa hay, and other hay. Those estimates will be published in 2017.

In late November, NASS will mail the *Agricultural Survey – December 1, 2016*. It will be used to finalize the state level acreage, yield and production for corn, soybeans, sorghum, and hay in Illinois. Those statistics will be published in the *Annual Crop Production* report on January 12, 2017.

Data from these two surveys will be combined to publish statistics for all 102 counties in Illinois, but we cannot publish a county unless the data we receive meet our quality standards. We need either 30 separate yield reports per county, or 25% of the total county acreage. NASS can only publish a county if one of those two standards is met, so even if you are already returning your survey, make sure that your neighbors are as well.

Once published, the state and county statistics are used in many ways. The county yields are used to determine county level payments under the Agricultural Risk Coverage-County (ARC-County) program administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). This program impacts a very large percentage of producers in Illinois, as nearly all corn and soybean production is covered under the ARC-County program.

The NASS county yield statistics are used in other ways as well. For instance, some types of crop insurance policies will make a payment to the producer based on the NASS yield. The Risk Management Agency

We request all readers, electronic media and others follow our citation guidelines when re-posting articles from farmdoc daily. Guidelines are available [here](#). The farmdoc daily website falls under University of Illinois copyright and intellectual property rights. For a detailed statement, please see the University of Illinois Copyright Information and Policies [here](#).

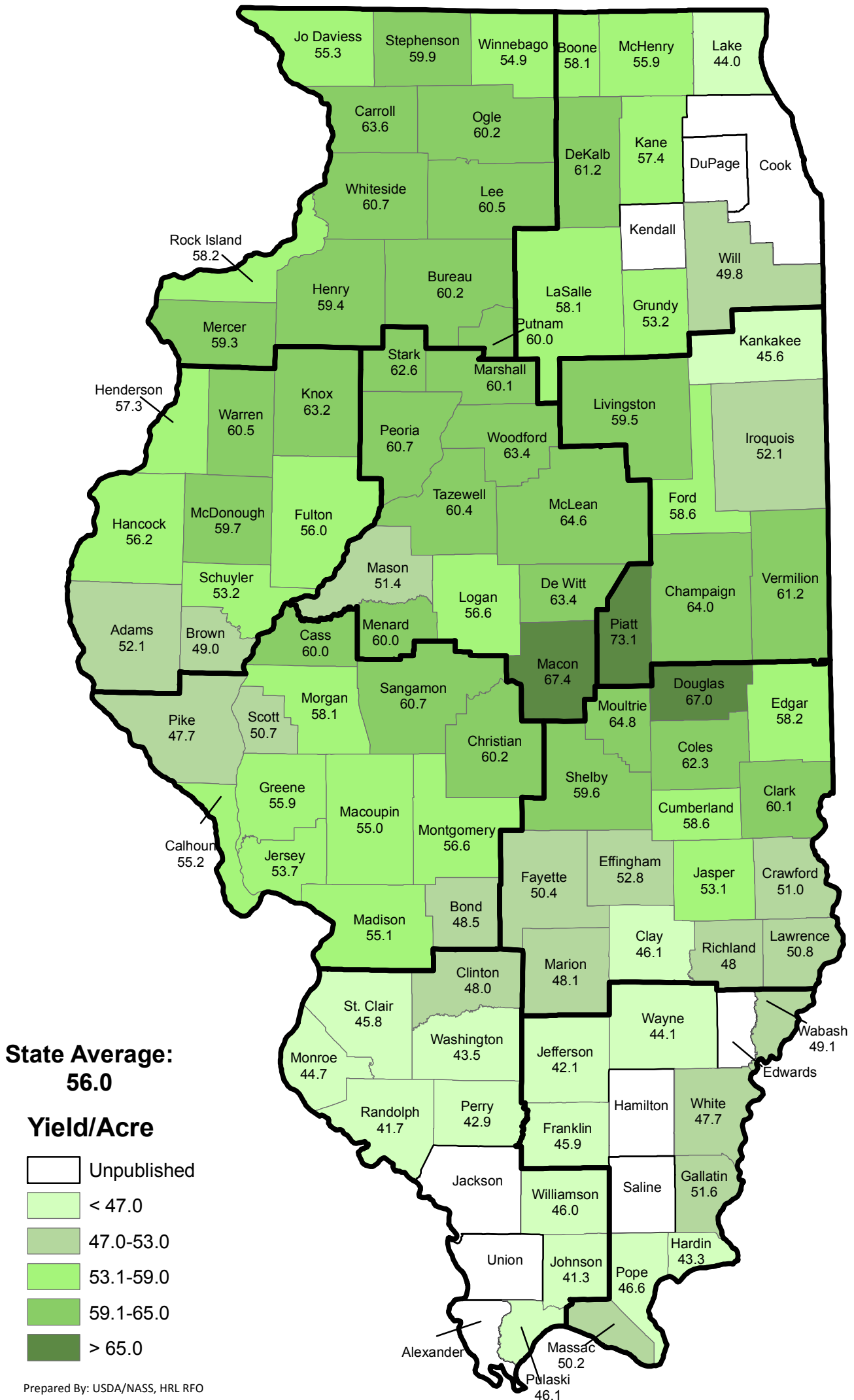
(RMA) uses NASS county yields to determine appropriate payment levels and prices for many types of crop insurance policies, for crops all around the country.

When you receive one of the NASS questionnaires in the mail, please consider responding online as well. We are flexible and try to make it as easy as we can for respondents. Operators can respond by using our secure website, or by filling out the survey form and sending it back to us in the postage paid envelope. NASS also hires enumerators to conduct phone interviews as well as personal interviews with producers that do not respond by mail or online.

Please help us to accurately measure and portray the significant impact that agriculture has across Illinois. Help us to ensure that farm bill payments are paid out at appropriate levels across counties in Illinois and around the country. The data that sampled producers report to NASS has a direct impact on all producers and we all want NASS statistics to be as accurate as possible.

Finally, it is important to state that every individual report received by NASS is confidential by law. NASS only releases aggregate totals and averages, never individual reports. Data reported by producers is also exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) because NASS is a Federal Statistical agency.

2015 Illinois Soybean Yield Estimates



Prepared By: USDA/NASS, HRL RFO

Last updated 2/18/2016