



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • FARM SERVICE AGENCY

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Census Vital to Farmers, Ranchers and Rural America

SALT LAKE CITY, UT, April 1, 2010 – Arthur Douglas, State Executive Director for USDA’s Farm Service Agency in Utah announced today that FSA has teamed up with the U.S. Census Bureau to encourage all farmers and ranchers to complete the 2010 census.

“I believe rural America is the heart and the soul and the guts of America. And, I believe that we have to start paying real attention to our farm families and to those who live in rural America if we want to preserve that value system,” said Douglas. “So, it’s important for us to figure out new strategies and different strategies and expanded strategies for bringing prosperity back to the farm, prosperity back to the ranch, and prosperity back to rural communities.”

These strategies begin with the completion of the census forms, which were mailed in March to all residents in the United States and Puerto Rico. They are comprised of 10 questions and take only 10 minutes to complete and mail back in the postage-paid envelope. The questions include names of residents, ages, sex, date of birth, race, relationship to the head of the household, whether the resident rents or owns and a telephone number should the Census Bureau have any questions.

Having everyone counted is critical to the security of rural communities and will ensure that the more than \$400 billion in federal funding will be allocated to these communities annually to support schools, broadband initiatives, hospitals, emergency services and public works projects.

The census, which is taken every 10 years, also is used to determine the number of seats a state has in the House of Representatives and to apportion representatives equally among the 50 states.

The need for rural America to be counted in the census has grown since it was first implemented in 1790. Back then, the 13 original states had a population of 3.6 million, with 94.9 percent living in rural areas. By 1990, that number significantly decreased to 24 percent of the population living in rural areas.

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Yet, according to Douglas it is the farmers and ranchers who are the backbone of rural America and provide the food, fiber and water that is essential to all Americans, whether they live in rural, urban or suburban areas.

“This prosperity starts by each farmer and rancher completing the 2010 Census,” said Douglas. It’s not only the law, but an avenue used to help revive America’s farm, food and values. Everyone needs to be counted.”

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