



**National Grain and Feed Association**  
TRANSFORMING AMERICA'S HARVEST®

1400 Crystal Drive, Suite 260  
Arlington, VA 22202  
(202) 289-0873  
ngfa.org

April 16, 2024

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On April 9, 2024, the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) announced its intention to discontinue the county estimates for crops and livestock citing budget concerns. The National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA) requests for the county estimates to be continued, as they are critical to the business operations of our industry.

The NGFA consists of grain, feed, processing, exporting and other grain-related companies that operate about 8,000 facilities. Our membership of grain elevators, feed and feed ingredient manufacturers, biofuels companies, grain processors and millers, livestock and poultry integrators have told us the county estimates are foundational for their operations. While the nationwide estimates are certainly useful and helpful to U.S. agriculture, it is the county estimates that have direct application for individual facilities.

NGFA members use the county estimates to build supply and demand estimates for their businesses, which help determine commodity sourcing plans to keep their facilities operational. Without county estimates our members believe there will be supply chain ramifications. For example, it would become more difficult for an exporter to participate in the export sales market without an accurate knowledge of how much grain is in their draw area. Also, processors and livestock feeders would have problems making appropriate purchase decisions to keep their operations continuously supplied.

We certainly understand the budgetary pressure that led to the discontinuation announcement and we would like to engage with USDA to find a solution that preserves the county estimates while being fiscally responsible. We encourage conversations on reducing data collection costs by using other methods or data from other USDA agencies. U.S. agriculture needs county estimates for local supply chains to efficiently operate, and we are open-minded on the collection methods with the end goal of preserving the data while saving USDA funds. We respectfully request to be part of conversations on continuing county estimates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Seyfert".

Michael J. Seyfert  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
National Grain and Feed Association

Cc: Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry  
House Committee on Agriculture