

Historical outline

Since 1955, the Government Statistician is responsible for the organization and administration of agricultural surveys and censuses. Accordingly, censuses were carried out by the Central Office of Statistics, now the National Statistics Office (NSO). Data here presented refer to the 2001 Census of Agriculture. Previous agricultural censuses were conducted in 1982/83, 1979, 1968/69, 1960, 1949/ 50.

Organization

The NSO organized the 2001 Census of Agriculture in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. Ministry of Education collaborated with NSO by making available a number of classrooms in the Government primary schools in all the villages, for interviewing purposes.

Enumeration period

The census interviews were held during 22 October to 11 November, 2001.

Reference date/period

For land, animal numbers and machinery: 30 September 2001. For crop and livestock production: the agricultural year (1 October 2000 to 30 September 2001).

Definition

- **Agricultural holding:** A single unit which has a single management and which produces agricultural products. A holding may have agricultural land in different localities, but all information related to it is taken at the holder's residence. No thresholds were applied. The excluded were those having
 - Less than three fruit trees of the same species, and
 - Ten or less vines on the holding (as these represented less than 0.001 ha).
- **Garigue (Moxa or Xaghri):** Land which cannot be ploughed because of scarcity of soil and/or because of predominant rocky nature of soil.

Coverage

The 2001 Agricultural Census covered the Islands of Malta and Gozo.

Frame

A postal survey conducted in 1999, updated the Farmers Register. All available administrative registers (market sales lists, fruit tree purchases, Farmers' Registration Code (FRC) and records of commercial sales to agriculture-related industries) were used to refresh the register of agricultural holdings. As a result, a register of 12 127 agricultural holdings was used as the census frame.

Method

Complete enumeration of holdings was performed, so that all agricultural holdings in the register were observed. Data were collected "as per holder's declarations". The holdings were grouped into two categories:

- In the first category, holdings having less than 0.3 ha of agricultural 'dry land' and no means of irrigation were served with a Postal Questionnaire. (The nature of these holdings with no irrigation and consequently depending entirely on the rainy season is well known; such holdings normally grow fodder, potatoes and onions).
- The rest of the holders, having all other agricultural activities, were interviewed personally at the government primary schools. The closing date of the census was the 11 November 2001. Non-respondents were given the opportunity to fill in the questionnaire at the Agricultural Extension Services till the end of January 2002. (This improved the response rate by a further 3 percent to 95 percent).

Data source

Census of Agriculture 2001 Valletta, National Statistics Office (NSO), 2003 xxviii, 227p. ISBN 99909-81-973.

Contact

- National Statistics Office (NSO), Lascaris Valletta VLT 2000, Malta. Tel.: (+356) 212 232 21, (+356) 212 232 25; Fax: (+356) 212 498 41, (+356) 212 484 83; E-mail: nso@gov.mt.
- Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics Unit. Tel: (+356) 212 246 75, (+ 356) 219 975 29; E-mail: agric.nso@gov.mt

Website

<http://www.nso.gov.mt>