
FRANCE - General Census of Agriculture 2010 – Explanatory notes

1. Historical Outline

The 2010 Agricultural Census in France is the sixth taken since the end of the Second World War, and follows those of 2000, 1988, 1979, 1970, 1955.

2. Legal Basis and Organization

The enabling legislation for the Census of Agriculture is National Decree No. 2009-529 of 11 May 2009 on the execution of an Agricultural Census in 2010. It entrusts the implementation to the Ministry in charge of Agriculture, defines the geographical and field objectives, authorizes the holding of municipal advisory committees during the preparatory phases, specifies that responses collected fall under the law, the Confidentiality and Freedoms laws, n ° 51-711 of 7 June 1951, and n ° 78-17 of 6 January 1978).

The Census of Agriculture is the responsibility of the Service for Statistics and Prospective, the central statistics department of the Ministry of Agriculture, part of the French public statistical system (coordination INSEE). The central unit is in charge of the design process, drafting the questionnaire and instructions, training of regional services, the final quality control of the data and the first publication of results.

Regional statistical and economic information services were responsible for the recruitment and training of enumerators. This Service was responsible for planning and controlling the work of the investigators, data acquisition, providing a first level of data validation, and publishing regional results when the survey is declared valid.

3. Reference Period or Date

The reference period for data on crops, methods of production and labour is the crop year 2009-2010 (November 2009 to October 2010). The livestock reference date is 1 November 2010. For rural Development characteristics the three previous calendar years 2008, 2009, and 2010.

4. Enumeration Period

Collection was between October 2010 and February 2011, completeness checks were undertaken in the field between March and June 2011.

5. Definition of the Statistical Unit

EC Regulation 1166/2008 defines the statistical unit as an agricultural holding.

„Agricultural holding“ or „holding“ means a single unit, both technically and economically, which has a single management and which undertakes agricultural activities listed in Annex I to the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008 within the economic territory of the European Union, either as its primary or secondary activity. In addition, the EU regulation determines thresholds of size.

In line with the EU legislation, the agricultural census in France covered all farms with at least 1 ha of utilised agricultural area or less for some specialised crops. Thresholds about animals breeding are also applied in the case where area thresholds are not reached (1 bovine...). This definition is applied since 1955.

The French oversee territories (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana and La Reunion) have other thresholds – lower than 1 ha, reflecting their specificities.

6. Geographic Coverage

Covered the entire country.

7. Exclusions and Cut-Off Thresholds

None noted other than those stated as the minimum threshold of agricultural activity in the national definition of an agricultural holding.

8. Methodology

Use of the FAO Modular Approach

No

Frame

The target population includes all holdings that satisfy the definition of the statistical unit. The general threshold is one hectare except for certain specialized products where it is lower. The French Census covers 100 percent of the field defined by the EU regulations.

Complete or Sample Enumeration Methods

The Census of agriculture was an enumeration of all agricultural holdings that satisfy the definition of a statistical unit.

Sample Design

Not applicable.

Collection Method

The field collection operation was entirely by face to face computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) on a "Tablet" personal computer touch screens with a stylus and/or keyboard..

Extensive use was made of the country's administrative data that supports the EU programs for agriculture and whenever possible the information was copied on to the computerized questionnaires used in the personal interviews. Respondents were only required to confirm, amend or supplement that information reduced the length of the interview and respondent burden. Bovine livestock has been systematically derived from national administrative register. Rural development data has also been derived from administrative data (subsidies management).

The geographic coordinates were based on the headquarters of the farm (farm house and farm buildings grouped), otherwise the farm buildings, or the largest parcel when there were no buildings.

Questionnaire(s)

EU Regulations requires information on holding location and geo-coordinates, legal status, ownership and tenancy, land use and crops grown, irrigation, livestock, organic farming, machinery (out of scope in 2010, mandatory in 2013 FSS), renewable energy installations, other gainful activities, socio-economic circumstances (full and part-time farming), labour force (family, non-family, contractors), agricultural and vocational training of the manager, inclusion in rural development support programmes, soil tillage methods, crop rotation, and erosion protection, livestock keeping places and keeping methods, animal grazing, manure application and manure storage and treatment facilities, maintenance and installation of landscape features.

France collected additional items on generation change (presence of a successor), participation in quality schemes, detailed breakdown for aromatic plants and vegetables and questions of regional interest. There were three questionnaires one for continental France and two for France's overseas Territories.

Controls to Minimize Non-Sampling Errors

The CAPI interface controlled the interview process and all questions. Therefore there was very little non-response. Total non-response represents less than one percent of the farms surveyed.

Innovative Methodologies

The use of "computer assisted personal interviews (CAPI) to reduce respondent burden, length of the interviews, and improve data quality and consistency.

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9. Data Entry, Edits and Imputations, Estimation and Tabulation

The CAPI interface included controls to ensure that there were responses to all questions. In addition, interactive range and consistency checks were included for each variable so that corrections could be

made by the operator during the interview. Further edits and imputations were completed at the central office where the Census estimation and tabulation was completed

To ensure that the list of operations is complete many tests were conducted at the end of collection. All available administrative sources were used to verify that existing operations had been identified and included. The key data bases and registers used included that for EU agriculture aid applications, the national database of identification, the computerized vineyard register, organic producer records, and local interest (perfume plants).

10. Census Data Quality

The first level of evaluation at the central level, by the expert working groups set up by theme. The mission was to compare the 2010 Census data with those of the 2000 Census, livestock surveys, land use, specialized surveys on "orchards" and "vegetables" information from the annual agricultural statistics program. The estimates were also compared to the data from the annual agriculture statistics program of the Regional Directorates Agriculture and Forestry. Its data on land use and agricultural production by county area, yield, harvest, and numbers and weights for livestock production. The annual data are at the county level. The comparisons showed no unexpected or surprising developments.

11. Data Dissemination and Use

All results are available at <http://www.agreste.agriculture.gouv.fr/>. The first provisional results were released in September 2011, 10 months after the end of the observation period. The main final results were available February 2012.

12. Data Sources

Eurostat:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Agricultural_census_2010

Final Report

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/749240/749313/FR_NMR_FSS_2010.pdf/d778104e-32be-45cf-a993-e4da8d473c2d

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