
St Lucia– Census of Agriculture 2007- Explanatory Notes

1. Historical outline

Previous agricultural censuses were conducted in 1946, 1961, 1973/74, 1986, 1996.

2. Legal basis and organization

The Statistics Act No.13 of November, 1973, provides “for the collection, compilation and analysis of certain statistical information including the taking of census and the publication of that information...”

In Section 3, the Act prescribes the duties of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) and the first listed duty is “to take any census in the Island” and in Section 4 establishes that the Statistician “may delegate in writing his powers and functions under this Act”.

For the St Lucia Census of Agriculture 2007 such delegation was done by means of a 2007 Censal Decree approved by the Cabinet of Ministers that appointed the Corporate Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries¹ as the Office in charge in collaboration with the CSO.

The decree appointed a Census Advisory Committee of 18 members from Ministry of Agriculture, CSO and producers associations

It was founded by the National budget and received the FAO technical assistance by means of the Technical Cooperation Project TCP/STL/3102

The field work for the 2007 Census of Agriculture, involved 186 enumerators, 36 field supervisors and 5 field coordinators.

3. Reference period/date

The census reference year was the calendar year 2006.

Enumeration day for: holding identification and location, identification and legal status of holder, holder's household composition, holding area, number of parcels, tenure, number of trees, area under compact plantation of banana, plantain and coconut, livestock, machinery and equipment owned, membership to farm organizations.

4. Enumeration period

The census of agriculture was enumerated during the period January 22nd to March 15th 2007.

5. Definition of the statistical unit

Agricultural census enumeration unit was defined as an economic unit of agricultural production under single management comprising all livestock kept and land used wholly or partly for agricultural production purposes, without regard to title, legal form or size.

There are two types of agricultural holdings: 1) holdings in the household sector: those operated by household members (individual or household, joint individuals from different households) ; 2) holdings in the non-household sector: those operated by cooperatives, corporations, government institutions, church institutions and other non-household enterprise.

6. Geographical coverage

The census covered all the island territory excluding the Government Forest reservation (17 000 acres).

7. Exclusions and cut-off thresholds

¹ At present: Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Fisheries and Rural Development.

The holdings with activity over at least one of the following cut-off limits were enumerated by means of a long questionnaire. The rest of holdings (those below all the cut-off limits) were enumerated during the screening process through a screening form:

- One/eighth of an acre of any temporary crop.
- 10 bearing trees of any tree crop.
- 100 mats of banana and/or plantain.
- One head of cattle.
- 2 pigs or 2 goats or 2 sheep or one head of any two.
- 12 poultry or 12 rabbit or 12 head of poultry and rabbits together.

8. Methodology

The country was divided in Enumeration Districts (ED) (421). Enumerators had to canvass the assigned ED identifying all households in it and applying the screening form in order to identify those holdings above the threshold and also to collect information in small holdings below it. The second questionnaire, "holding questionnaire" (long) was applied to all holdings above the threshold.

The information was collected by means of personal interviews with manual filling of paper questionnaires.

Strong field supervision was applied to ensure quality during the field operations.

Data were manually edited, coded and keypunched.

Framework

Data from the 2001 Population and Housing Census along with records from other sources (agriculture extension officers, farmer associations, etc.) served as census frames. A list of farms of more than 25 acres, a list of farms with greenhouses, a list of poultry farms were compiled prior to the taking of census to ensure complete coverage. The cartography of the Agricultural Census was the same used for the 2001 Population and Housing Census, the same ED were also used. This procedure allows for comparisons and geographical links between the two censuses.

Questionnaire(s)

Two questionnaires were used: a "screening form" and a "holding questionnaire".

Items of the screening form comprised: area with temporary crops, selected fruit trees, livestock (including poultry), beehives, and engagement in fishing activities for households below the threshold. The information collected through the long questionnaire (Agricultural Census Questionnaires), applied to holdings above the threshold, covered: General information, identification and legal status and main activity of holding, population and employment, land use, land tenure, soil conservation methods, number and type of permanent crops, existence and end use of temporary crops, livestock, machinery and equipment, selected practices and facilities, membership to farmers' associations and portion of holder's household income coming from agriculture.

The question about who is mainly responsible for rearing backyard animals and/or backyard horticulture and/or other similar activity was aimed to identify "sub-holders". The receiving of remittances is also investigated. No community survey was taken. Fishing activities of households were reported in the screening form questionnaire.

9. Data entry, edits, imputation and tabulation

10. Data Dissemination and Use

The final results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture were delivered by means of:

- The brochure "Portrait of main findings" delivered during the seminar of presentation of census results (October 18th, 2007);
- A hard copy publication of final results;

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- The website.

Two thematic analyses were also produced and disseminated: Gender Thematic Analysis and Livestock Thematic Analysis.

11. Census data quality

No post enumeration survey (PES) was applied. Upon comparison with estimated number of dwellings, households and population the census coverage was estimated in 92.6%.

Checking against trustable external data such as banana production, cocoa production and coconut production were also performed.

12. Data source

Final reports of FAO consultancies. Questionnaires and manuals.

Web site: http://malff.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=66&Itemid=80

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