

COOK ISLANDS - Agricultural Census 1988 - Explanatory Notes

Historical outline: An agricultural sample survey was undertaken in 1950 in the Cook Islands as part of the 1950 World Census of Agriculture Programme, but data were deemed to be unsatisfactory owing to insufficient response and incomplete sampling. A second attempt to conduct an agricultural census was made in 1975 but coverage was limited to the island of Rarotonga. In 1988, the census of agriculture to which present notes and data relate was successfully carried out.

Organization: The census was organized and conducted under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture in collaboration with the Statistics Office; an Agricultural Census Unit was established to coordinate all census operations. Financial and technical support was given by the UN Development Program, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. Field work was carried out by 83 enumerators and 23 supervisors.

Enumeration period: The census was carried out from 1 to 30 September 1988; however, in a few areas, the field work was delayed and was not completed until December 1989.

Reference date: Data on crops and machinery refer to the 12 months preceding the census; data on employment refer to the month preceding the census (August 1988); all other data refer to the period 1 - 30 September 1988.

Definitions: A household is defined as:

- a) "Non-Agricultural" if it is not engaged in crop production (also if household members own or look after unused land or livestock);
- b) having a "Minor Agricultural Activity" if it manages less than 0.05 Ha of land under garden crops or less than 10 coconuts or other crop trees;
- c) "Agriculturally Active" if the household manages 0.05 Ha or more of land under garden crops or grows 10 or more crop trees. In this third case the household is considered as operating a holding.

Coverage: All households and holdings in the Cook Islands were covered; institutions (hospitals, hotels, prisons, other public services organizations, etc.) were excluded from the census.

Frame: The frame used was the updated list of households by Enumeration Areas (EAs) compiled during the 1986 Census of Population and Dwellings.

Methods: All islands were divided, for census purposes, into Census Districts (CDs), which were in turn subdivided into EAs up to a total of 43 CDs and 124 EAs for the whole country. The census was carried out on a complete enumeration basis through direct interview.

Three questionnaire forms were used:

- Household, which was completed for all households regardless of the level of their agricultural activity.
- Holding, which was completed for all agriculturally active households (see definitions - c).
- Parcel, referring to the characteristics of parcels as reported in the Holding Form.

A Pilot Test in two phases preceded the census to ensure the effectiveness of the questionnaires. To check the accuracy of data collected, a Post Enumeration Sample Survey was launched immediately after the end of field enumeration and completed in June 1989.

Data source: Ministry of Agriculture and Statistics Office - Census of Agriculture 1988 - Rarotonga - Cook Islands.

Mailing address: Ministry of Agriculture - Rarotonga - Cook Islands; Tel. 28711, or Statistics Office - Rarotonga - Cook Islands; Tel. 29390.