

## NEW ZEALAND - Agricultural Census 1990 - Explanatory Notes

**Historical outline:** The Agricultural Census in New Zealand is conducted annually. New Zealand has participated in all World Census of Agriculture rounds. Present data refer to the 1990 Census of Agriculture.

**Organization:** The Statistics Act 1975 established a Department of State called the Department of Statistics, headed by the Government Statistician, entrusted with compiling, analyzing, abstracting, and publishing official statistics, and operating under the supervision of the Minister of Statistics. The census is undertaken jointly by the Department of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. The Department of Statistics is entrusted with producing and disseminating agricultural statistics in summarized form for release to Government and to farming or other industries organizations. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries utilizes census information for the development of public policies regarding agriculture.

**Enumeration period:** The census enumeration day was 30 June 1990.

**Reference date:** Data on crop production and use of fertilizers refer to the agricultural year 1989-90. Data on land utilization and livestock numbers refer to the day of enumeration. Data on paid farm workers refer to the week preceding the census.

**Definition:** A holding is defined as any area of land used for, or potentially usable for, horticulture, cropping, livestock or forestry operations.

**Coverage:** The census covered the entire country. Effective from 1 November 1989 a two-tier system of territorial local authorities replaced the various rural and urban authorities in existence on 31 October 1989. The new system consists of Districts and Cities at the lower level, and Regions made up of groups of Districts and Cities. As a result, the country was administratively divided into 14 Regional Council Areas consisting, in turn, of 74 District and City Council Areas.

**Frame:** One of the most important duties of the Department of Statistics is to update and maintain a directory of all holdings, which is used as census frame.

**Methods:** Holdings were defined, for census purposes, as either "significant" or "insignificant," on the basis of their Estimated Value of Agricultural Output (EVAO). Significant holdings collectively produced 98% of EVAO, while insignificant holdings collectively contributed no more than 2% to the total output of agricultural industry. In number of units, significant holdings were, in 1990, the 65% of the total, while insignificant holdings were the remaining 35%. Significant holdings are generally surveyed annually, while insignificant holdings are surveyed every three years, but in the 1990 census all holdings were investigated. To carry out the postal census, four types of questionnaires were mailed:

- A first questionnaire was sent to significant holdings classified, (following the New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, NZSIC), as Dairy Holdings, Sheep Holdings, Mixed and Other Livestock Holdings, Cropping Holdings, and Holdings Not Elsewhere Specified.
- A second questionnaire was sent to significant holdings classified as Horticultural and Fruit Growing Holdings.
- A third questionnaire was sent to insignificant holdings.
- A fourth questionnaire on capital expenditure was sent only to a sample of holdings.

**Data source:** New Zealand Department of Statistics - Agriculture Statistics 1990.

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