

The EU Farm Structure Surveys from 2010 Onwards

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Abstract: Over the past three years there has been intensive discussion within the EU on the content of the next series of farm structure surveys, which starts in 2010 with the census of agricultural holdings. Changes in consumer demand, coupled with the introduction of new policies on agricultural and environmental issues, food safety and rural development have broadened the scope of agriculture-related statistics considerably. The challenge within the EU has been how to address these new needs without significantly increasing the burden on respondents.

This paper describes the key changes which have been proposed for the EU and which have stimulated most debate. These include:

- new structural variables (e.g. organic farming, renewable energy production);
- redefinition of the coverage of the census;
- introduction of georeferencing;
- use of sample surveys for certain census characteristics;
- exploitation of administrative data sources; and
- development of a new survey on agricultural production methods.