

ERS Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: America's Farms and Ranches at a Glance: 2023 Edition

Type of Report
(ERR, EIB, EB) EIB

Influential Scientific Information

Agency: Economic Research Service Highly Influential Scientific Assessment
USDA

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Subject of Review: While broad U.S. averages provide a general overview of farms, they often mask the vast disparities in size, type, and production value among the nation's nearly 2 million farms. In 2022, the average production value for these farms was \$225,429. Yet, this figure is misleading: half of these farms produced a value of just \$7,800 or less, and a significant 72% of all production came from farms generating at least \$1 million in agricultural output. Such disparities raise questions about the true nature of the U.S. farm sector's diversity and the challenges faced by different farm categories. Furthermore, the definition and classification of "farms" have evolved over time. The USDA's farm typology, established in 2013, primarily focuses on the "family farm" concept. However, since the 1970s, the USDA's definition of a farm has been any establishment producing and selling a minimum of \$1,000 in agricultural products annually, a threshold not adjusted for inflation. This raises concerns about the accuracy and relevance of such classifications in capturing the realities of today's diverse agricultural sector. How do these classifications impact our understanding of farm structures, financial stress, credit usage, and other critical aspects, especially when considering the nuances of race, ethnicity, and social disadvantages? This report seeks to delve deeper into these issues, offering a more granulated view of the U.S. farm sector.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: Panel Review Individual Reviewers

Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 09/01/2023 Completed: 10/3/2023

Number of Reviewers: 3 or fewer 4 to 10 More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: Agency Designated Outside

