

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION NO. 2 OF 2020

BY THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

RELEASE OF LISTS OF AGRICULTURAL FARM BUSINESSES FOR THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS AND SCIENCES

In accordance with the requirements of Section 14 of the *Census and Statistics (Information Release and Access) Determination 2018*, made under Section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has released a list of business characteristics, the details of which are as follows.

The ABS has disclosed to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) a list of de-identified farm businesses taken from the Australian Business Register (ABR) based ABS Business Register, and will subsequently disclose contact details for a selection of those farm businesses.

The list will be used by ABARES in respect to its 2019-20 farm surveys program. The list of de-identified farm businesses from the ABR-based ABS Business Register will be used to design and select samples for ABARES surveys relating to the agricultural industry; including:

- the agricultural and grazing industries;
- dairy industry;
- irrigation including water markets and resource management; and
- vegetable growing.

Information released:

- a measure of size, based on the estimated value of agricultural operations where available or a Business Activity Statement derived size identifier;
- one or more geographic classification codes including Australian Statistical Geography Standard down to Statistical Area 1, latitude and longitude, local government region and property name;
- an industry classification code using the Australian and New Zealand Industrial Classification (ANZSIC); and
- a secondary activity indicator, where available.

The ABS also provided a unique identifying number (as well as a concordance of unique identifying numbers in previous years) for each farm business for the purposes of sampling methodology. The identities of the businesses linked to these numbers are only known to the ABS.

For each farm business selected by ABARES for inclusion in their agricultural industry survey program, the ABS will subsequently provide the name, address and telephone number contact information. It is anticipated that these contact details will be provided for approximately 15,000 farm businesses, however not all farm businesses selected will actually be surveyed. This is based upon ABARES' sampling methodology which includes potential replacements for each selection (as participation is voluntary).

This service has been provided to ABARES since 2010. Before this, the service was made available to the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics (ABARE) each year from 1988 to 2009 and to the former Bureau of Agricultural Economics for similar purposes from 1985 to 1987. Access to ABS lists

has improved the accuracy of ABARES' farm surveys, eliminated the need for ABARES to develop an independent business register, and improved the comparability of the statistics derived from these surveys with those produced by the ABS.

ABARES has provided the ABS with a written undertaking that they will:

1. use the lists specified in the Schedule to the undertaking only for the purpose of conducting the farm surveys and activities listed in the Schedule, which do not involve the enforcing of any obligation or liability applicable under any enactment;
2. not release the lists or any part of the lists, either directly or indirectly, to another person outside of ABARES other than to a contractor who may require access to the lists for the purpose of providing a service to ABARES;
3. appoint a contact officer who will manage the processes for individuals within ABARES to request access to the lists; and will circulate information to individuals within ABARES who are granted approval by the ABS to access the lists;
4. maintain a register of all officers of ABARES who have access to the lists and provide a copy of that register to the ABS on request;
5. if it is necessary for a contractor to have access to the lists for the purpose of providing services to ABARES, ABARES will ensure that the contractor and every person employed by the contractor who has access to the lists, provide the Australian Statistician with a relevant undertaking prior to accessing the lists;
6. advise respondents in writing that the survey:
 - a. is conducted by ABARES from a list of names and addresses obtained from the ABS in accordance with legislative guidelines;
 - b. is not covered by the ABS guarantee of confidentiality; and
 - c. is voluntary (not compulsory)
7. clear any relevant explanatory material for the surveys with the ABS prior to despatch;
8. provide a copy of the survey results and any information relevant to the maintenance of ABS business registers if so requested by the ABS;
9. for the purpose of conducting a compliance audit concerning observance of the terms and conditions under which the list is disclosed, allow ABS officers access to necessary documents and information; and
10. destroy all copies of the list as soon as the surveys and activities have been completed.



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