

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS ACT 1975: sub-section 6(3)**

**PROPOSAL NO. 4 OF 2016**

**BY**

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**

**AGRICULTURAL CENSUS 2015-16**

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) proposes to collect information for the purpose of informing decision making in relation to agricultural commodity production, water use and natural resource management.

The information will be collected:

- from June to September 2016;
- from businesses identified from the ABS Business Register;
- as a census of approximately 100,000 agricultural businesses;
- by self-enumeration (electronic form or mail-out/mail-back paper form) or telephone interview; and
- across all States and Territories of Australia.

Information will be collected on a range of characteristics including:

- land use
- livestock production
- hay and silage
- cereal and other crops
- horticulture crops
- organic and bio-dynamic certification
- water for agricultural production
- irrigation expenditure
- nurseries, cut flowers and cultivated turf
- fertiliser use
- crop management
- pasture and crop cultivation
- farm management

The information collected will be used by the ABS in the compilation of *Agricultural Commodities, Australia 2015-16* (cat. no. 7121.0), *Water Use on Australian Farms 2015-16* (cat. no. 4618.0) and in the compilation of the Australian National Accounts.

The ABS expects to make statistical and related information from the collection available from early 2017.

The principal users of these data are:

- the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (including the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES));

- the Department of the Environment;
- state and territory government departments of primary industry; and
- industry bodies.

The data will contribute to informed decision-making in relation to the agriculture industry and to environmental issues associated with the production of agricultural commodities.

To assist in determining the feasibility of the collection and to understand and manage respondent burden consistent with the Government's Regulator Performance Framework, the ABS:

- has considered what existing information is available;
- has consulted with principal users of the data (as listed above) as to their data requirements;
- has conducted field testing to ensure the required data are readily available and that provider load will be minimised;
- has improved online reporting instruments to be more streamlined and easier to navigate, improving the provider experience and reducing burden; and
- will be required to clear the collection through the Statistical Clearing House.

This collection was last conducted in 2010-11 and was previously tabled in Parliament as Proposal 4 of 2011.

Luise McCulloch  
Deputy Australian Statistician  
Statistical Services Group

March 2016