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1974

REACTION TO THE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL
OUTLOOK CONFERENCE



ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

United States
Department of
Agriculture



National Agricultural Library

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Reaction to the
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK CONFERENCE

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Washington, D.C.

October 1974

Reaction to the
National Agricultural Outlook Conference

Background

The first National Agricultural Outlook Conference was held in the Department of Agriculture in 1923, about a year after the creation of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, and is generally regarded as the beginning of a continuous outlook program within the Department. In 1924 the Outlook Conference was continued and the reception of the reports of these first two Conferences was so favorable it was decided to organize outlook work on a permanent basis. Since then Outlook Conferences have been held regularly and have become an official part of the planned program of the Department.

The format and emphasis of the Conferences have changed somewhat over time, but for the most part they have tended to include sessions on the outlook for the general economy, agriculture, foreign trade, farm programs and policy, and a series of reviews of the outlook and situation for individual commodities for a year or two into the future. Speakers include outstanding people, both government and non-government.

The entire outlook program of the Economic Research Service represents a large portion of the Agency's resources and is the Agency's most significant as well as most visible output for use by the general public. It has a significant impact on resource allocation decisions within the agricultural industry. Despite its importance, it has not been subjected to a systematic evaluation. The National Agricultural Outlook Conference, being an important vehicle for the dissemination of Outlook information, seemed to be a logical starting point for evaluation.

In the past, the Extension Service of the USDA has surveyed State Extension staff to find out what they think about the Conference, and the

planning committees have informally discussed the conference with participants and have held "debriefing sessions" after conferences. However, this study is the first formalized systematic review of the reactions of a wide spectrum of users of agricultural economic data.

This survey is part of the overall Department policy of reviewing its services to find out how well they serve individual target groups.

The findings from this survey will be considered by the Department in developing improvements and determining the future of the Conference.

Planning

An outside contractor, Trienah Meyers, planned and directed the study in consultation with Kenneth Farrell, Deputy Administrator, ERS, and a steering committee which included:

Kyle Randall	ERS
Ben Blankenship	ERS
James Donald	ERS
Don Seaborg	ERS
Richard Ford	ES

In addition, discussions were held with and suggestions received from Yvonne Clayton, ERS, Margaret Widenhamer of SRS, and with Edwin Kirby, Administrator of the Extension Service, USDA, and Raymond Scott and Opal Mann.

Topics Covered in Survey

The questions included in the survey covered the following areas of information:

For those who attended and for those who did not attend the December 1973 Conference, the kind of organizations they represent, their areas of responsibility, and the kinds of information they need in their work.

For those who did not attend the Conference in December 1973, the reasons for not attending.

For those who attended the February 1972 or February 1973 Conferences, what they thought of the Conference they did attend.

For those who attended the December 1973 Conference, what they thought of the individual sessions.

For those who attended any of the last three Conferences, what their objectives were in attending and whether the Conference met their objectives.

For those who ever attended a Conference:

What forecasting time period they need in their work

What changes they suggest for future Conferences

If they recommend continuing the Conference, the preferred date

If they recommend discontinuing the Conference, the alternate sources they suggest be made available for outlook information

Additional suggestions were invited as part of the last question and on the back page of the questionnaire

Survey Procedure

Mail questionnaires were sent to United States' agribusiness firms, financial institutions, agricultural staff both State and national agencies, media, farm organizations and other public interest groups. One major State group was the State Extension Service specialists.

Names and organizations consisted of those who registered at one or more National Agricultural Outlook Conferences held in 1971, 1972, and 1973, plus others having interests in agriculture. A second list of respondents was developed by specialists in the ERS and ES on the basis of their knowledge of the target groups. In addition, those who registered at the December 1973 Conference whose names were not on the other list were included in the mailings.

Although Conference attendees include representatives from foreign countries, and many of them are individually invited, they are not considered

part of the target audience and their opinions were not solicited in this survey.

The first mailing, to 1,185 people, was made within 2 days after the end of the December 1973 Conference so that attendees would receive the questionnaires shortly after returning home. A second mailing, to the non-respondents, was made 3 weeks after the Conference. Both mailings included a covering letter, the questionnaire, and a copy of the Conference program.

The sample for ERS was drawn from staff GS-12 through 15, by taking every other name from a master list, a total of 235.

After a review of the returns, about 6 weeks after the Conference, it was decided not to attempt additional followup either by mail or telephone. It was assumed that after a lapse of 6 weeks, those not interested enough in the Conference to respond to two mailings would probably not add enough to our knowledge to justify further delay in processing the data.

Response Rates

The rate of response to the two mailings averaged almost 50 percent. For ERS the response was 92 percent. For response by type of organization see the appendix.

Statistical Significance of Survey Results

Because the sample of respondents in the survey was not randomly selected, it is not possible to discuss or test results in terms of "significant differences" in a statistical sense or in terms of probabilities. Although one should not conclude that the percentage differences are absolute measurements, conclusions based on the general direction or clustering of attitudes which are unique to individual types of organizations should be valid.

Comments About the Report

The State Extension Service responses may be weighted by the relatively high percentage of people who say they are interested in information about home economics, 35 percent. This could represent a high level of response from the home economists and/or it could be an apparent inflation because administrators of State programs have the overall responsibility for home economics as well as other areas of interest.

The questionnaire invited respondents to classify themselves as to type of organization they represented on a checklist which included 13 possibilities plus "other." Some of these groups, particularly the smaller ones, were merged for purposes of tabulation and analysis, and two new categories were added from the "write-in" answers.

<u>Classification by the respondent</u>	<u>Classifications merged as they appear in the tables</u>
State Extension Service	State Extension Service
Newspaper Newsletter Magazine Radio, TV	Media
Financial Institution	Financial Institution
Association of Food Retailers, Wholesalers, Processors, etc. Individual Food Firm	Food Association, Individual Firm
Suppliers	Suppliers
Farm Organization Commodity Association	Farm Organization, Commodity Association
USDA--Non-ERS	USDA--Non-ERS
Commodity or Stock Brokerage Firm	Commodity or Stock Broker

Classification by
the respondent

Classifications merged as
they appear in the tables

Added Groups

University, College (other
than State Extension)

University, College

Other Federal, State,
Local Governments

Other Federal, State,
Local Governments

Survey Results

THE LARGEST GROUP REPRESENTED IN THE SAMPLE WAS THE STATE EXTENSION SERVICE, 24 PERCENT.

The media was next with 13 percent, food associations and individual food firms 13 percent, and financial institutions 12 percent.

(Table 1) 1/

RESPONSIBILITIES REPRESENTED BY THE RESPONDENTS WERE HEAVIEST IN MARKETING AND SALES, 21 PERCENT, AND IN OUTLOOK WORK, 14 PERCENT.

Although individual target groups reported a variety of areas of responsibility, there were some which seemed to dominate. State Extension Service was heavily represented by home economics, 35 percent, financial institutions in credit and finance, 64 percent, food associations and firms in outlook work, 27 percent, suppliers in marketing and sales, 46 percent, farm organizations and commodity associations in marketing and sales, 43 percent, commodity and stock brokers in marketing and sales and research and statistics, 32 percent, and universities in rural development, 21 percent, and administration, 25 percent. (Table 2)

1/ Table numbers referred to in the pages which follow correspond to the questions on which they are based. See questionnaire in appendix.

THE SCOPE OF WORK OF THE RESPONDENTS TENDED TO STATE, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COVERAGE IN ABOUT EQUAL EMPHASIS, ABOUT ONE-THIRD EACH. REGIONAL AND LOCAL RESPONSIBILITIES WERE RELATIVELY FEWER.

Among State Extension staff almost 90 percent reported responsibility for State work. Among food associations and individual firms, suppliers, farm and commodity groups, and brokers, 40 to 55 percent had national and/or international areas of responsibility. Universities had a strong State focus, and financial institutions reported national interests. (Table 3)

FOUR KINDS OF INFORMATION HEAD THE LIST OF NEEDS OF THE RESPONDENTS; SUPPLY AND DEMAND, PRODUCT PRICES, GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, AND THE GENERAL ECONOMY, OVER 70 PERCENT EACH.

Supply and demand was, by far, the area in which most respondents had an interest, 84 percent. Higher proportions of the media expressed need for data in more areas than did the other groups. They averaged over six areas each. Members of other groups were more likely to identify four or five areas in which they needed information. (Table 4)

SOMEWHAT SMALLER PERCENTAGES OF RESPONDENTS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SPECIFIC COMMODITIES THAN THEY DID IN FUNCTIONAL AREAS. FEED GRAINS AND MEAT ANIMALS DOMINATED THE LIST, ABOUT 60 PERCENT EACH.

This was relatively consistent from group to group, that is, higher proportions interested in feed grains and meat animals. In a few of the groups, need for information about food grains, fats and oils and dairy was also high, averaging about 40 to 46 percent for the sample as a whole. (Table 5)

ALMOST HALF OF THE RESPONDENTS HAD ATTENDED THE DECEMBER 1973 CONFERENCE, BUT 30 PERCENT HAD NEVER ATTENDED.

Some target groups were more likely to have attended the most recent Conference; over half of the respondents from State Extension, food associations, and firms, suppliers, farm associations, and commodity associations, USDA (non-ERS), and other governments had attended. Two-thirds of the media reported they had never attended a Conference. Over a third of the financial institutions, suppliers, universities, farm associations and commodity associations had never attended.

(Table 6)

MANY RESPONDENTS WHO HAD NOT ATTENDED RECENTLY OR WHO HAD NEVER ATTENDED WRITE IN FOR THE INFORMATION THEY NEED, 32 PERCENT. SOME OF THEM HAD NEVER HEARD OF THE CONFERENCE, 15 PERCENT.

Those most likely to write for outlook information were among the media, food associations and individual firms and suppliers. There were sizeable percentages who said they had never heard of the Conference among the financial institutions and suppliers, about 30 percent. (Table 7)

AMONG RESPONDENTS WHO HAD ATTENDED PREVIOUS CONFERENCES, ATTENDANCE AT THE GENERAL ECONOMIC OUTLOOK AND THE AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK SESSIONS WAS HIGH, 85 PERCENT AND 88 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY.

About 75 percent of this group attended individual sessions on trade, farm programs and policy, and one or more of the commodity sessions. These percents should be regarded with some caution because the numbers are relatively small and because the recall involves a period of 1 to 2 years which could bias memory. (Table 8a)

MOST SCORED THE SESSIONS ADEQUATE TO EXCELLENT.

Most sessions were scored somewhat more heavily as adequate than as excellent, but there was some tendency to score a few sessions as poor: U.S. trade, commodities, and family living outlook, 12 to 15 percent. (Table 8b)

AMONG THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE MOST RECENT CONFERENCE THE REPORTED ATTENDANCE AT SOME INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS WAS HIGH, ALMOST 80 PERCENT, BUT NOT QUITE AS HIGH AS REPORTED FOR PREVIOUS YEARS.

This may be due in part to the relatively late change in date of the December 1973 Conference coupled with transportation problems (fuel shortage) which resulted in delayed arrival the first day of some of those who did attend.

Highest attendance was reported at the general economic outlook, agricultural outlook, U.S. trade, the world agricultural situation, and outlook for farming inputs. Lowest percentages of attendance were for the sessions on forest products and on tobacco. (Table 9a)

AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS SESSIONS TENDED TO
BE SCORED ADEQUATE TO EXCELLENT.

Most sessions were more heavily scored adequate than excellent with the exception of the general economic outlook, which was most favored. Fifty percent thought it excellent, higher than previous years.

Although the consumer and food security sessions were scored adequate to excellent by the majority of those who attended, they received more "poor" ratings than other sessions: 32 percent for the consumer presentation and 23 percent for food security. The commodity sessions on forest products and on sugar, and those on family living and family concerns were also generally scored well but were somewhat less well received than other sessions. (Table 9b)

RESPONDENTS WHO ATTENDED ANY OF THE LAST
THREE CONFERENCES SAID THEY CAME BECAUSE
THEY WANTED TO GET AN OVERALL VIEW, TO
UPDATE THEIR INFORMATION.

From 80 to 100 percent of the individual organizations gave a general answer in response to the question about their objective in attending. The only other reason that surfaced with frequency was "to have personal contacts and meet participants." This ranged from about 7 percent to about 35 percent by different types of organizations. (Table 10)

MOST OF THESE RESPONDENTS REPORTED THAT THE CONFERENCE MET THEIR OBJECTIVES ADEQUATELY, 74 PERCENT. THE REMAINDER SPLIT ALMOST EQUALLY IN CONSIDERING THE CONFERENCE COMPLETELY ADEQUATE, 13 PERCENT, OR INADEQUATE, 11 PERCENT.

On the whole the numbers of those who reported attending individual sessions are too small to analyze by groups, but suppliers seemed most likely to be completely satisfied, 23 percent, followed by financial institutions, the media, food firms and commodity and stock brokers. Those least satisfied, who considered their objectives in attending inadequately met were among universities, 38 percent, and financial institutions, 17 percent. (Table 11)

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING THE CONFERENCE
INFORMATION MORE USEFUL--A PLEA FOR
MORE TIME FOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AND
INFORMAL SESSIONS.

About 24 percent of the responses included comments about lack of audience participation and too much time for formal presentation. They said they wanted more time for questions and answers during the sessions, arrangements for informal, separate discussion sessions, and opportunity to meet with specialists. Recommendations ranged from having the speaker summarize his printed speech to allow more time for discussion, to having rump sessions after-hours, and lengthening the number of days of the Conference.

Sixteen percent suggested that speakers include more detail, "deeper" analysis, be more candid, present alternative possibilities, and add their personal comments in addition to the printed speech.

About 12 percent talked of mechanical problems, primarily the unavailability of papers before the sessions and lack of adequate numbers of copies. (Table 12-13) 1/

1/ Because respondents did not clearly separate their narrative answers to questions 12 and 13, the questions were treated as one, and were hand tallied.

OVER HALF SAID THE AMOUNT OF TIME ALLOTTED TO THEIR AREA OF INTEREST WAS ADEQUATE.

State Extension, financial institutions, and universities were most satisfied. The highest proportions preferring more time were among the media, suppliers, and farm organizations and commodity associations. (Table 13)

Those who indicated needing more time tended to list functional areas rather than individual commodities. They wanted more on policy, the general economic situation, prices, production, inputs, finance, the international situation, family living and consumers. (Table 12-13)

ALMOST 80 PERCENT OF THOSE WHO ATTENDED AT LEAST ONE OF THE LAST THREE CONFERENCES SAID THEY USED THE INFORMATION FOR GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION, ABOUT 60 PERCENT USED IT FOR CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS, AND ALMOST 40 PERCENT USED IT IN THEIR RESEARCH.

Extension Service emphasized conferences, radio/TV, and newsletters. The media tended to trade and farm journals. Financial institutions, suppliers and universities were more likely to use the information for meetings and research, farm and commodity associations for meetings, and brokers for research. (Table 14)

USING THE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS FROM THE CONFERENCE STATE EXTENSION AND THE MEDIA REACHED, BY FAR, THE LARGEST TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER YEAR.

However, a calculation of the average number of people reached by each type of organization shows financial institutions and farm and commodity groups high on the list.

Respondents reported reaching a total of almost 35 million people, with an average of over 133 thousand.

THOSE WHO HAD EVER ATTENDED A CONFERENCE
TENDED TO LIKE HAVING A "SPECIAL THEME".

Fifty-three percent suggested we continue the practice of having a special theme, 31 percent thought it should be discontinued. Comparisons between target groups were not made because of the small numbers.

(Table 16)

A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS ARE
SATISFIED WITH THE USUAL PERIOD OF
FORECASTS, 64 PERCENT. TWENTY PERCENT
PREFER A DIFFERENT TIME PERIOD.

Commodity and stock brokers were most satisfied, 86 percent.

Suppliers were most interested in change in period of forecasts,

48 percent. (Table 17a)

OVER 60 PERCENT OF THOSE WHO PREFERRED
A CHANGE IN TIME OF FORECAST TENDED TO
WANT LONGER RANGE PERIODS.

From the tabulated results, 24 percent suggested 3 to 5 years,

38 percent suggested over 5 years. (Table 17a)

A hand tally of the extensive write-in responses ranged from periods as short as 3 or 4 days or quarterly, to as long as 50 years and "as long as possible." Some wanted these periods exclusively, some wanted them added to the present forecasts, and there was a group who wanted longer as well as shorter intervals for forecasts. There was almost as many different suggestions and combinations of suggestions as there were respondents, but on the whole they reinforced the attitudes expressed in the tabulated results. (Table 17b)

FIRST CHOICE OF DATES FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES WAS FOR NOVEMBER, 35 PERCENT, FOR FEBRUARY, 20 PERCENT. AMONG THOSE WHO SUGGESTED OTHER DATES MANY OPTED FOR DECEMBER. RELATIVELY FEW SUGGESTED ELIMINATING THE CONFERENCE.

The strongest proponents of the November date were among the State Extension people, 46 percent, suppliers, 44 percent, and commodity and stock brokers, 41 percent.

Among those few who did recommend eliminating the Conference, they said it was because they preferred regional conferences--12 percent among State Extension and 12 percent of the media. (Table 18-1)

MOST RESPONDENTS DID NOT MAKE A SECOND CHOICE SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES, 78 PERCENT.

The scattered suggestions for second choice tended to reinforce the first choices reported. (Table 18-2)

Other Comments

One hundred and sixteen people wrote fairly lengthy comments at the end of the questionnaire. They were all read and, though they were fairly detailed and unique to the respondent, an attempt was made to isolate particular topics that seemed uppermost in the thinking of the commentator.

Many of the statements explained the reasoning behind responses given earlier in the interview. Comments tended to cluster around adding regional or specialized conferences, discussion groups, inadequate supplies of printed material at the Conference, and general approval. (Table 19)

A number of verbatim quotes are included in the appendix, after tables, to provide a feeling of the tone and range of the comments.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Because many who returned the questionnaire had never heard of the Conference, there is the implication that there is an additional audience of people whose work involves agricultural data who would benefit by knowing about the Conference and its proceedings. More effort might be made to inform more client groups and associations, including State Departments of Agriculture, in advance, of the date and program of the Conference.

Those who know about the Conference but who do not attend still benefit from ERS research and the Conference--many of them write in for the information they need. Because some did not seem to know that they can keep up to date by requesting that their names be put on mailing lists to receive announcements of new reports, the availability of such lists should be made more widely known.

Although most sessions at previous and at the last Conference were scored adequate to excellent, with reference to the December 1973 Conference, some improvement apparently is needed in the sessions about consumers, food security, family living, family concerns, and forest products and sugar.

Because many respondents said they attended the Conference for personal contacts, and later in the interview made suggestions about scheduling informal discussions and improving question and answer periods, consideration should be given to arranging time and place for such sessions.

Perhaps on an experimental basis, at the end of each session, an announcement could be made that specialists would be available at the end of the day, or on the day after the Conference to test willingness to actually spend more time in ad hoc groups.

A number of respondents had a less complicated solution to providing discussion periods--limit the speakers to a relatively short summary

presentation of their printed statement, and use the remaining time for more interaction between the audience and the specialists.

The thought of eliminating the Conference finds little support among the respondents. For the most part it meets their objectives in attending, they liked having a theme and the usual period of forecasts, and on the whole said there is enough time allocated to their area of interest. There was some feeling that, if possible, forecast periods should be extended.

The multiplier effect of the Conference is considerable. Respondents use it for general background information, conferences, research, radio and TV, and other media, and reach about 35 million people in the course of a year.

Although sizeable proportions of some important target audiences had never attended a Conference, in large part because they had never heard of it, those who did attend reached wide audiences with the information received at the Conference. This was particularly true for financial institutions, farm organizations, and commodity associations. A review should be made of official mailing lists to be sure these organizations are included for information about upcoming Conferences and the availability of regular research reports.

Some improvements are indicated, but respondents generally approve of having a National Agricultural Outlook Conference, with the present format, and find that the design of the program and the opportunity of meeting other specialists fulfill their objectives in attending.

APPENDIX

ABOUT THE TABLES

The list of "Types of Organization" which appears on the stub of the tables includes those listed in the questionnaire plus those written in by respondents.

The responses from the Economic Research Service are separated from the body of tables because they are not considered one of the client organizations.

Some tables do not add to 100.0 because of rounding.

Table 1--Types of organizations represented by respondents.

Type of organization	Percent	Number
State Extension Service	23.8	134
Media	13.2	74
Financial Institutions	12.5	70
Food Association, Individual Firms	13.3	75
Suppliers	9.6	54
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	6.6	37
University, College	4.3	24
USDA, Non-ERS	4.3	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	2.8	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	3.9	22
Other	5.7	32
Total	100.0	562
ERS	100.0	220

Table 2--Principal area of responsibility represented by respondent.

Type of Organization	Farm Management	Marketing and Sales	Rural Development	Resource Economics	Credit and Finance	Farm Policy	Outlook	Consumer and Home Economics	Purchasing	Communication	Research and Statistics	Admin. and Management	Other	Total
	-----Percent 1/-----													Number
State Extension Service	10.4	17.9	0.0	1.5	0.0	6.0	15.7	35.1	0.0	0.7	3.7	6.7	1.5	134
Media	10.8	5.4	1.4	1.4	0.0	9.5	9.5	2.7	0.0	51.4	0.0	2.7	4.1	74
Financial Institutions	2.9	2.9	1.4	1.4	64.3	0.0	11.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.6	2.9	2.9	70
Food Associations, Individual Firms	0.0	17.3	1.3	5.3	2.7	2.7	26.7	2.7	16.0	4.0	13.3	5.3	2.7	75
Suppliers	0.0	46.3	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	20.4	0.0	0.0	1.9	16.7	5.6	3.7	54
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	0.0	43.2	0.0	2.7	0.0	13.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	13.5	5.4	2.7	8.1	37
University, College	8.3	8.3	20.8	4.2	0.0	8.3	8.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	4.2	25.0	4.2	24
USDA, Non-ERS	4.2	25.0	0.0	4.2	0.0	16.7	12.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	12.5	4.2	8.3	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	0.0	18.8	6.3	6.3	0.0	12.5	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.8	25.0	6.3	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	0.0	31.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.8	18.2	4.5	22
Other	0.0	43.8	0.0	3.1	0.0	3.1	12.5	0.0	15.6	6.3	6.3	6.3	3.1	32
Total	4.8	20.6	1.6	2.7	8.4	5.5	14.4	10.1	3.2	8.9	8.5	6.8	3.6	562
ERS	6.4	17.3	11.4	21.8	2.3	6.8	8.2	1.0	0.0	0.0	14.1	0.9	9.1 ^{2/}	220

1/ Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

2/ Of this group, 5.5 were concerned with international trade.

Table 3--Scope of work of respondent.

Type of organization	International	National	Regional	State	Local	No response	Total
	Percent ^{1/}						Number
State Extension Service	6.7	9.7	11.2	88.1	5.2	0.7	134
Media	23.0	31.1	37.8	35.1	17.6	0.0	74
Financial Institutions	20.0	44.3	21.4	11.4	27.1	1.4	70
Food Association, Individual Firms	53.3	49.3	2.7	1.3	0.0	1.3	75
Suppliers	40.7	42.6	22.2	5.6	0.0	0.0	54
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	43.2	40.5	16.2	10.8	2.7	0.0	37
University, College	16.7	8.3	20.8	58.3	29.2	4.2	24
USDA, Non-ERS	54.2	41.7	16.7	25.0	4.2	0.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	43.8	37.5	37.5	43.8	12.5	0.0	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	54.5	50.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	22
Other	78.1	37.5	6.3	9.4	9.4	0.0	32
Total	31.9	32.6	17.3	33.8	9.4	0.7	562
ERS	23.6	62.7	29.5	10.9	3.2	0.0	220

^{1/} Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

Table 4--Kinds of agricultural information needed in work.

Type of organization	Supply & demand	Product prices	Input prices	Income	Financial status	Government programs	General economy	Food supply retail prices	Home economics	Other	No response	Total
	-----Percent 1/-----											Number
State Extension Service	67.9	63.4	52.2	48.5	36.6	60.4	70.9	47.8	37.3	7.5	1.5	134
Media	83.8	79.7	74.3	78.4	70.3	85.1	71.6	47.3	18.9	20.3	0.0	74
Financial Institutions	81.4	81.4	67.1	75.7	68.6	64.3	70.0	27.1	0.0	7.1	0.0	70
Food Associations, Individual Firms	98.7	66.7	41.3	24.0	17.3	77.3	82.7	37.3	4.0	5.3	0.0	75
Suppliers	96.3	77.8	72.2	66.7	51.9	77.8	81.5	22.2	1.9	7.4	0.0	54
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	97.3	81.1	59.5	40.5	35.1	75.7	62.2	32.4	10.8	5.4	0.0	37
University, College	50.0	41.7	29.2	50.0	29.2	58.3	50.0	16.7	25.0	12.5	0.0	24
USDA, Non-ERS	91.7	70.8	54.2	45.8	37.5	83.3	79.2	37.5	16.7	8.3	0.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	81.3	62.5	62.5	50.0	37.5	81.3	81.3	37.5	6.3	18.8	6.3	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	100.0	81.8	45.5	40.9	18.2	95.5	77.3	40.9	9.1	4.5	0.0	22
Other	90.6	56.3	37.5	31.3	25.0	68.8	62.5	28.1	6.3	18.8	0.0	32
Total	83.6	70.5	56.2	52.5	42.2	72.4	72.4	36.8	15.5	9.8	0.5	562
ERS	72.3	54.5	45.0	36.4	26.8	70.0	59.5	26.8	3.2	14.5	2.3	220

1/ Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

Table 5--Main commodity interests.

Type of organization	Feed grains	Food grains	Fats & oils	Fruit	Vegetables	Dairy	Meat animals	Poultry	Tobacco	Cotton	Wool	Forest products	Other	No commodity interest	No response	Total
	Percent ^{1/}															Number
State Extension Service	52.2	35.1	26.1	18.7	17.2	29.1	49.3	24.6	3.7	10.4	10.4	6.7	11.2	23.1	3.0	134
Media	81.1	55.4	40.5	17.6	25.7	56.8	77.0	35.1	9.5	25.7	24.3	24.3	10.8	9.5	0.0	74
Financial Institutions	88.6	57.1	47.1	28.6	25.7	45.7	78.6	35.7	15.7	35.7	18.6	17.1	11.4	5.7	0.0	70
Food Association, Individual Firms	66.7	50.7	68.0	28.0	22.7	42.7	53.3	48.0	1.3	13.3	2.7	9.3	16.0	4.0	0.0	75
Suppliers	87.0	57.4	64.8	14.8	16.7	50.0	64.8	44.4	20.4	37.0	5.6	11.1	5.6	3.7	1.9	54
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	24.3	24.3	29.7	2.7	5.4	27.0	24.3	21.6	10.8	18.9	5.4	0.0	5.4	2.7	0.0	37
University, College	54.2	37.5	12.5	16.7	20.8	54.2	58.3	33.3	12.5	12.5	4.2	20.8	16.7	8.3	0.0	24
USDA, Non-ERS	45.8	25.0	50.0	8.3	8.3	20.8	33.3	20.8	4.2	20.8	16.7	8.3	8.3	8.3	0.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	81.3	62.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	56.3	62.5	50.0	0.0	43.8	12.5	25.0	25.0	6.3	0.0	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	81.8	63.6	77.3	31.8	22.7	22.7	77.3	68.2	13.6	59.1	27.3	40.9	9.1	0.0	0.0	22
Other	43.8	46.9	34.4	21.9	18.8	34.4	40.6	31.3	43.8	18.8	3.1	9.4	9.4	6.3	0.0	32
Total	65.3	46.3	43.4	20.3	19.9	40.0	57.7	35.2	10.7	23.0	11.7	13.3	11.2	9.8	0.9	562
ERS	45.5	35.0	24.1	14.1	16.4	17.3	34.1	18.2	10.9	19.1	6.8	2.7	15.0	31.8	1.4	220

^{1/} Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

Table 6--Most recent year respondent attended a National Agricultural Outlook Conference.

Type of organization	Never attended	Prior to 1972	February 1972	February 1973	December 1973	Total	
						Percent	Number
State Extension Service	4.5	9.0	9.7	20.1	56.7	100.0	134
Media	66.2	13.5	0.0	2.7	17.6	100.0	74
Financial Institutions	38.6	4.3	1.4	8.6	47.1	100.0	70
Food Associations, Individual Firms	25.3	12.0	4.0	8.0	50.7	100.0	75
Suppliers	38.9	3.7	0.0	7.4	50.0	100.0	54
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	35.1	0.0	2.7	8.1	54.1	100.0	37
University, College	33.3	12.5	16.7	8.3	29.2	100.0	24
USDA, Non-ERS	4.2	0.0	0.0	12.5	83.3	100.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	25.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	68.8	100.0	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	18.2	9.1	9.1	13.6	50.0	100.0	22
Other	46.9	0.0	3.1	12.5	37.5	100.0	32
Total	29.7	7.5	4.4	10.7	47.7	100.0	562
ERS	31.4	12.7	2.3	10.9	42.7	100.0	220

Table 7--(If attended prior to 1972 or never attended) Principal reason for not attending recently or never attending.

Type of organization	Never heard of conference	Write for information	Have other sources	Not worth time	Time conflict	Budget problems	Other reasons	No response	Total	
									Percent	Number
State Extension Service	0.0	27.8	5.6	0.0	16.7	16.7	33.3	0.0	100.0	18
Media	1.7	44.1	6.8	3.4	13.6	10.2	16.9	3.4	100.0	59
Financial Institutions	30.0	20.0	6.7	0.0	3.3	3.3	36.7	0.0	100.0	30
Food Association, Individual Firms	7.1	35.7	14.3	0.0	21.4	0.0	21.4	0.0	100.0	28
Suppliers	34.8	34.8	4.3	4.3	8.7	4.3	8.7	0.0	100.0	23
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	23.1	23.1	7.7	0.0	7.7	0.0	38.5	0.0	100.0	13
University, College	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	18.2	27.3	18.2	0.0	100.0	11
USDA, Non-ERS	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	1
Other Federal, State, Local Government	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	40.0	20.0	0.0	100.0	5
Commodity or Stock Broker	16.7	16.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	33.3	100.0	6
Other	40.0	26.7	13.3	0.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	6.7	100.0	15
Total	15.3	31.1	7.7	1.9	12.0	7.7	22.0	2.4	100.0	209
ERS	2.1	51.5	6.2	2.1	0.0	7.2	27.8	0.0	100.0	97

Table 8a--(If attended conference in February 1972 or February 1973, but not December 1973) Attendance at specific session.

Session	Attended	Did not attend	Did not answer	Total	
				Percent	Number
General economic outlook	84.7	9.4	5.9	100.0	85
Agricultural outlook	88.2	5.9	5.9	100.0	85
Outlook for U.S. trade	75.2	12.9	11.8	100.0	85
Farm programs and policy	75.4	15.3	9.4	100.0	85
Commodity outlook	76.5	14.1	9.4	100.0	85
Family living outlook	37.6	41.2	21.2	100.0	85

Table 8a--ERS.

Session	Attended	Did not attend	Did not answer	Total	
				Percent	Number
General economic outlook	89.6	6.9	3.4	100.0	29
Agricultural outlook	86.2	6.9	6.9	100.0	29
Outlook for U.S. trade	58.6	27.6	13.8	100.0	29
Farm programs and policy	65.4	24.1	10.3	100.0	29
Commodity outlook	48.2	31.0	20.7	100.0	29
Family living outlook	17.2	58.6	24.1	100.0	29

Table 8b--(If attended conference in February 1972 or February 1973, but not December 1973) Reaction to specific sessions.

Session	Attended specific session and thought it was:				
	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Total	
				Percent	Number
General economic outlook	44.4	47.2	8.3	100.0	72
Agricultural outlook	42.6	48.0	9.3	100.0	75
Outlook for U.S. trade	43.7	43.7	12.5	100.0	64
Farm programs and policy	42.1	48.4	9.3	100.0	64
Commodity outlook	33.8	50.7	15.4	100.0	65
Family living outlook	40.6	46.8	12.5	100.0	32

Table 8b--ERS.

Session	Attended specific session and thought it was:				
	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Total	
				Percent	Number
General economic outlook	30.8	65.4	3.8	100.0	26
Agricultural outlook	24.0	72.0	4.0	100.0	25
Outlook for U.S. trade	17.6	82.4	0.0	100.0	17
Farm programs and policy	15.8	78.9	5.3	100.0	19
Commodity outlook	28.6	64.3	7.1	100.0	14
Family living outlook	20.0	80.0	0.0	100.0	5

Table 9a--ERS (If attended conference in December 1973) Attendance at specific sessions.

Session	Attended	Did not attend	Did not answer	Total	
				Percent	Number
General Economic Outlook	78.3	15.7	6.0	100.0	268
Agricultural Outlook	79.1	13.8	7.1	100.0	268
U.S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974	78.7	12.7	8.6	100.0	268
World Agricultural Situation	77.2	14.6	8.2	100.0	268
Food Security	58.9	28.4	12.7	100.0	268
Outlook for Farming Inputs	70.5	18.7	10.8	100.0	268
What Consumers want from Agriculture	50.4	36.9	12.7	100.0	268
Livestock and Feed	67.5	22.8	9.7	100.0	268
Dairy	41.1	47.0	11.9	100.0	268
Oilseeds, Fats and Oils	56.7	31.0	12.3	100.0	268
Food Grains	55.9	29.9	14.2	100.0	268
Cotton and Other Fibers	25.0	58.6	16.4	100.0	268
Fruits and Vegetables	12.7	72.4	14.9	100.0	268
Forest Products	6.4	76.1	17.5	100.0	268
Sugar	11.6	72.4	16.0	100.0	268
Tobacco	6.7	73.9	19.4	100.0	268
Farm Credit	20.2	62.3	17.5	100.0	268
The Outlook for Family Living	17.9	66.4	15.7	100.0	268
Meeting Family Concerns	14.6	67.5	17.9	100.0	268

Table 9a--(If attended conference in December 1973) Attendance at specific sessions.

Session	Attended	Did not attend	Did not answer	Total	
				Percent	Number
General Economic Outlook	69.1	22.3	8.5	100.0	94
Agricultural Outlook	46.8	40.4	12.8	100.0	94
U.S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974	40.5	48.9	10.6	100.0	94
World Agricultural Situation	37.3	51.1	11.7	100.0	94
Food Security	25.5	58.5	16.0	100.0	94
Outlook for Farming Inputs	53.3	36.2	10.6	100.0	94
What Consumers want from Agriculture	27.6	56.4	16.0	100.0	94
Livestock and Feed	37.2	50.0	12.8	100.0	94
Dairy	17.0	69.1	13.8	100.0	94
Oilseeds, Fats and Oils	27.7	57.4	14.9	100.0	94
Food Grains	28.7	57.4	13.8	100.0	94
Cotton and Other Fibers	13.9	68.1	18.1	100.0	94
Fruits and Vegetables	10.7	72.3	17.0	100.0	94
Forest Products	2.2	78.7	19.1	100.0	94
Sugar	7.5	74.5	18.1	100.0	94
Tobacco	7.4	76.6	16.0	100.0	94
Farm Credit	8.6	68.1	23.4	100.0	94
The Outlook for Family Living	13.8	68.1	18.1	100.0	94
Meeting Family Concerns	9.5	71.3	19.1	100.0	94

Table 9b--(If attended conference in December 1973) Reaction to specific sessions.

Session	Attended specific session and thought it was:				
	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Total	
				Percent	Number
General Economic Outlook	50.9	44.8	4.3	100.0	210
Agricultural Outlook 1974	34.4	59.9	5.7	100.0	212
U.S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974	37.4	58.8	3.8	100.0	211
World Agricultural Situation	29.5	64.2	6.3	100.0	207
Food Security	13.9	62.7	23.4	100.0	158
Outlook for Farming Inputs	37.0	58.8	4.2	100.0	189
What Consumers Want from Agriculture	9.6	58.5	31.9	100.0	135
Livestock and Feed	36.4	59.7	3.9	100.0	181
Dairy	35.4	63.6	1.0	100.0	110
Oilseeds, Fats and Oils	41.4	56.6	2.0	100.0	152
Food Grains	37.3	59.4	3.3	100.0	150
Cotton and Other Fibers	29.8	65.7	4.5	100.0	67
Fruits and Vegetables	23.5	70.6	5.9	100.0	34
Forest Products	5.9	82.4	11.7	100.0	17
Sugar	12.9	77.4	9.7	100.0	31
Tobacco	11.1	88.9	0.0	100.0	18
Farm Credit	33.3	61.1	5.6	100.0	54
The Outlook for Family Living	29.2	60.4	10.4	100.0	48
Meeting Family Concerns	28.2	59.0	12.8	100.0	39

Table 9b--ERS (If attended session in December 1973), reaction to specific session.

Session	Attended specific session and thought it was:				
	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	Total	
				Percent	Number
General Economic Outlook	47.7	41.5	10.8	100.0	65
Agricultural Outlook 1974	25.0	72.7	2.3	100.0	44
U.S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974	23.7	65.8	10.5	100.0	38
World Agricultural Situation	17.2	71.4	11.4	100.0	35
Food Security	0.0	79.2	20.8	100.0	24
Outlook for Farming Inputs	30.0	62.0	8.0	100.0	50
What Consumers Want from Agriculture	26.9	46.2	26.9	100.0	26
Livestock and Feed	31.4	60.0	8.6	100.0	35
Dairy	31.3	62.5	6.2	100.0	16
Oilseeds, Fats and Oils	38.5	57.7	3.8	100.0	26
Food Grains	37.0	51.9	11.1	100.0	27
Cotton and Other Fibers	23.1	69.2	7.7	100.0	13
Fruits and Vegetables	40.0	50.0	10.0	100.0	10
Forest Products	0.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	2
Sugar	42.9	42.9	14.2	100.0	7
Tobacco	28.6	42.8	28.6	100.0	7
Farm Credit	50.0	37.5	12.5	100.0	8
The Outlook for Family Living	30.8	53.8	15.4	100.0	13
Meeting Family Concerns	22.2	55.6	22.2	100.0	9

Table 10--(If attended February 1972, February 1973 or December 1973) Objectives in attending the National Agricultural Outlook Conference.

Type of Organization	Objectives in attending--			No response	Total
	General statement (to get overall view, update info., etc.)	Personal contacts, meet participants	Other		
	-----Percent ^{1/} -----				Number
State Extension Service	96.6	11.2	5.2	0.0	116
Media	86.7	6.7	13.3	0.0	15
Financial Institutions	90.0	17.5	2.5	7.5	40
Food Associations, Individual Firms	83.0	34.0	4.3	8.5	47
Suppliers	96.8	19.4	3.2	0.0	31
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	100.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	24
University, College	84.6	30.8	7.7	0.0	13
USDA, Non-ERS	82.6	17.4	8.7	4.3	23
Other Federal, State Local Government	100.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	11
Commodity or Stock Broker	93.8	31.2	0.0	0.0	16
Other	100.0	35.3	0.0	0.0	17
Total	92.6	18.7	4.2	2.3	353
ERS	92.7	12.2	1.6	0.0	123

^{1/} Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

Table 11--(If attended February 1972, February 1973, or December 1973) Whether conference(s) met respondents objective(s).

Type of organization	Objectives met--				Total	
	Completely	Adequately	Inadequately	No response	Percent	Number
State Extension Service	11.2	73.3	14.7	0.9	100.0	116
Media	13.3	73.3	13.3	0.0	100.0	15
Financial Institutions	17.5	60.0	17.5	5.0	100.0	40
Food Association, Individual Firms	12.8	76.6	6.4	4.3	100.0	47
Suppliers	22.6	74.2	3.2	0.0	100.0	31
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	8.3	87.5	4.2	0.0	100.0	24
University, College	7.7	53.8	38.5	0.0	100.0	13
USDA, Non-ERS	8.7	73.9	17.4	0.0	100.0	23
Other Federal, State, Local Government	18.2	81.8	0.0	0.0	100.0	11
Commodity or Stock Broker	12.5	87.5	0.0	0.0	100.0	16
Other	11.8	88.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	17
Total	13.0	74.2	11.3	1.4	100.0	353
ERS	8.1	78.9	10.6	2.4	100.0	123

Table 12-13 1/--(If attended February 1972, February 1973, or December 1973) How could this information be made more useful to you? Do you want more in your area of interest?

	All Organizations	ERS
<u>Functional Areas</u>	26.5	36.3
Misc., more on policy, general economic situation, income, finance, production	7.8	6.3
Marketing	1.3	2.5
National resources	1.3	1.3
International	5.8	10.0
Rural Development	.6	11.3
Family Living	5.9	1.3
Consumer	3.9	3.7
<u>Commodities</u>	8.4	1.3
Specified and unspecified	8.4	1.3
<u>Speakers and Sessions</u>	48.5	47.5
More detail, more regional info., deeper analysis, present alternatives, more candid, speaker should add to printed version	15.9	8.7
Methodological detail, info. about models used	2.6	2.5
Contribution by non-Government, business input	2.9	2.5
Better, more charts	2.9	5.0
Discussion, Q&A, personal contacts, informal sessions	24.3	28.7
<u>Mechanical Problems</u>	12.3	10.0
Papers available in advance of session, at conference, enough copies	7.1	8.7
Provide summaries, press releases	4.2	1.3
Advance notice of date of conference	1.0	0.0
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	4.2	5.0
Total responses	100.0	100.0
Percent		
Number	309	80

1/ Because respondents did not clearly separate their narrative answers to questions 12 and 13, they were treated as one question and hand tallied.

Table 13--(If attended February 1972, February 1973, or December 1973) Preference for more sessions or more time in area of interest.

Type of organization	Prefer more	Adequate as is	No response	Total	
				Percent	Number
State Extension Service	34.5	60.3	5.2	100.0	116
Media	40.0	53.3	6.7	100.0	15
Financial Institutions	27.5	60.0	12.5	100.0	40
Food Associations, Individual Firms	42.6	44.7	12.8	100.0	47
Suppliers	41.9	48.4	9.7	100.0	31
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	50.0	45.8	4.2	100.0	24
University, College	23.1	69.2	7.7	100.0	13
USDA, Non-ERS	34.8	52.2	13.0	100.0	23
Other Federal, State, Local Government	36.4	54.5	9.1	100.0	11
Commodity or Stock Broker	37.5	50.0	12.5	100.0	16
Other	29.4	64.7	5.9	100.0	17
Total	36.3	55.2	8.5	100.0	353
ERS	30.9	57.7	11.4	100.0	123

Table 14--(If attended February 1972, February 1973 or December 1973) How respondents use the information and materials made available at the conference.

Type of organization	General information	Conferences, meetings	Research	Radio, TV	News-letter	News-paper	Trade or Farm Journal	Popular magazine	Other	No response	Total
	-----Percent 1/-----										Number
State Extension Service	74.1	78.4	14.7	62.1	67.2	43.1	11.2	2.6	7.8	0.0	116
Media	20.0	6.7	6.7	6.7	20.0	20.0	60.0	0.0	6.7	0.0	15
Financial Institutions	77.5	60.0	62.5	0.0	22.5	5.0	5.0	0.0	15.0	5.0	40
Food Associations, Individual Firms	87.2	44.7	40.4	0.0	19.1	0.0	2.1	0.0	8.5	0.0	47
Suppliers	90.3	64.5	67.7	0.0	6.5	0.0	3.2	0.0	9.7	0.0	31
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	91.7	62.5	29.2	16.7	54.2	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	24
University, College	69.2	61.5	69.2	0.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	38.5	0.0	13
USDA, Non-ERS	91.3	43.5	21.7	13.0	17.4	0.0	4.3	0.0	13.0	0.0	23
Other Federal, State, Local Government	100.0	45.5	36.4	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	0.0	9.1	0.0	11
Commodity or Stock Broker	87.5	43.8	87.5	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	16
Other	64.7	58.8	58.8	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	0.0	17.6	0.0	17
Total	78.5	60.1	37.4	23.2	35.4	16.1	8.5	0.8	10.2	0.6	353
ERS	83.7	26.8	48.0	0.8	1.6	0.0	1.6	0.0	9.8	5.7	123

1/ Percents add to more than 100.0 because respondents gave more than one answer.

Table 15--(If attended February 1972, February 1973, or December 1973) Number of people reached with information and materials made available at the conference.

Type of organization	Responded to question		Those who responded reported reaching	
	Percent	Number	Total number of people	Average number of people
State Extension Service	76	88	11,953,700	135,837
Media	87	13	14,832,000	1,140,923
Financial Institutions	75	30	3,551,808	118,394
Food Associations, Individual Firms	62	29	1,035,364	35,702
Suppliers	71	22	226,418	10,292
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	92	22	1,516,900	68,950
University, College	85	11	114,750	10,432
USDA, Non-ERS	57	13	32,096	2,469
Other Federal, State, Local Government	73	8	34,520	4,315
Commodity or Stock Broker	63	10	47,900	4,790
Other	82	14	1,303,138	93,081
Total	74	260	34,648,594	133,264
ERS	33	40	173,801	4,345

Table 16--(If ever attended a conference) Reaction to special theme.

Type of organization	Discontinue theme	Continue theme	No response	Total	
				Percent	Number
State Extension Service	25.0	61.7	13.3	100.0	128
Media	36.0	52.0	12.0	100.0	25
Financial Institutions	27.9	48.8	23.3	100.0	43
Food Association, Individual Firms	33.9	48.2	17.9	100.0	56
Suppliers	36.4	48.5	15.2	100.0	33
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations:	37.5	50.0	12.5	100.0	24
University, College	43.8	37.5	18.8	100.0	16
USDA, Non-ERS	43.5	43.5	13.0	100.0	23
Other Federal, State, Local Government	16.7	50.0	33.3	100.0	12
Commodity or Stock Broker	50.0	33.3	16.7	100.0	18
Other	11.8	76.5	11.8	100.0	17
Total	31.1	52.9	15.9	100.0	395
ERS	29.1	58.3	12.6	100.0	151

Table 17a--Satisfaction with usual period of forecasts.

Type of organization	Prefer--			Total		Those who prefer a change suggest--			Total	
	Usual	Change	No response	Percent	Number	3 to 5 years	Over 5 years	Other 1/	Percent	Number
State Extension Service	70.9	20.9	8.2	100.0	134	25.0	25.0	50.0	100.0	28
Media	73.0	9.4	17.6	100.0	74	0.0	42.8	57.2	100.0	7
Financial Institutions	57.1	17.1	25.7	100.0	70	25.0	50.0	25.0	100.0	12
Food Association, Individual Firms	66.7	21.3	12.0	100.0	75	12.5	75.0	12.5	100.0	16
Suppliers	37.0	48.1	14.8	100.0	54	19.2	46.2	34.6	100.0	26
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	67.6	16.2	16.2	100.0	37	66.7	0.0	33.3	100.0	6
University, College	66.7	8.3	25.0	100.0	24	50.0	0.0	50.0	100.0	2
USDA, Non-ERS	66.7	29.1	4.2	100.0	24	28.6	28.6	42.8	100.0	7
Other Federal, State, Local Government	62.5	18.8	18.8	100.0	16	0.0	66.6	33.3	100.0	3
Commodity or Stock Broker	86.4	9.1	4.5	100.0	22	50.0	0.0	50.0	100.0	2
Other	50.0	18.7	31.3	100.0	32	33.3	0.0	66.7	100.0	6
Total	64.2	20.5	15.3	100.0	562	23.5	38.3	38.2	100.0	115
ERS	61.4	24.5	14.1	100.0	220	11.1	44.4	44.4	100.0	54

1/ See table 17b for hand tally of narrative answers.

Table 17b--(If not satisfied with usual period of forecasts) Time period suggested 1/.

Those who prefer a change suggest--	All Organizations	ERS
Shorter (days, monthly, quarterly)	17.0	5.0
Shorter and longer (all combinations)	14.9	15.0
3 to 5 years (in all combinations)	19.1	10.0
Over 5 years (5 to 10, 10 to 15, 10 to 20, 50 and over)	25.5	40.0
Longer (time unspecified)	23.4	30.0
Total responses	100.0	100.0
Percent	47	20
Number		

1/ Because some respondents wrote long narrative explanations in questions 12, 13 and 17, these time periods were hand tallied.

Table 18-1--Suggestions for future conferences, first choice.

Type of organization	Continue conference during--				Eliminate conference and--			Another idea	No response or choice unknown 2/	Total	
	November	December	February	Another time	Set up 1/ regional conference	Distribute info.	Distribute regular reports			Percent	Number
State Extension Service	45.5	9.0	13.4	10.4	11.9	6.0	0.7	0.0	3.0	100.0	134
Media	29.7	10.8	9.5	6.8	12.2	1.4	0.0	0.0	29.7	100.0	74
Financial Institutions	27.1	11.4	30.0	0.0	4.3	2.9	1.4	1.4	21.4	100.0	70
Food Association, Individual Firms	30.7	10.7	28.0	6.7	2.7	4.0	2.7	1.3	13.3	100.0	75
Suppliers	44.4	5.6	18.5	5.6	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.0	20.4	100.0	54
Farm Organization, Commodity Associations	35.1	10.8	21.6	2.7	8.1	2.7	2.7	0.0	16.2	100.0	37
University, College	20.8	8.3	37.5	4.2	4.2	0.0	4.2	0.0	20.8	100.0	24
USDA, Non-ERS	37.5	25.0	16.7	8.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2	100.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	25.0	37.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	100.0	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	40.9	4.5	31.8	4.5	4.5	4.5	0.0	0.0	9.1	100.0	22
Other	31.3	3.1	21.9	6.3	3.1	0.0	3.1	0.0	31.3	100.0	32
Total	35.4	10.5	20.3	6.0	6.9	3.0	1.4	0.4	16.0	100.0	562
ERS	30.5	8.2	23.6	3.6	5.9	3.2	2.7	0.0	20.0	100.0	220

1/ See Table 19 for additional comments on regional conferences.

2/ Respondents who checked items for continue and for items under eliminate and who did not indicate first or second choice were considered "unknown," and included with those who did not answer question 18.

Table 18-2--Suggestions for future conferences, second choice.

Type of organization	Continue conference during--				Eliminate conference and--			Another idea	No response 1/	Total	
	November	December	February	Another time	Set up regional conference	Distribute conference info.	Distribute regular reports			Percent	Number
State Extension Service	3.0	0.7	5.2	5.2	9.7	4.5	0.0	3.0	67.2	100.0	134
Media	1.4	4.1	0.0	2.7	5.4	8.1	2.7	0.0	75.7	100.0	74
Financial Institutions	4.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	7.1	0.0	2.9	1.4	80.0	100.0	70
Food Associations, Individual Firms	1.3	1.3	1.3	6.7	0.0	5.3	2.7	1.3	78.7	100.0	75
Suppliers	1.9	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	1.9	0.0	83.3	100.0	54
Farm Organizations, Commodity Associations	0.0	2.7	5.4	5.4	8.1	10.8	0.0	0.0	67.6	100.0	37
University, College	4.2	4.2	4.2	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	100.0	24
USDA, Non-ERS	0.0	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	8.3	0.0	0.0	83.3	100.0	24
Other Federal, State, Local Government	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.8	100.0	16
Commodity or Stock Broker	9.1	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.1	0.0	72.7	100.0	22
Other	6.3	3.1	0.0	3.1	0.0	3.1	3.1	0.0	78.1	100.0	32
Total	2.7	2.0	2.7	3.4	4.6	4.6	1.8	1.1	76.0	100.0	562
ERS	2.3	1.4	1.4	0.5	6.4	3.2	2.7	0.0	80.0	100.0	220

1/ "No response" in this table is primarily a tabulation of those who did not report a second choice.

Table 19--Other Comments 1/ (All Organizations)

<u>Speakers and Participants</u>	28
New faces, more input from business, industry, other non-government	8
More divergent views	4
More "early warning" signals	1
More on "systems"	1
More insights	1
Add assumptions, alternatives, methodology	5
Better, more timely data	1
More on issues	1
Avoid political	2
More candid	3
More specific	1
<u>More or better sessions</u>	15
Consumer)	
Home Economics)	
Family Problems)	
Credit)	
Livestock/Grain)	7
Processed Foods)	
Metals (Copper, silver))	
Evaluate accuracy of forecasts	2
Better, more informed speakers	4
Don't read speeches, improved presentation	2
<u>Conference</u>	31
Add regional conferences, have regional conferences alternate years, have meetings for special groups or topics	10
Have frequent meetings on less than a regional base	1
Add regional data to reports	1
More small group discussions, Q&A, two-way communication	19
<u>Forecasts</u>	9
Time of forecasts	
Shorter	3
3-5 years	1
Over 5 years	1
Long range	4

1/ Written at end of questionnaire.

Continued

Table 19--Other Comments (All Organizations)--Continued

<u>Time of Conference</u>		8
Earlier		1
November/December		2
December/January		1
January/February		3
February/March		1
<u>Approval</u>		18
Good conference, "keep it going," liked everything, informative		18
<u>Housekeeping Problems</u>		28
Session conflicts		2
Make material available at conference, before meetings		13
Better advance notice of conference		4
Like to be invited		1
PA system		6
Better physical arrangements, coat racks, coffee, less crowded room		2
<u>Other</u>		22
(Includes evidence that people do not know they can have their name put on a mailing list, that charts and visuals can be purchased, and that those who do not attend can write for the "package" of materials made available at the conference)		
		145
		116
	Total number responses	
	People responding	

Table 19a--Other Comments (ERS)

<u>Speakers and Participants</u>		9
More input from industry, other agencies	4	
More divergent views	1	
Present alternatives	1	
Avoid sales pitch (industry)	1	
More candid, less political	2	
<u>More or Better Sessions</u>		14
Rural America	3	
Foreign	2	
Energy	1	
Population	1	
Water and Land Resources	1	
New Foods	1	
Tropical Products	1	
Horticulture	1	
Food is a bargain	1	
More informed speakers	2	
<u>Conference</u>		13
Add Regional Conference	10	
More, improved discussion	3	
<u>Forecasts</u>		1
Long range	1	
<u>Time of Conference</u>		1
Earlier	1	
<u>Approval</u>		1
<u>Housekeeping Problems</u>		
Make material available at conference	4	
Better advance notice of conference	3	
Better physical arrangements	2	
Better visuals	1	
<u>Other</u>		16
		<hr/>
	Responses	65
Total Number	People Responding	38

Verbatim Comments--All Organizations

"Well-informed persons from the business area made excellent contributions at the December conference. Continue to use such people. Facts are needed, and consensus opinions are helpful, but identification and understanding of the uncertainties are also important, and might well receive more attention."

"State Departments of Agriculture are increasingly called upon to enforce federally-initiated programs. The role of state departments of agriculture in national regulatory and service programs, including export marketing, should be considered as a likely subject for consideration of annual outlook conferences."

"Greater interest in having state department of agriculture participation in the Outlook Conference should be demonstrated by USDA. Invitations for participation are of low visibility so far as state departments of agriculture are concerned. USDA seems to be more concerned with inviting its own people to the conferences than in making certain that state departments of agriculture be included as valuable participants."

"Nancy Steorts talked about a need for better understanding between USDA and consumers. Involve some consumer groups in next year's Conference."

"Session to appraise U.S. competitive advantage in various export commodity areas--outlook elsewhere in world--particularly Russia and China (People's Republic)."

"I would consider it a big improvement in the effectiveness of the Conference delivery system if each speaker would talk from notes rather than read a prepared talk. We can read. Also, for discussion purposes, speakers could raise 1 or 2 pertinent questions which they consider important but have been unable to answer in preparing their written talks. Explain why."

"I would suggest that all economists in the Extension Service should attend every year for the whole Conference."

"May I suggest better physical and administrative arrangements. This year seating was very crowded; there was no convenient place to leave hats, coats, and rubbers; publications ran out or were unavailable; there were long lines to get into the various cafeterias. Possibly the Conference could be held in the Department of State, which has better facilities."

"Whatever you do, please keep the Conference going and get the texts to us who cannot attend. If you are interested in attracting more farm editors on daily newspapers, try an invitation letter so it can be used to convince the managing editor. The overall content through manuscripts has been used widely."

"Make a comparative summary each year of how well your "outlook" stood up during the year for which the projection was made."

"Have outlook briefings at meetings of special groups. I have in mind the Newspaper Farm Editors of America that meet in Washington each April. I am a member of this group. While the Outlook Conference may serve others, I cannot justify the time and money to make the trip to Washington solely for this. I could justify regional meetings, i.e., a regional Wheat Meeting was held at Oklahoma City last summer. Very beneficial."

"Leave more time between sessions for discussions, meetings, etc. Reduce length of presentations and reading of lengthy papers. More questions can be handled if question forms are supplied and Moderator feeds questions to appropriate individuals on panel. Current method is too slow and does not generate questions."

"Would like to have a written copy of all presentations--not just a few."

"Get some of the speakers away from reading their reports and have them develop the assumptions behind the forecasts."

"Agriculture needs to talk to business, commerce and the consumer, instead of just to itself. The Conference reports contain a wealth of information that needs to be digested by persons far removed from direct involvement in agriculture. If the reports are not widely distributed to general circulation magazines and newspapers, including the weekly press, I feel that big dividends could come from broader distribution. Knowing that newspapers and periodicals with limited staffs will not dig out stories from lengthy reports, perhaps the general circulation targets should be reached through meaty digests of Conference reports."

"Have complete packets of Outlook material assembled for state specialists. Develop better PA system. Have less panel members. Encourage more short reports from state specialists. Provide coat racks. Make coffee available near Conference room. Clear everyone off stage except speaker--or panel. Schedule informal evening sessions. Provide sign-up for USDA reports such as Feed Situation, Grain Market News, etc. Hold sessions on "how" estimates are made for crops, and livestock."

"With respect to the recent Conference: Special commendation for

Best method of presentation	--	Bob Miller, Dairy
Most dramatic peek into future	--	Gerald Decker, Energy
Most useful discussant	--	Sheldon Stahl, General Economy
Best technical package	--	Joseph Sullivan, Fertilizer"

"I would suggest that you use the past years' registrants as a mailing list to distribute specific plans and programs for the up-coming Conference. I am assuming that you will be sending a summary of the Conference to all participants."

"Yes--Receive an invitation to attend."

Verbatim Comments--ERS

"ERS sub-conferences. If non-Washington ERS people are to be brought in for lower level conferences, such conferences might be timed to tie in with the Outlook Conference. This way, they could reap the benefits of two conferences."

"Annual Outlook as now carried out should be supplemented by occasional Long Term Outlook Conferences."

"I think the comments of the extension people were quite interesting and informative. I think perhaps more use could be made of them in informing Washington-based personnel of the attitudes and problems of the farmers themselves."

"It might be useful if there were time for an exchange of information on what kinds of work was being done by people in the field and people in D.C. I was aware of surprise on the part of both types of employees when they discovered that particular types of projects were being carried on."

"It would be helpful if the Conference schedule of events was distributed to ERS personnel before rather than after the Conference."

"Emphasize USDA is not for farmer only but for all people: producer, processor, consumer. Each fits into picture, each has role and responsibility."

Outlook '74

National
Agricultural
Outlook
Conference

December
17, 18 and 19

U.S.
Department of
Agriculture



**52nd National Agricultural Outlook
Conference
December 17, 18, 19, 1973
Washington, D. C.**

The conference is being held 2 months earlier than last year's conference to give farmers and farm suppliers more time to plan for 1974 food production. "We want to give farmers all the help we can with up-to-date outlook information and last-minute reports on the probable availability of fuel, pesticides, fertilizer, farm equipment, and related supplies."—Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz

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Monday A.M. December 17

General Session

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium
USDA South Building

Don Paarlberg

Director, Agricultural Economics, USDA, Chairperson

- 8:45 Opening of Conference
- 9:00 Speech by Secretary Earl L. Butz
- 9:30 Fuel and the Needs of Agriculture - William E. Simon, Deputy Secretary, Treasury Department
- 10:00 General Economic Outlook - Gary Seevers, Member, Council of Economic Advisers
- 10:30 General Economic Outlook as Seen From the Wharton School - George R. Green, Executive Director, Wharton Econometric Forecasting Associates, Inc.
- 11:00 Recess
- 11:15 Panel Discussion
Quentin M. West, Administrator, ERS - Moderator
Gary Seevers and George R. Green
Dawson Ahalt, Cost of Living Council
Sheldon Stahl, Vice President and Senior Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
- 11:45 Adjourn for Lunch

Monday P.M. December 17

General Session

Quentin M. West

Administrator, ERS, USDA, Chairperson

- 1:00 World Agricultural Situation - Carroll G. Brunthaver, Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Commodity Programs
- 1:30 World Food Security - Eric M. Ojala, Assistant Director General, Economic and Social Policy Department, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
- 2:00 Discussion
- 2:30 U.S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974 - David Hume, Administrator, FAS
- 3:00 Recess
- 3:30 Agricultural Outlook 1974 - C. Kyle Randall, Outlook and Situation Officer, ERS
- 4:00 Discussion
- 4:30 Adjournment

Tuesday A.M. December 18 **General Session**

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Kenneth R. Farrell

Deputy Administrator, ERS, Chairperson

- 8:45 Outlook for Farming Inputs - John Berry, ERS, Moderator
Energy - Gerald L. Decker, Manager, Utilities Division, Dow Chemical Co.
Fertilizer - Joseph P. Sullivan, President, Estech, Inc.
Transportation - Jim Lauth, AMS
Technology and the Use of Inputs - Harold Owens, Extension Service
- 10:05 Recess
- 10:20 Implications for Farm Output, John Berry, ERS
- 10:40 Discussion
- 11:00 What Consumers Want from Agriculture - Nancy H. Steorts, Special assistant to the Secretary for Consumer Affairs
- 11:30 Discussion
- 11:45 Adjourn for Lunch

Tuesday P.M. December 18 **Commodity Session**

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Livestock and Feed

Henry Larzelere

Extension Economist, Michigan State University, Chairperson

- 1:15 Meat Animals Outlook - John Larsen, ERS
- 1:45 Poultry Outlook - William Cathcart, ERS
- 2:05 Feed Outlook - James Naive, ERS
- 2:30 Panel Discussion and Comments From the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Donald Novotny, FAS
Orville Overboe, ASCS
James Hartman, FAS
Will Walther, SRS
Leonard Condon, AMS
O. C. Hester, AMS
- 3:00 Intermission

Tuesday P.M. December 18 **Commodity Session**

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Dairy

Roger H. Wilkowske

Extension Economist, ES, USDA, Chairperson

- 3:30 Dairy Outlook - Robert R. Miller, ERS, USDA
- 3:50 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Sidney Cohen, ASCS
Robert March, AMS
William Doering, FAS
- 4:45 Adjournment

FAMILY LIVING SESSIONS

Rm. 218, Adm. Bldg., USDA

Tuesday P.M. December 18 **The Outlook For Family Living**

*Opal H. Mann, Assistant Administrator
Home Economics, ES, Chairperson*

- 1:30 Housing: Prices and Availability - Arnold Diamond, Director, Office of Economic Analysis, HUD
- 2:00 Energy Outlook and Implications for the Family - Marilyn Doss Ruffin, Family Economist, ARS
- 2:45 1973 Yearbook of Agriculture Presentation, Patio, Adm. Bldg.
- 3:30 Clothing and Textiles: Supplies, Prices, and Outlook for 1974 - Virginia Britton, Family Economist, ARS
- 4:00 Food: Prices, Consumption and Expenditures - Larry Summers, Economist, ERS

FAMILY LIVING SESSIONS

Rm. 3840, South Bldg, USDA

Wednesday A.M. December 19 Meeting Family Concerns

Frances M. Magrabi, Consumer and Food Economics Institute, ARS, Chairperson

- 8:45 Coordination of Consumer Affairs in the USDA - Nancy Steorts, Special Assistant to the Secretary for Consumer Affairs
- 9:30 Food Safety, Food Education, Food Economics: Panel
Nutrition education: Mary Hill, ARS
Freezer food concerns: Josephine Lawyer, ES
Food additives and fortification: Corbin Miles, FDA, HEW
USDA Meat and Poultry inspection: Current Interest in product labeling: Harry Mussman, APHIS
Proper handling and storage of food: Lewis Norwood and Evelyn Spindler, ES

Wednesday P.M. December 19 Meeting Family Concerns

Robert L. Rizek, Consumer and Food Economics Institute, ARS, Chairperson

- 1:30 Clothing, Energy, and Housing: Panel
Sanitation in home laundering: B. Kopacz, Southern Regional Research Center, ARS
Energy conservation in and around the home: Glenda Pifer, ES, USDA
Housing: Solving the technical problems in energy conservation: William Cox, ES

Wednesday A.M. December 19 Commodity Session

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Oilseeds, Fats and Oils

*Joseph R. Corley
Extension Economist, ES, USDA, Chairperson*

- 8:45 Outlook - George Kromer, ERS
9:15 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Stan Mehr, FAS
Malcolm Maclay, ASCS
10:00 Intermission

Food Grains

*Sharon Hoobler
Extension Economist, ES, USDA, Chairperson*

- 10:15 Wheat Outlook - Francis Gorme, ERS
10:35 Rice Outlook - James Naive, ERS
10:50 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Charles Pence, EMS
Donald Novotny, FAS
Paul King, ASCS
12:00 Adjourn for Lunch

Wednesday P.M. December 19 Commodity Session

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Cotton and Other Fibers

*Jasper Jernigan
Extension Cotton Specialist,
ES, USDA, Chairperson*

- 1:15 Outlook - Russell Barlowe, ERS
1:35 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
William Shotner, ASCS
H. Reiter Webb, FAS
Geron Rathell, EMS
Alvin Deck, AMS
Donald May, American Textile Manufacturers Institute

Wednesday P.M. December 19 Commodity Session

Fruits and Vegetables
Rm. 654, GHI Building*

*John T. Porté -
Extension Economist, ES, USDA, Chairperson*

- 1:15 Fruits and Tree Nuts - Andrew Duymovic, ERS
- 1:35 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Gilbert Sindelar, FAS
C. M. Brader, AMS
Don Fedewa, SRS
- 1:55 Vegetables and Potatoes - Charles Porter, ERS
- 2:15 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
Gilbert Sindelar, FAS
C. M. Brader, AMS
Don Fedewa, SRS
- 2:45 Demonstration of a produce information service

Wednesday P.M. December 19 Commodity Session

Tobacco
Rm. 3056, South Bldg.

William Lanier, ASCS, Chairperson

- 3:00 Outlook - Robert H. Miller, ERS
- 3:15 Marketing Developments, William Lanier, ASCS
- 3:30 Foreign Trade Developments, Hugh Kiger, FAS
- 3:40 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor
Speakers and Discussants
E. Leon Moore, ARS
Leonard Ford, AMS
Joseph Todd, ASCS

Forest Products
Rm. 4306, South Bldg.

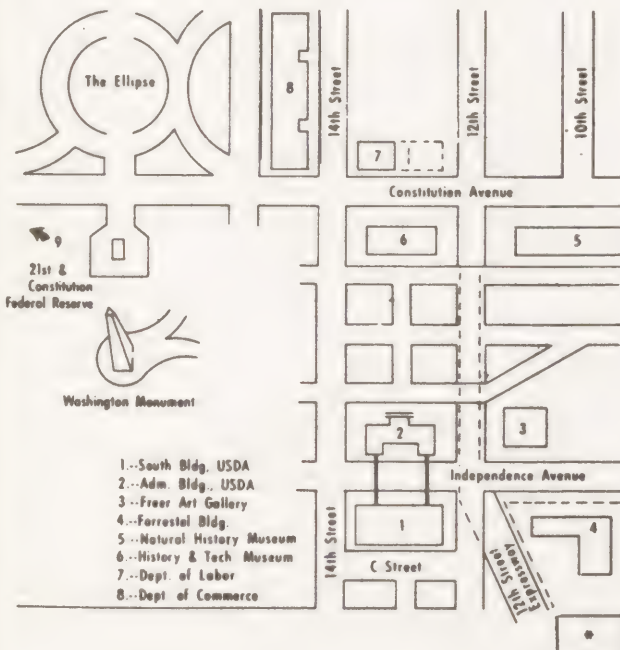
*Don E. Nelson
Extension Economist, ES, USDA, Chairperson*

- 2:15 Outlook - Robert B. Phelps, FS
- 2:35 Informal Discussion

Sugar
Rm. 2096, South Bldg.

*Arthur Calcagnini
Director, ASCS Sugar Div., Chairperson*

- 3:00 Domestic Outlook - Robert Stansbury, ASCS
- 3:20 International Outlook - Les Hurt, FAS
- 3:30 Other topics - Fred Gray and Bruce Walter, ERS
- 3:45 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor



Wednesday P.M. December 19

Credit Session

Thomas Jefferson Memorial Auditorium

Farm Credit

Buel Lanpher

Extension Economist, ES, Chairperson

2:45 Outlook - Philip T. Allen, ERS, USDA

3:05 Panel Discussion and Comments from the floor

Speakers and Discussants

L. A. Dickerson, FHA

Robert L. Walton, Farmers and Merchants
Bank, Bushnell, Illinois, and Chairman,
Agricultural Bankers Division, American
Bankers Association

Gene L. Swackhammer, Director of Re-
search, FCA

Emanuel Melichar, Economist, Board of
Governors of the Federal Reserve System

Myron M. Sigaty, Second Vice President,
The Travelers Insurance Company,
Hartford, Conn.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A SHOWING OF *"THE PULL OF THE MARKETPLACE,"* A NEW USDA SLIDE PRESENTATION THAT:

- Shows the explosion of economic growth around the world
- Explains the rising world-wide demand for more and better food
- Shows what's happening in the major U.S. farm export markets
- Demonstrates the value of agricultural exports
- Raises the export challenges for U.S. Agriculture in the future

"THE PULL OF THE MARKETPLACE," runs 24 minutes and can be seen in Room 1605-S (first floor, sixth wing; just around the corner from Jefferson Auditorium).

Prepared by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and Foreign Agricultural Service.

Dec. 17, Monday 10:30 and 3:30

Dec. 18, Tuesday 10:00 and 3:00

Dec. 19, Wednesday 10:00 and 2:30



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
IS REVIEWING ITS SERVICES, ONE BY ONE, TO FIND
OUT HOW WELL THEY SERVE INDIVIDUAL TARGET GROUPS

Every year the Department of Agriculture holds a National Agricultural Outlook Conference which includes sessions on the outlook for the general economy, agriculture, foreign trade, farm programs and policy, and a series of reviews of the outlook and situation for individual commodities. The conference presents a roundup of the present situation and an outlook for one or two years in the future. Speakers include outstanding specialists, both government and nongovernment.

The only way for us to find out how well we are serving people interested in agricultural economic information is to ask them what they think -- so we are sending this questionnaire to a wide range of people in the agri-business community, financial institutions, agricultural staff both state and national, the media, farm organizations and other public interest groups.

At this time we would like to know whether you attend our yearly conference.

If you do not attend, what are your interests, if any in economic information and what kind of organization you represent.

If you do attend, what comments do you have about the conference format and content, and what kind of organization do you represent.

Results of this survey will contain summaries for different interest groups but will not identify individual respondents or their organizations. The "sample control record number" on the last page of the questionnaire will be used only to check-out our responses.

Because we want to consider your ideas when we plan next year's conference, and this planning starts fairly soon, we would appreciate your returning this questionnaire as soon as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Don Paarlberg".

DON PAARLBERG
Director, Agricultural Economics

USDA SURVEY - NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK CONFERENCE

1. What type of organization do you represent? (Select one)

- 01 Financial Institution (Fed'l Reserve, World Bk., FCA, Private Bk., Ins. Co., Etc.)
- 02 Commodity or Stock Brokerage Firm
- 03 Association of food retailers, wholesalers, processors, etc.
- 04 Individual Food Firm (retail chain, distributors, manufacturers, etc.)
- 05 Commodity Association (crops, livestock, fibers, etc.)
- 06 Suppliers (machinery, chemicals, etc. and farm services)
- 07 Newspaper (daily, weekly, or press service)
- 08 Newsletter
- 09 Magazine
- 10 Radio, TV
- 11 Farm Organization
- 12 State Extension Service
- 13 USDA (indicate which Service) _____
- 15 Other, including self employed (please specify) _____

2. What is your principal area of responsibility in your organization? (Select one)

- 01 Farm Management
- 02 Marketing &/or Sales
- 03 Rural Development
- 04 Resource Economics
- 05 Credit & Finance
- 06 Farm Policy
- 07 Outlook
- 08 Home Economics
- 09 Other (please specify) _____

3. What is the scope of your work?

- International
- National
- Regional
- State
- Local

4. What kinds of agricultural information are you interested in?

- Supply & Demand, including expts. & impts.
- Farm Product Prices
- Farm Input Prices
- Farm Income
- Financial Status of Farms
- Government Programs
- General Economy
- Food Suppliers & Retail Prices
- Home Economics
- Other, please specify _____

5. What are your main commodity interests?

- No Commodity Interest
- Feed grains
- Food grains
- Fats & Oils
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Dairy
- Meat Animals
- Poultry
- Tobacco
- Cotton
- Wool
- Forest Products
- Other (specify) _____

6. What was the most recent year you attended all or part of the National Agricultural Outlook Conference sponsored by the USDA?

- 74[] Dec. 1973 (Skip to Question 9) 02[] Prior to 1972. Specify last year
 73[] Feb. 1973 (Skip to Question 8) attended _____ (Continue to Question 7)
 72[] Feb. 1972 (Skip to Question 8) 01[] Never attended (Continue with Question 7)

If attended PRIOR to 1972 or NEVER ATTENDED

7. Please tell us the principal reason why? (Select one)

- 01[] Never heard of the Conference
 02[] Not interested in or have no need for information provided by the Conference
 03[] Write for or received copies of the "papers" in which I am interested
 04[] Have other adequate sources for similar information
 05[] Not worth time and effort to attend
 06[] Other reasons (please explain) _____

(Skip to Question 16)

If attended Conference in Feb. 1972 or Feb. 1973, BUT NOT DEC. 1973

8. From the standpoint of usefulness to you, what did you think of the content of the sessions? (IF ATTENDED BOTH YEARS, ANSWER IN TERMS OF FEB. 1973.)

Session	Attended and thought it -				If poor, please explain
	Did not attend	Excellent	Adequate	Poor	
General Economic Outlook	1	2	3	4	
Agricultural Outlook	1	2	3	4	
Outlook for U.S. Trade	1	2	3	4	
Farm Programs and Policy	1	2	3	4	
Commodity Outlook	1	2	3	4	
Family Living Outlook	1	2	3	4	

____ (Skip to Question 10)

If attended Conference in Dec. 1973

9. From the standpoint of usefulness to you, what did you think of the content of the sessions?

Session	Did you think it-				If poor, please explain
	1 : not : attend	2 : Excel- : lent	3 : Ade- : quate	4 : Poor	
General Economic Outlook	1	2	3	4	
Agricultural Outlook 1974	1	2	3	4	
U. S. Agricultural Trade Outlook 1974	1	2	3	4	
World Agricultural Situation	1	2	3	4	
Food Security	1	2	3	4	
Outlook for Farming Inputs	1	2	3	4	
What Consumers Want From Agriculture	1	2	3	4	
Livestock and Feed	1	2	3	4	
Dairy	1	2	3	4	
Oilseeds, Fats and Oils	1	2	3	4	
Food Grains	1	2	3	4	
Cotton and Other Fibers	1	2	3	4	
Fruits and Vegetables	1	2	3	4	
Forest Products	1	2	3	4	
Sugar	1	2	3	4	
Tobacco	1	2	3	4	
Farm Credit	1	2	3	4	
The Outlook for Family Living	1	2	3	4	
Meeting Family Concerns	1	2	3	4	

(Continue with Question 10)

If attended Feb. 1972, Feb. 1973 or Dec. 1973

10. In general, what was your objective(s) in attending the National Agricultural Outlook Conference? _____

11. On the whole did the conference(s) meet your objectives?
1 Completely
2 Adequately
3 Inadequately (please explain) _____

12. Conference sessions tend to cover production, marketing, costs and trade. How could this information be made more useful to you?

13. As far as you are concerned, would you like more sessions (or time) in your area(s) of interest?
1 No
2 Yes (please explain) _____

14. Please tell us how you use this information and printed materials you get at the National Agricultural Outlook Conference.

<input type="checkbox"/> General economic intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers
<input type="checkbox"/> Conferences, meetings, discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade or Farm Journal
<input type="checkbox"/> Research	<input type="checkbox"/> Popular Magazine
<input type="checkbox"/> Radio - TV	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter	_____

15. What is your estimate of the total number of people you reach in these ways in about a year? _____

If ever attended conference

16. In the last three years the conference has had a special theme such as "Future Structure of Agricultural Production and Marketing" and "Foreign Trade and the U.S. Farmer."
Should we continue having a special theme?
1 No (Go to Question 17)
2 Yes What theme(s) would you suggest for future conferences?

17. The forecasts at the National Agricultural Outlook Conference are usually limited to one or two years.

In general does that time period serve your needs?

- 1 No What time period would you suggest? _____
2 Yes (Go to Question 18)

18. In the past few years, except for changes in the conference date, there have not been any major modifications in format.

In the future, we would like to consider several options. Tell us which you would recommend? (If you choose more than one, please rank them #1, #2, etc.)

Continue the yearly National Agricultural Outlook Conference--modified in accordance with comments made in the preceding pages and hold it during

- 02 February
11 November
13 Another time (specify month) _____

Eliminate the yearly National Agricultural Outlook Conference and

- 14 set up regional conferences
15 distribute package of information as is usually prepared for conference attendees
16 just continue to make regular outlook and situation reports available

I have another idea

- 17 Please describe:

We appreciate your help in evaluating the National Outlook Conference. Please use the space below and the back page for any other comments you'd like to make about the National Agricultural Outlook Conference and any ideas you have for future conferences.

Sample control
record number:

Additional Comments:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

January 10, 1974

A REMINDER

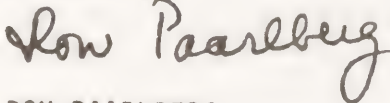
SUBJECT: USDA Survey - National Agricultural Outlook Conference

A few weeks ago we sent you a questionnaire asking what kind of work you do and your thoughts about the National Agricultural Outlook Conference.

Many have already returned their questionnaires and we appreciate that quick response. If you have not sent yours in as yet we encourage you to do so promptly. Without your reactions your area of interest will not be adequately represented in the final results.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



DON PAARLBERG
Director
Agricultural Economics

Response Rates by Type of Organization

The 945 names included in the original mailing were coded to identify type of organization and an identifying number was written on the questionnaire. These code numbers were tallied as the returns came in.

An additional 240 names of those who registered at the Conference (who were not on the original list) were added to the mailing but because of the time element they were not given an identification code.

The percentage rates of return as they appear below provide a reliable estimate, but because the last group of Conference names was not identified for type of organization and the 21 groups below were merged into 11 for final tabulation, these numbers and group names do not exactly match those which appear as totals on the tables.

Type of Organization	Number		Percent
	Mailed	Returned ^{1/}	Returned
Banks	92	32	35
Federal Reserve Banks	22	11	50
Insurance Companies	8	6	75
State Extension Service	176	120	68
Federal Extension Service	10	2	20
Press	47	16	34
Farm Editors	111	36	32
Radio, TV	48	18	37
State Communicators	11	5	45
Coop Editors	17	5	29
Unions	8	3	37
Food Associations	18	10	55
Input Suppliers	59	33	56
Food Firms	101	50	49
Commodity Associations	67	28	42
Welfare and Civil Rights Organizations	23	1	4
Commodity or Stock Brokers	47	16	34
1890 Colleges	17	8	47
Advisory and Consulting Firms	6	2	33
Cooperatives	2	0	0
USDA (Non-ERS)	55	19	34
Additional names from conference registration (not classified)	240	141	59
Total	1,185	566	48
Economic Research Service	235	220	92

^{1/} An additional 28 were returned by the Post Office because of faulty addresses.

Conference Registration

In the past there have been no estimates of the total number of people who attended the National Agricultural Outlook Conferences because not all attendees register, Washington based ERS are specifically told not to register, the press have a separate room for their use and are not asked to sign in, and there is no single session that attracts all who do attend some part of the conference.

A record has been kept of those who do register:

November 1971 . . .	273
February 1972 . . .	300
February 1973 . . .	365
December 1973 . . .	388

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A record has been kept of those who do register:

November 1971	573
February 1972	309
February 1973	365
December 1973	385

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