Survey Team Activities and Preliminary Results

August 25, 2011

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Outline

• Overview of activities
• Conceptual model
• Survey instrument
• Data collection
• Initial results: data description
• Discussion
Activities since July 2010

• Developed survey instrument
• Hired Research Associate (Russell Graves)
• Acquired population data from private vendor (Farm Market iD)
• Pilot tested and administered survey
• Contracted for data entry (FHSU)
• Cleaned and began to analyze data
Conceptual model

- Markets
- Policies
- Climate
- Incentives, regulations
- Prices
- Weather
- Geophysical factors
- Environmental quality
- Resource consumption
- Socio-cultural interactions
- Individual, farm characteristics
- Motives, attitudes
Survey instrument

1. Goals in farming
2. Operated cropland
3. Planting decisions
4. Biofuel crops
5. Irrigation
6. Conservation
7. Risk
8. Policy views
9. Farm operation
10. Demographics
Response rate strategies

• Distinctive logo
• Survey editing
• Graphic design
• Cover letter
• Reminders
  – Postcard
  – Second mailing
  – Phone calls

February 24, 2011

Dear Kansas Agricultural Producer,

These days are both an exciting and uncertain time for U.S. agriculture. Changes to energy and agricultural policy — some enacted, others proposed — are already affecting markets and input costs for common commodities and may even create new markets for once little-known crops like switchgrass. And, as always, farmers face changing and unpredictable price and weather conditions that make crop production a risky business.

How will all these changes shape the cropping decisions of farmers like you? This is one of the key questions in a major agricultural land-use study at Kansas State University and the University of Kansas. Through support from the National Science Foundation and the Kansas Transportation Research Institute, researchers from the two universities are working together to learn more about the decisions that Kansas farmers make.

You have been selected to participate in this study by completing the enclosed land-use survey. The survey asks you about your motivations in farming, the crops you grow in 2010, the risks you face in farming, the way that weather conditions affect your cropping choices, and your views on a number of agricultural policies.

We request that you complete this survey, which will take about 25 minutes of your time, and mail it back using the enclosed prepaid envelope no later than Tuesday, March 8, 2011. Your survey responses are very important. Based on statewide responses to this survey, we will be able to inform policy makers, the energy industry, and the public about the impacts of changing conditions on farmers in Kansas.

Your responses and commentary will be kept anonymous and results will only be released in summarized form in a way that protects your privacy. We know that your time is valuable and we greatly appreciate your help. If you have any questions about the survey or how the responses will be handled, please contact Dr. Russell Graves, Research Associate, Department of Agricultural Economics, Kansas State University, at 785-532-1957 or at rgraves@ksu.edu.

For more information about the joint land-use study at Kansas State University and the University of Kansas, please visit the following website:
http://www.kpksu.edu/CEP/E110112.html

Sincerely yours,

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Data collection and handling

• Focus groups held 1/4/11 in Manhattan and 1/6/11 in Hays; significant refinements to survey instrument made

• 100 pilot surveys mailed on 1/25/11; 19 returned and additional refinements made

• 10,000 surveys mailed on 2/28/11

• 10,000 reminder postcards mailed on 3/4/11

• 8,293 follow-up surveys mailed to non-respondents on 3/21/11
• Reminder telephone calls made by Docking Institute at Fort Hays University in late March/early April 2011

• A total of 2,314 completed surveys received; data entry performed from April through May 2011 by the Docking Institute

• Data entry for additional late and misentered surveys, as well as data cleanup, done by survey team at Kansas State University from May through August 2011

• Overall, 273 surveys were returned as undeliverable and 411 were either refused, deemed non-applicable, or had been sent to a retired or deceased farmer

• Thus, the overall response rate was 24.8% (2314/9316)
Map of all 10,000 Kansas crop producers who received the survey
Map of all 2,314 Kansas crop producers who completed the survey
Survey Data: Descriptive Statistics

- please refer to the handout
Questions?