

ARGENTINA - Agricultural Census 1988 - Explanatory Notes

Historical outline: Eleven agricultural censuses have been conducted in Argentina: in 1888, 1895, 1908, 1914, 1937, 1947, 1952, 1960, 1970, 1974, and 1988.

Organization: The Argentine Republic is organized as a federal nation consisting of 23 autonomous provinces subdivided, in turn, into 502 departments and a federal district comprising the capital city of Buenos Aires. The same structure is reported in the field of national and provincial statistics: the National Institute for Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) is the federal agency responsible for data collection and for the planning and coordination of national statistical surveys, while each province operates its own statistical bureau (DPE) as a provincial government agency. The INDEC and every DPE are formally linked into the National Statistical System (SEN) and their activities are closely coordinated. As a result, the 1988 census of agriculture was carried out according to an organizational pattern of centralized norms and decentralized operations. The field work was carried out by 24 coordinators at provincial level, 42 subcoordinators, 158 chief supervisors, 888 supervisors and 4136 enumerators.

Enumeration period: The census enumeration was conducted during September - November 1988 and lasted for about forty days.

Reference date: Data on livestock numbers, buildings and similar structures, number of machinery and other inventory items, refer to 30 June 1988. All other data refer to the agricultural year 1 July 1987 - 30 June 1988.

Definition: The adopted statistical unit was the Agricultural Holding (EAP), defined as a market-oriented production unit over 500 square meters in area, made up of one or more related parcels and having a holder, who assumes the entrepreneurial risk, responsible for its management; the same labour force, and most of the durable equipment and machinery, should be commonly employed in all the EAP's parcels.

Coverage: The census covered the entire country, with the exclusion of urban areas and desert zones unfit to agricultural use.

Frame: The lack of a complete and updated directory of statistical units was compensated by the development of an adequate cartography, together with the use of cadastral registers indicating land ownership. The census universe was subdivided into territorial units, called census segments, whose boundaries were defined through mapping and through the analysis of cadastral subdivisions.

Methods: Complete enumeration of all holdings was carried out based on direct face-to-face interviews; each enumerator was assigned a census segment, defined in order to permit an average of 5 interviews per day, with a total per enumerator of 160 interviews in a 40-day period. Four different types of questionnaires were adopted in relation to the different characteristics of the territory. In marginal or difficult access zones, it was considered less expensive to call agricultural holders to selected enumeration points for interview, instead of the enumerators travelling to the holdings.

Data source: Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos (INDEC) - Censo Nacional Agropecuario 1988 - Resultados Generales.

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