

## Introduction

According to the current international methodology\* and the Law of the Republic of Armenia “On Agricultural Census” (hereinafter referred to as the Law), the agricultural census is the statistical function of collecting, processing and disseminating comprehensive data on the structure of agriculture.

Agricultural Census was carried out in the Republic of Armenia on October 11-31, 2014. The Agricultural Census was conducted in Armenia for the first time, and, in compliance with the international rules and standards, it should be conducted once in every ten years.

In order to test the methodological and organizational principles of the Agricultural Census, programs and processes of machine processing of materials, a pilot agricultural census was carried out on November 10-30, 2013.

The agency responsible for preparation, conduct of the Agricultural Census and development of materials is the state authorized statistical body, namely the National Statistical Service of the Republic of Armenia (NSS RA).

According to the requirement specified in the Article 4 of the Law, in order to facilitate the preparation and conduct of the Agricultural Census national, Yerevan and marz committees for preparation and conduct of the Agricultural Census were established by the decree of the Government of RA No. 402-N dated 25.04.2013. In addition, by the decision of the State Statistical Council of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter referred to as the SSC RA) No. 02-N dated May 3, 2013 an operational unit on Agricultural Census with the status of a department was created in May 2013.

The purposes of conducting the Agricultural Census in the Republic of Armenia are as follows:

- 1) Information about the structure of the agriculture – agricultural lands, livestock, agricultural machinery, agricultural facilities, the available human and material resources and their usage, on national level, marz and community levels,***
- 2) Establish an integral survey system of statistical data on agriculture,***
- 3) Create a statistical register of rural households,***
- 4) Ensure comparability with the international statistical data.***

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\*) FAO statistical development series 11, A system of integrated agricultural censuses and surveys, volume 1, «World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2010» Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome, 2005, 160 pages.

Implementation of the Agricultural Census in the Republic of Armenia is significant also because the data collected during the census will be used to create systems of monitoring indices: *poverty monitoring, food security monitoring, agricultural programming and relevant policy development, maintenance of gender-based statistics, improvement of the quality of the current statistics, delivery of more comprehensive information to consumers, etc.*

In addition to the above-said, the statistical data collected through the Agricultural Census will allow to do the following: *improve the current statistics in the sphere of agriculture, establish a complete system on statistical information about the agriculture, create statistical registers for entities engaged in agriculture, develop the sampling tools for statistics and ensure their compliance with the current international standards and criteria, identify the trends of change of the agricultural infrastructures, specify a more detailed composition and structure of the agriculture as an entrepreneurship (economic type of activities).*

The Agricultural Census was carried out throughout the whole territory of the Republic of Armenia, in all communities.

The methodology for organizing and carrying out the Agricultural Census in the Republic of Armenia, as well as the Agricultural Census question guide and the questionnaires have been developed according to the guidelines of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with support of USDA expert Michael Steiner, Resident Twinning Adviser Thomas Bie of the EU TWINNING project “Strengthening of the National Statistical System of Armenia”, Rolf Selander, senior adviser of the Statistics Sweden, Kristian Hulsager, head of the Agricultural Statistics Department of Denmark Statistics, Karsten Larsen, Director, Statistics Division, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Pietro Gennari, head of the Agricultural Statistics Division of Denmark Statistics, Giorgi Kvinikadze, statistician at the headquarters of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, experts Oleg Kara and Vasile Petre, as well as the staff of RA Ministry of Agriculture.

The units of the RA AC are as follows: *individual (rural) households, individual farms of urban population engaged in agriculture, individual farms of members of horticultural associations, communities, all legal entities engaged in agriculture, private entrepreneurs, collective farms.*

Data collection was carried out by the following methods:

- individual (rural) households: universal survey, questionnaires filled in by the enumerators (“1-AC QUESTIONNAIRE OF AGRICULTURAL CENSUS”),
- individual farms of urban population engaged in agriculture and members of horticultural associations: sample survey, questionnaires filled in by the enumerators (“1-AC QUESTIONNAIRE OF AGRICULTURAL CENSUS”),
- communities: universal survey, questionnaires filled in independently (“2-AC QUESTIONNAIRE OF AGRICULTURAL CENSUS IN RURAL AND URBAN COMMUNITIES”),
- all legal entities engaged in agriculture, private entrepreneurs, and collective farms (penitentiary institutions, military units, social care institutions for the elderly and disabled, educational institutions, scientific experimental units): universal, questionnaires filled in independently (“3-AC QUESTIONNAIRE OF AGRICULTURAL CENSUS FOR LEGAL ENTITIES AND PRIVATE ENTREPRENEURS”).

All methodological and organizational documents related to the organization and implementation of the Agricultural Census are published at the NSS RA website: <http://armstat.am/am/?nid=455> .