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Description of document: Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Independent Evaluations of the Agricultural Marketing Research and Promotion Boards 2021

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August 30, 2021

Delivered via Electronic Mail

Re: Final Response to FOIA Request 2021-AMS-00228-F

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Your request was received on August 2, 2021 and sought access to: A copy of each listing of independent evaluations of the research and promotion commodity boards.

The AMS FOIA staff works with subject matter experts across the Agency to locate responsive documents. For this request, a search was conducted within the following AMS programs and offices which have oversight of the 22 research and promotion boards:

- Specialty Crops Program, specifically the Promotions and Economic Division, which has oversight of the Hass Avocado Board, U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, Mushroom Council, National Mango Board, and the National Watermelon Promotion Board, American Pecan Promotion Board, Christmas Tree Promotion Board, National Honey Board, National Peanut Board, National Potato Promotion Board, Paper & Packaging Board, Popcorn Board, and the Softwood Lumber Board.
- Livestock and Poultry Program, specifically the Research and Promotion Division, which has oversight of the American Egg Board, American Lamb Board, Cattlemen's Beef Board, National Pork Board, United Soybean Board and the United Sorghum Checkoff Program.
- Cotton and Tobacco Program, which has oversight of the Cotton Board.
- Dairy Program, specifically the Promotion, Research, and Planning Division, which has oversight of the Fluid Milk Processors Promotion Program and the National Dairy Promotion & Research Board (Dairy Checkoff Program).

AMS' search began on August 4, 2021. As explained further below, your request is granted in full.

Each research and promotion board are required to have an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the generic commodity promotion programs and other programs conducted by the board at least every 5 years unless otherwise provided by law. See 7 U.S.C. §7401(c). For more information, please refer to AMS' Guidelines for Oversight of Research and Promotion Programs at pages 15-16:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/RPGUIDELINES092015.pdf>

In response to your FOIA Request, please see the following links to the websites of the research and promotion boards where the reports are publicly available:

Hass Avocado Board: <https://hassavocadoboard.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/hab-latest-independent-economic-evaluation-2018.pdf>

U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council: <https://ushbc.blueberry.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/03/CornellStudyReportFINAL.pdf>

Mushroom Council: <https://www.mushroomcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Econometric-Evaluation.pdf>

National Mango Board: <https://www.mango.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Estimating-the-Impact-of-the-NMBs-Programs-on-the-U-S-Demand-for-Mangos-Full-Report-ENG.pdf>

National Watermelon Promotion Board: <https://www.watermelon.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Econometric-Evaluation.pdf>

American Pecan Promotion Board: Board has not yet been seated.

Christmas Tree Promotion Board: <https://www.christmastreepromotionboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CTPB-Independent-Evaluation-2020.pdf>

National Honey Board: <https://honey.com/images/files/Honey-Report-2018-12-20-2018.pdf>

National Peanut Board: https://www.nationalpeanutboard.org/content/1126/files/NPB_Return_On_Investment_2019.pdf

National Potato Promotion Board: <https://potatoesusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/2017-Potatoes-USA-Evaluation.pdf>

Paper & Packaging Board: <https://www.paperandpackaging.org/sites/industry/files/2019-10/P%20BPB%202015-2018%20Econometric%20Report.pdf>

Popcorn Board: https://www.popcorn.org/Portals/0/PB%202013-2017%20Evaluation_1.pdf

Softwood Lumber Board: <https://softwoodlumberboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/5268-SLB-2020-Cal-Yr-Indep-Evaluation-Report-3.15.21-FINAL.pdf>

American Egg Board: <https://incredibleegg.wpengine.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/AEBROI-Summarybrochure.pdf>

American Lamb Board: <https://www.lambresourcecenter.com/roi-reports>

Cattlemen's Beef Board: <https://www.beefboard.org/return-on-investment/>

National Pork Board: <https://www.porkcdn.com/sites/porkorg/library/2018/01/return-on-investment-report-2017.pdf>

The Soybean Board: <https://www.unitedsoybean.org/media-center/issue-briefs/checkoff-return-on-investment/>

The Sorghum Board:
https://www.sorghumcheckoff.com/assets/media/pdfs/2018_ProducerReturnOnInvestments.pdf

The Cotton Board:
https://www.cottonboard.org/sites/454/uploaded/files/Cotton_Board_5Yr_Economic_Evaluation_2021_Capps_FINAL_6182021.pdf

Fluid Milk Processors Promotion Program:
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/2018%20Dairy%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>

The National Dairy Promotion & Research Board (Dairy Checkoff Program):
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/2018%20Dairy%20Report%20to%20Congress.pdf>

If you have any questions about the way this request was handled, please contact Brooke Geller, Government Information Specialist, at (202) 302-6958 or brooke.geller@usda.gov. If you have general questions or concerns regarding AMS' FOIA procedures or regulations, please contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Bill Allen, at (202) 720-3785 or via email at ams.foia@usda.gov.

Thank you for your interest in AMS programs and policies.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Brook

Mark R. Brook
FOIA Officer
Agricultural Marketing Service