

Making Sense of Data via the Web - A Case Study Using Agricultural Data

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This demonstration illustrates results of research conducted at the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to determine ways to disseminate data on the World Wide Web so that data customers can freely and effectively view and analyze NASS data using any web browser connected to the Internet. Specifically, we demonstrate web-based solutions that enable viewing, analyzing, and dynamically interacting with summary data at the state and county level. The demonstration presents important concepts and technologies that we implement on the NASS web site to enhance the ability to find data of interest, and see structure and pattern inherent in the data. We display historical data through the use of animated maps and charts as well as *Asparklines@* as developed by Edward Tufte and described as small graphic charts that can be inserted within text on a page. We also display current data using dynamic maps and charts, and making use of *Asmall multiples@*, galleries, and multivariate column views; all meant to give more context and power to the data customer. While this demonstration focuses on Agricultural Data, the principles and methods can be applied to other sources of survey and census data.