

Use of Global Positioning Receivers at the National Agricultural Statistics Service

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The National Agricultural Statistics Service has explored using handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers in data collection.

One way that NASS has utilized GPS receivers is to obtain latitude/longitude coordinates for a particular agricultural field of interest instead of the labor intensive method of using county/highway maps and an in-house, developed mapping software.

A second use of GPS receivers is to record a particular point in a field where a field enumerator is required to return each month to record crop counts. In the past, the enumerator would tie red ribbon around stakes to mark the area of interest. However, sometimes the ribbon comes loose, stakes are knocked down or the enumerator simply is unable to find the designated area.

The enumerator would then use the GPS receiver to assist in finding the location. The demonstration will show how both utilizations of the GPS receivers saved staff time and improved data quality. A short review of cost and benefits will also be presented.