

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Floriculture Production Data to Return!

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Good news out of the USDA: They're reinstating the annual Floriculture Crops Summary, which was cancelled after the 2015 survey due to budget issues. But thanks to pressure from SAF and other industry groups, NASS (the National Agricultural Statistics Service) will bring the survey back in 2019 to survey the industry about the 2018 production year.

There will be some changes: The old Floriculture Crops Summary surveyed 15 states; the new one will survey 17. Added are Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Virginia and Wisconsin. Dropped from the survey are Hawaii, Maryland and South Carolina. Why these particular states? For better geographic representation, says Dr. Marvin Miller of Ball Horticultural Company. The old survey had just four states west of the Mississippi and none in New England.

And Alaska? Well, we're told that was a political inclusion, pure and simple, as one of the sponsors of the bill funding the survey is Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski. Admittedly, Alaska has a burgeoning cut peony business (which would explain the addition of that crop, as noted below).

Interestingly, Arizona and Hawaii have reached an agreement with NASS to do surveys for which NASS would be reimbursed by the state. They'll use different questionnaires and a different timing, but presumably the data will be similar, giving us results for 19 states, not 17.

Other changes include:

- Seed geraniums have been dropped from the annual bedding plants category
- Perennials added are Daylily, Ferns (Hardy/Garden) and Peony
- Cut flowers added are Dahlia, Peony and Sunflower
- Cut flowers dropped are Alstroemeria, Carnation, Delphinium and Lisianthus
- Potted Flowering Plants dropped are Azalea and African Violet

Surveys should have hit your mailbox in December. **GT**