

ERS Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Beginning U.S. Farms and Ranches: Characteristics Associated with Business Survival

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB) EIB

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information
USDA [] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: In 2017, there were more than 900,000 beginning farmers and ranchers (BFRs) – those with no more than 10 years of farming experience – farming 193 million acres and contributing \$88 billion in agricultural sales in 2017. BFRs are typically younger than their more established counterparts and, on average, have less net worth for securing farm business loans. BFRs also tend to operate smaller farms, which may place them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis larger, established operations due to economies of scale. Because they have less farming experience, some new farmers may lack the skills required to efficiently manage and operate their farm businesses. Several USDA programs direct resources toward meeting the distinct needs of BFRs, including Farm Service Agency targeted loan programs and priority financial assistance for BFRs from Rural Development. The Risk Management Agency offers benefits to BFRs who buy crop insurance, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service provides advanced payments to BFRs to adopt conservation practices through its Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The National Institute for Food and Agriculture also supports a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program that provides training, education, outreach, and technical assistance to BFRs. Information about the characteristics of farms operated by different types of BFRs may be useful in targeting and tailoring program resources for these farmers. Information about which factors are correlated with farm business survival could inform the design and function of programs and policies that support BFRs.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers

[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 09/29/2023 Completed: 8/14/2024

Number of Reviewers: [] 3 or fewer [X] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: Agency Designated Outside Organization

Opportunities for Public Comment? Yes No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? Yes No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? Yes No