

NAFB National Producer Media-Use Wave Study Executive Summary

The NAFB National Producer Media-Use Wave Study[®] provides a comprehensive and impartial analysis of the media usage of Class 1A (\$100,000+ in annual agricultural sales) producers across the United States. Agricultural media and marketing professionals will find the survey results a useful tool in the planning and implementation of their media and marketing programs. Complete results of the survey are available in digital format on the report CD.

About the Wave Study

The Wave Study was conducted by Ag Media Research and sponsored by the National Association of Farm Broadcasting. A total 2,412 telephone interviews were completed in three waves of approximately 800 interviews each. Waves were conducted in February, April, and September of 2008 to account for the seasonal nature of agriculture.

Each respondent was qualified as a Class 1A farm decision-maker from a sample provided by an independent third-party source. The interviewing method was unaided recall when identifying publications and television programs -- the respondent is not aided, prompted or assisted in answering. The number of completed interviews for each state was determined by the number of Class 1A farmers in each state according to the U.S. Census of Agriculture.

Details are available for all the major agricultural media, and there are 28 different geographic and commodity breakouts available for a variety of media and marketing applications.

A Changed Farm Media Landscape

A similar agricultural media wave study was sponsored by NAFB in 1998-99. An explosion of digital information and media consolidation has occurred in the 10 years since the initial wave study was conducted. Those changes are reflected in the findings of the study just completing in November 2008.

While digital media has been added to the options available for farmers to receive information, the specific information of most value to farmers has changed very little in 10 years. Topping the list for farmers is markets and weather information, followed by agricultural news and local area events.

Internet

Access to the Internet has increased greatly on farms in the last 10 years. However, not all farmers are connected. A significant 31 percent of Class 1A farmers report no Internet connection. And only 44.2 percent have a high-speed connection. For those with a connection, the choices among Web sites are so abundant that fragmentation is occurring – there are no individual sites or categories that clearly are “most valuable” to farmers. Age and income are important factors in Internet connectivity and use. Producers age 49 and under, and with higher levels of income, are heavier users of the Internet.



Print

Readership of farm magazines remains strong; however, recall is concentrated in only a few publications. The top four major farm publication entities were recalled collectively by 78.3 percent of respondents, with 54.4 percent mentioning the most frequently named publication.

Overall, there was little difference in the time spent reading publications now compared to 10 years earlier. However, there are significant differences in seasonal reading time, with the highest in winter and dropping off sharply in fall. Another trend observed is younger producers age 49 and under spend substantially less time reading farm publications than do those age 50 and up. There is also a variance in the number of publications producers recall reading in a month. The average is 3.4 publications read per month; however, light readers (those recalling two or fewer publications) account for 36 percent of those reading publications.

Radio

A new generation of younger farmers is taking farm broadcast to a higher level as they rely more on their farm broadcaster for specific information, and spend more time listening to farm radio than older producers. Younger farmers in all seasons tend to spend less time with magazines and with television than older farmers, and more time with radio.

Younger farmers, those with higher incomes, and corn and soybean producers are more likely to listen to a specific farm broadcaster, as are those producers with a high-speed Internet connection. Weather, markets, and farm news are the primary radio program interests of farmers.

Television

Satellite television is now in 61.6 percent of the Class 1A farm homes in America, increasing from 47.3 percent a decade earlier. Only 11.5 percent receive their signal by cable, but 29.2 percent are still using a standard antenna. For those farmers who watch television for farm information, their use patterns have changed dramatically. A specific channel for farm news is watched by 88.9 percent of those farmers watching television for farm information.

Most-used Daily Sources

Radio and television continue to be the leading media channels for daily agribusiness information. Radio is the leading source, at 62 percent, closely followed by television (59.7 percent, and Web site (45.0 percent). Cell phone text messages are used by 14.2 percent.

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