

## Centralizing the Mink Survey at the National Agricultural Statistics Service

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### **Abstract:**

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has had the unique challenge over the years of disseminating Blaise instruments across forty-four field offices from our headquarters (HQ) location in Washington, DC. With the introduction of Blaise 4.81, we could begin the process of centralizing our instruments in order to create a seamless approach to CATI and paper data collection and editing across the U.S. The first survey to undergo this transformation was the Annual Mink Survey.

In April 2010, NASS conducted its first survey in a centralized database. We used Blaise 4.82 and stored the data directly into a MySQL database. We chose the Annual Mink Survey because of its small sample size (only 415). It was also a good candidate because it is collected and edited in only two states (Wisconsin and Utah). We created a Web-enabled menu in Visual Basic .NET which was used to invoke Blaise and Manipula and manage the survey.

This paper will focus on our successes and the challenges we faced with this survey. It will detail the choices we made such as the type of .BOI file created, the tables used to manage the survey, and the division of tasks between HQ and Field Offices. It will conclude with our plans for the future.