

## Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: Farm Business Debt at a Glance

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB,) EB

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

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Subject of Review: The use of debt by farm operators can signal both financial strength and financial risk. If the return on debt-financed assets exceeds the cost of debt, debt use will increase farm income and wealth. However, increasing use of debt also increases the financial risk that a farm faces, or the risk of bankruptcy, if farm revenues are lower than expected. U.S. farms' debt use varies widely by farm size, specialization, operator age, and other farm characteristics. This brief presents data on basic debt use patterns by farm businesses and explores key trends over the past 20 years.

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: 10/29/13 End: 12/18/13 Completed: 1/7/14

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: [X] Agency [ ] Designated Outside Organization

Organization's Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? [ ] Yes [X] No

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

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? [ ] Yes [X] No

Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? [ ] Yes [X] No

