

Agriculture in the urban areas of the U.S. is an important factor in food security, especially for the socially disadvantaged. Some of the urban agriculture operations represent farms, an entity that sells, or normally would have sold, a thousand dollars or more of agricultural produce in a year. Other urban agricultural sites, such as a small plot within a community garden, do not qualify as farms. Yet, all can contribute to food security. The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is conducting a pilot study of a potential method for better quantifying urban agriculture. The pilot study of urban agriculture is being conducted in two US cities, one of which is Baltimore, Maryland. Satellite imagery, social media, and permit lists are used to develop algorithms that identify areas of potential agricultural activity. A sample survey is then be conducted to estimate the number of operations that are non-agricultural, agricultural but not a farm, or an urban farm. The number of people involved in urban agriculture in the test cities, the land area devoted to urban agriculture, and the value of agricultural production are to be estimated. In this paper, the study is outlined; the work to identify sites of potential agricultural activity and survey results are presented; and the viability of the approach is discussed. Challenges and lessons learned are highlighted.