

Minnesota Manufacturing Business Conditions Survey Methodology – Winter 2003

The February 2002 Harris Info Source Selectory of Minnesota Manufacturers provided the population of 9,612 manufacturing businesses for the survey. A random sample of 1,000 businesses was drawn from the population.

Two mailings of a post card survey were sent to each of the selected businesses. The first mailing was on January 15th and the second mailing went out to businesses that had not responded by January 31st. The cutoff for survey responses was February 13th. A total of 296 usable surveys were received, for a response rate of 30 percent. Of the usable surveys, 42 were from respondents indicating that their specific location had no manufacturing on site. An additional 86 surveys were returned as undeliverable or were unusable.

Survey results were tabulated for all manufacturers. The confidence interval for sampling error was calculated. The 95 percent confidence interval for the table of results for all manufacturers is plus or minus 6.1 percentage points. Results are also subject to errors introduced by other factors such as the wording of questions and differences between survey respondents and non-respondents.

Note: Previous Minnesota Manufacturing Business Conditions Surveys utilized stratified random sampling that accounted for the size of a business based on employment. This technique yielded little variability between strata and the precision acquired was minimal. This methodology is no longer employed and now a simple random sample is drawn.