

New and Beginning Producers

One third of U.S. farms had a producer who had farmed for 10 or fewer years



ACH22-4/April 2024

In 2022, the United States had 1,011,715 producers who identified as beginning farmers. A beginning farmer is anyone who has farmed for 10 or fewer years. They accounted for 30% of the country's 3.37 million producers. The largest share of beginning farmers was in states along the East and West coasts. The average age of a beginning farmer was 47.1, much younger than the average age of all farmers (58.1). In fact, 24% of beginning farmers were under 35, while farmers under 35 represented only 9% of all U.S. farmers.

1,011,715
producers



196 million
acres



\$122 billion
agriculture sales



Number and Location

In 2022, the ag census counted 3.4 million producers involved in decision making for the 1.9 million farms and ranches across the United States. Overall, the number of producers decreased 0.8% from the previous census. The number of producers operating any farm for 10 or fewer years increased 11%, while farms with a new and beginning producer increased 5% from the previous census.

States along the East and West coasts had a high share of farms with beginning producers compared to farms in the Midwest. Rhode Island accounted for the largest share of beginning producers at 41%. Overall, 630,116 U.S. farms (33%) had a beginning producer.

The number of new and beginning producers aged 65 and over increased 32.8% from 2017, while the largest share of new and beginning producers were between the ages of 35-64 years old.

	2017	2022	% change
Total Number of Beginning Producers	908,274	1,011,715	11
Age <35	234,128	241,324	3
Age 35-64	562,045	621,521	11
Age 65+	112,101	148,870	33

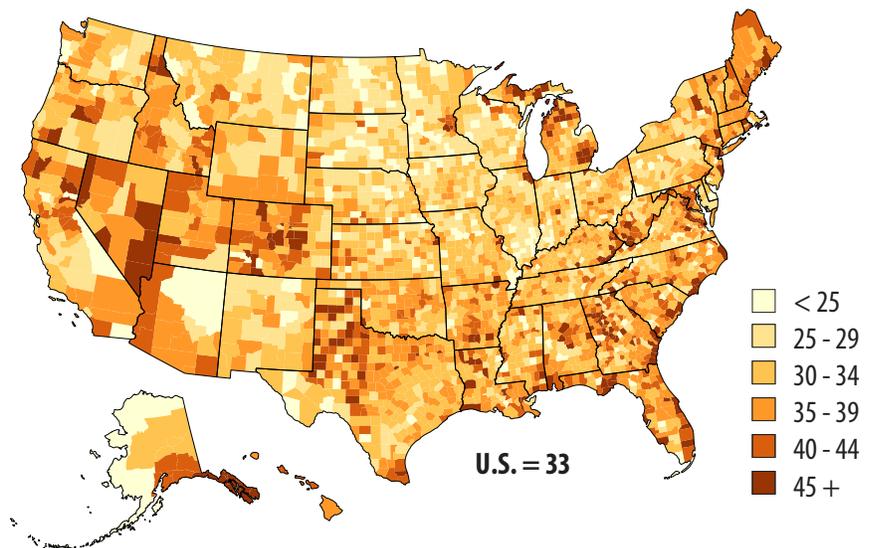
Number of Producers, by Years on Any Farm, All U.S.

	2017	2022	% Change
<6 years	474,198	481,821	1.6
6 - 10 years	434,076	529,894	22.1
11 years or more	2,491,560	2,362,329	-5.2
All Producers	3,399,834	3,374,044	-0.8

Top States, Beginning Producer-Operated Farms, 2022 (as % of total state farms)

Rhode Island	41.4
Alaska	38.7
Maine	35.9
Colorado	35.6
New Hampshire	35.3
Hawaii	35.2
Georgia	34.4
Idaho	34.1
Nevada	33.9
Florida	33.9

Farms with New and Beginning Producers as Percent of Total Farms, by County, 2022



SNAPSHOT

Beginning Producers, 2022

Number = 1,011,715

	Beginning	All U.S.
	(percent)	
Sex		
Male	59	64
Female	41	36
Age		
<35	24	9
35 - 64	61	53
65+	15	39
Lived on their farm	64	70
Worked off farm		
No days	24	38
1 to 199 days	25	22
200+ days	51	40
Primary occupation		
Farming	28	42
Other	72	58
With military service	7	9
Hispanic	4.4	3.3
American Indian	1.5	1.7
Asian	1.0	0.7
Black	1.3	1.2
Native Hawaiian	0.1	0.1
White	94.9	95.4
More than one race	1.0	0.9
Average age (years)	47.1	58.1

Forty percent of all farms had one producer in 2022, while 27% of farms with a new and beginning producer were operated by a single producer. Beginning producers were much less likely to be present on farms with only a single producer.

About the Census

The Census of Agriculture, conducted once every five years, is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Results from the 2022 ag census and previous censuses are available online at national, state, and county levels.

See the searchable database Quick Stats, downloadable PDF reports, maps, and a variety of topic-specific products for more 2022 ag census data.

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

Producer Characteristics

Beginning producers were more likely to be female than producers overall; 41% of beginning producers were female compared to 36% of all U.S. producers. Almost three-quarters (72%) of beginning farmers reported a primary occupation other than farming (compared to 58% of all U.S. producers), and the majority (51%) worked off the farm 200 days or more.

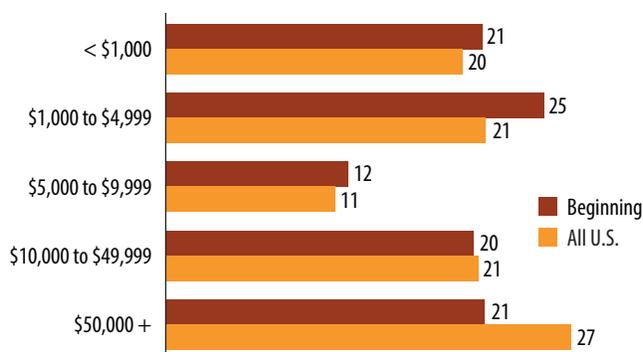
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The percent of beginning producers who were under 35, compared to 9% of all U.S. producers.

Farm Characteristics

Farms with at least one beginning producer sold \$122 billion in agricultural products in 2022, with 49% (\$60 billion) in crop sales and 51% (\$62 billion) in the sales of livestock, poultry, and livestock and poultry products. These farms accounted for 23% of total U.S. agriculture sales. They received \$2.2 billion in government payments in 2022.

Farms with a Beginning Producer and All U.S. Farms by Economic Class, 2022
(percent) (sales and government payments combined)



Twenty-one percent of farms with a beginning producer had sales and government payments of more than \$50,000 per year compared to 27% of all U.S. farms. Farms with a beginning producer were more likely to produce less than \$10,000 in sales and government payments (58%) compared to all U.S. farms (52%).

Farms and Land

Farms with beginning producers accounted for 196 million acres of land, 22% of the U.S. total. The majority of farms with beginning producers (51%) were less than 50 acres in size. The average size of farms with a beginning producer was 312 acres, compared to 463 acres for all U.S. farms.

Farm Size in Acres	With	
	Beginning Producer	All U.S.
(percent of total)		
1 to 9	17	12
10 to 49	34	30
50 to 179	26	28
180 to 499	12	15
500 +	10	15

Seventy-four percent of farms with a beginning producer were operated by farmers who own all the land they operate, while 9% were operated by farmers who rent all their land. The other 17% of farms with beginning producers had both owned and rented land.

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The percent of farms with beginning producers that have internet access.

Farm Specialization^a

Farms with a beginning producer were mostly similar to all U.S. farms in terms of specialization. Farms with a beginning producer were less likely to specialize in oilseed and grain production (14%) compared to all U.S. farms (17%), and more likely to specialize in specialty crops (14% compared to 10% nationally).

	% of Farms
Oilseed and grain	14
Specialty crops	13
Vegetables	3
Fruits, tree nuts and berries	6
Greenhouse, nursery, floriculture	4
Other crops	22
Beef cattle	26
Dairy cattle and milk	1
Hogs and pigs	2
Poultry and eggs	6
Sheep and goat	6
Other animal	10

^a Refers to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). More than half of a farm's sales come from the commodity.