

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agriculture has always been a vital part of the lives of Illinois citizens and the economy of the state. Illinois is gifted with some of the richest agricultural resources in the world. The fertile soil, favorable climate, availability of excellent transportation via water, highway, rail and air, good marketing opportunities and a productive work force are some of the many resources that allow Illinois to be recognized as a world supplier of food, feed, and fiber. The variations in soil types, climate and topography in the state make it possible for Illinois farmers to produce a wide variety of agricultural commodities. Approximately 1,500 different soil types can be found in Illinois.

“VALUE ADDED” AGRICULTURE

Food and agricultural product manufacturing and processing contribute significantly to Illinois' economy. Nationally, Illinois ranks among the leading states in the number of food and agricultural processing companies, including meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, vegetable processing and many others. Furthermore, Illinois ranks number one among all states in the production of ethanol. According to the Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois companies produce approximately 685 million gallons of ethanol annually from approximately 274 million bushels of corn.

AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY

The diversity in soil types allows farmers to grow many well known crops and lesser known specialty crops including alfalfa, amaranth, apples, bell peppers, blueberries, broccoli, buckwheat, canola, Christmas trees, clover, cucumbers, field corn, ginseng, grain sorghum, herbs, horseradish, mushrooms, nursery products, oats, peaches, popcorn, potatoes, potted plants, pumpkins, rye, seed corn, snap beans, sod, soybeans, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter wheat and others. Livestock is produced using a wide variety of methods ranging from one ostrich in a pen to thousands of hogs in total confinement production. Other agricultural animals raised include beef cattle, broilers, buffalo, catfish, crayfish, dairy cattle, dairy goats, deer, elk, emus, horses, hybrid striped bass, layers, mink, minnows, rabbits, sheep, tilapia, turkeys and others.

FARMS AND LAND VALUES

In 2002, there were 76,000 farms in Illinois that contained 27.7 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 2002 was 364 acres. The average per acre value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2003, was \$2,770 per acre, which compared to \$2,640 per acre on January 1, 2002.

COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Illinois ranked second among all states in the production of corn and soybeans in 2002. Production of corn for grain during 2002 totaled 1.50 billion bushels, nine percent less than produced in 2001. The corn yield averaged 136 bushels per acre, 16 bushels per acre less than in 2001. Soybean production in 2002 totaled 453.7 million bushels, five percent lower than in 2001. The soybean yield in 2002 was 43.0 bushels per acre, two bushels below 2001.

In 2002, Illinois pork producers produced 1.81 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois fourth among all states. Pork production decreased one percent from the previous year. Cattle and calf production during 2002 totaled 594.4 million pounds, one percent more than the production in 2001. Illinois ranked 18th in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

CASH RECEIPTS

Total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois for 2002 totaled 7.49 billion dollars, two percent above 2001. Illinois ranked 6th among all states in total cash receipts in 2002. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 2002 totaled 5.92 billion dollars, up eight percent from 2001 and placed Illinois second among all states in total crop cash receipts in 2002. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 2002 totaled 1.6 billion dollars, which was down 15 percent from 2001 and placed Illinois 22nd among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts in 2002.

In 2002, corn accounted for 41.5 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 30.1 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 7.5 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to 2001, cash receipts for both corn and soybeans increased ten percent.

In 2002, hogs accounted for 9.6 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 6.8 percent and dairy products accounted for 3.2 percent of the total cash receipts. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 2002. Compared to 2001, cash receipts declined 22 percent for hogs, 19 percent for dairy, and four percent for cattle.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

During the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, Illinois' export shares totaled 3.31 billion dollars, which ranked Illinois second among all states in total agricultural exports. During the same year, Illinois ranked first in the export of feed grains and products, second in soybeans and products, fifteenth in wheat and products and sixth in live animals and meat.