

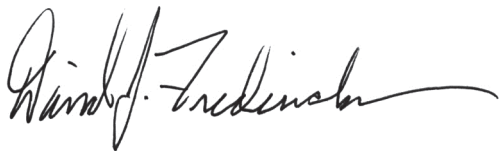
Foreword

The world increasingly looks to Minnesota as a reliable source of quality food and fuel. We consistently rank in the top ten among all states for production of many farm commodities, and from Winona to Worthington to Warroad, agriculture is a dominant part of our economy. Even in urban areas, the benefits of agriculture are apparent in the form of our world-class food companies and internationally known brands. No less than seven of Minnesota's Fortune 500 companies have roots in our farm and food sector.

As America looks to get people back to work after years of high unemployment, the role of agriculture as a job generator is especially important. Every agricultural production job supports an additional 1.5 jobs in all economic sectors. When you consider the business activity and jobs supported by agriculture, the total employment impact for Minnesota agriculture approaches 342,000 jobs.

Our role here at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture is to enhance Minnesotans' quality of life by ensuring the integrity of our food supply, the health of our environment, and the strength of our agricultural economy. As part of that mission, the department helps produce the annual Minnesota Agricultural Statistics book. This book provides a wide range of solid information on trends in crop and livestock production, farm income and other data. This accurate information is vital for decision-makers throughout the agricultural sector.

I want to thank the Minnesota farmers and agri-businesses who respond to surveys by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service. This useful resource is possible only through their cooperation and support.

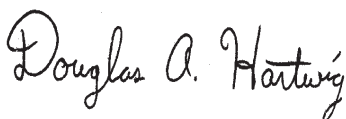



Dave Frederickson, Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Agriculture

These troubling economic times only validate the need for facts on our Nation's agriculture. As farmers strive to be good stewards of the land and maintain a viable operation, they need to know their production costs and have marketing plans. Reliable, accurate statistics from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) provide producers with the facts they need to develop their operation plans. Also, policies are written using USDA statistics as a guide for developing sound agriculture policies based on facts instead of emotions. These policies are developed to ensure safe food for consumers.

Our farmers understand the importance of their role in producing the food that feeds the world. They also know the value in having the facts provided to everyone from NASS's statistics on agriculture. USDA NASS thanks all the farmers and ranchers who assist us with providing the facts on U.S. agriculture. USDA NASS counts agriculture because "Agriculture Counts".

If you would like additional information, e-mail us at nass-mn@nass.usda.gov or call us at 1-800-453-7502. You can also access our reports at www.nass.usda.gov/mn.




Douglas Hartwig, Director
Minnesota Agricultural Statistics