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MINNESOTA HOG NUMBERS DOWN 3 PERCENT FROM DECEMBER

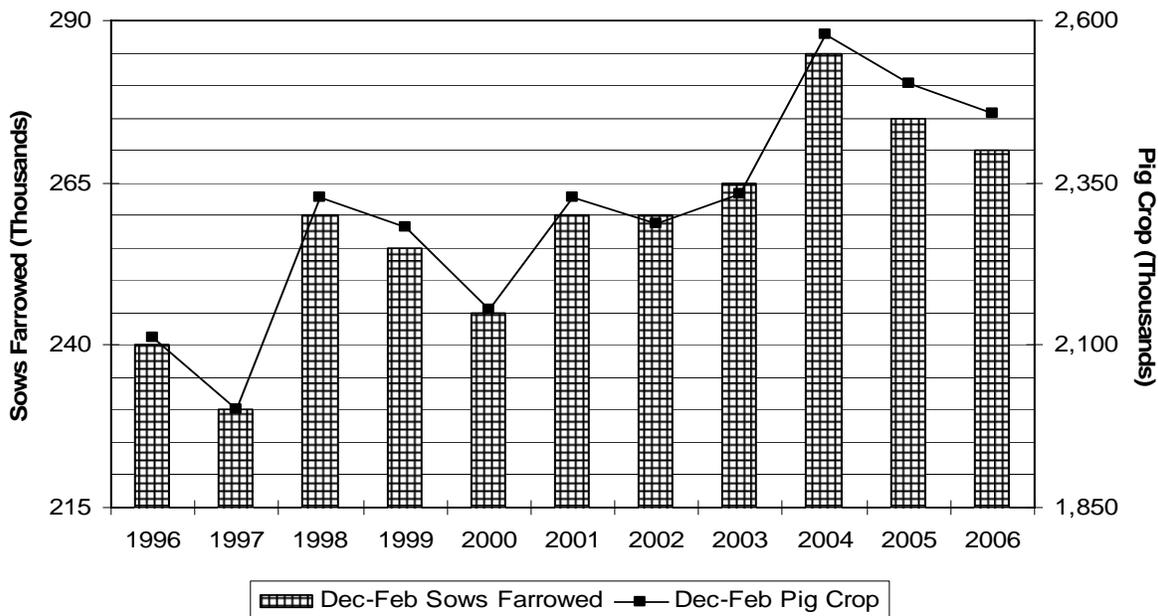
Minnesota hog producers had an inventory of 6.4 million hogs and pigs on March 1, 2006, up 2 percent from last year but down 3 percent from the December 1, 2005 figure, according to the USDA, NASS, Minnesota Field Office. Breeding hogs totaled 580 thousand, down 2 percent from a year earlier and market hogs and pigs at 5.82 million, were up 2 percent from a year ago.

Market hogs in the under 60 pound weight group were up slightly from last year. The 60-119 pound weight group was down 1 percent. Hog numbers in the 120-179 pound group were up 5 percent from last year, while the 180+ pound group was up 7 percent from a year ago.

STATE PIG CROP DOWN 2 PERCENT

Minnesota's December 2005-February 2006 pig crop totaled 2.46 million head, down 2 percent from a year earlier and down 5 percent from the September-November 2005 pig crop. The 270 thousand sows that farrowed averaged 9.10 pigs per litter, unchanged from a year ago.

**Sows Farrowed & Pig Crop
 Minnesota 1996-2006**



MARCH-MAY 2006 AND JUNE-AUGUST 2006 INTENTIONS

Hog producers in Minnesota intend to farrow 275 thousand sows during the March-May 2006 quarter. If realized, this would be down 5 percent from the same period in 2005. Producers intend to farrow 270 thousand sows during the June-August 2006 quarter. If realized, this would be down 4 percent from the same period in 2005.

(See back page for U.S. highlights)

U.S. HOG INVENTORY UP 1 PERCENT

U.S. inventory of all hogs and pigs on March 1, 2006 was 60.1 million head. This was up 1 percent from March 1, 2005, but down 2 percent from December 1, 2005.

Breeding inventory, at 6.03 million head, was up 1 percent from last year and up slightly from the previous quarter.

Market hog inventory, at 54.1 million head, was up 1 percent from last year but down 2 percent from last quarter.

The December 2005-February 2006 pig crop, at 25.7 million head, up 1 percent from 2005 and up 2 percent from 2004. Sows farrowing during this period totaled 2.84 million head, up slightly from both 2004 and 2005. The sows farrowed during this quarter represented 47 percent of the breeding herd. The average pigs saved per litter was 9.03 for the December 2005-February 2006 period, compared to 8.94 last year. Pigs saved per litter by size of operation ranged from 7.50 for operations with 1-99 hogs and pigs to 9.10 for operations with more than 5,000 hogs and pigs.

U.S. hog producers intend to have 2.90 million sows farrow during the March-May 2006 quarter, up 1 percent from the actual farrowings during the same period in both 2004 and 2005. Intended farrowings for June-August 2006, at 2.92 million sows, are up slightly from 2005 and up 1 percent from 2004.

The total number of hogs under contract, owned by operations with over 5,000 head, but raised by contractees, accounted for 39 percent of the total U.S. hog inventory, unchanged from last year.

Revisions

All inventory and pig crop estimates for March 2005 through December 2005 were reviewed using final pig crop, official slaughter, death loss, and updated import and export data. Based on the findings of this review, small adjustments of less than one-half of one percent were made to the September 2005 and December 2005 total inventory. An adjustment of slightly larger than one-half of one percent was made to the June-August pig crop.

**Monthly Farrowings: Number of Sows, Pigs per Litter, and Pig Crop,
United States, December-November 2005-2006^{1/ 2/}**

Month	Sows Farrowing		Pigs per Litter		Pig Crop	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
	1,000 Head	1,000 Head	Number	Number	1,000 Head	1,000 Head
Dec ¹	938	937	8.89	8.97	8,338	8,409
Jan	951	953	8.94	9.07	8,500	8,647
Feb	946	950	8.99	9.05	8,505	8,598
Mar	967		8.99		8,693	
Apr	962		9.00		8,656	
May	953		9.06		8,637	
Jun	968		9.07		8,779	
Jul	978		9.04		8,845	
Aug	972		9.08		8,825	
Sep	982		9.04		8,873	
Oct	966		9.05		8,740	
Nov	940		9.01		8,467	
Total	11,523		9.01		103,858	

¹ December preceding year.

² Monthly values may not add to quarterly or annual totals due to rounding.