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News Release

In Cooperation with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture

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2010 FARM NUMBERS, LAND IN FARMS, AND LIVESTOCK OPERATIONS

WEST VIRGINIA - The number of farms in West Virginia totaled 23,000 in 2010, down 200 farms from 2009. The total land in farms was 3.65 million acres, down 50,000 acres from 2009. The average farm size was 159 acres, unchanged from 2009.

The West Virginia number of farms in the \$1,000 - \$9,999 economic sales class totaled 18,400, unchanged from 2009. Land in farms for this sales class totaled 1.85 million acres, down 50,000 acres from the 2009 number of 1.90 million acres.

UNITED STATES - The number of farms in the United States in 2010 is estimated at 2.2 million, virtually unchanged from 2009. Total land in farms, at 920.0 million acres, increased 100 thousand acres from 2009. The average farm size is 418 acres, unchanged from the previous year.

Farm numbers and land in farms are broken down into five economic sales classes. Farms and ranches are classified into these "sales classes" by summing their sales of agricultural products and government program payments. Sales class breaks occur at \$10,000, \$100,000, \$250,000, and \$500,000.

Farm numbers increased slightly in the \$1,000-\$9,999 and \$500,000 and over sales classes. Higher commodity prices and larger value of sales contributed to changes in the number of farms within these sales classes. Farm numbers increased 0.1 percent, to 1.23 million farms, in the \$1,000 - \$9,999 sales class. Meanwhile, the number of farms in the \$500,000 and over sales class increased by 1.6 percent, to 126,720 farms.

Land in farms increased in the largest sales class while decreasing in all other sales classes. Land operated by farms in the \$500,000 & over sales class increased 3.0 percent, to 298.9 million acres. Land operated by farms with \$1,000-\$9,999 in sales decreased by 0.6 percent, to 105.0 million acres.

The average farm size was unchanged in 2010. However, average farm sizes declined in some of the sales classes partially due to smaller farms moving up to higher sales classes.

Compared to 2009, the number of farms in 2010 declined in 9 states, remained unchanged in 28 states and increased in 13 states. The largest decline in the number of farms occurred in Montana and Tennessee (both losing 400 farms). The largest increase in the number of farms occurred in Indiana (gaining 500 farms), followed by New Mexico, South Dakota, and Virginia (all gaining 300 farms).

The number of operations with cattle totaled 935,000 for 2010, down 1 percent from 2009. Beef cow operations in 2010, at 742,000, were also down 1 percent from last year. The number of milk cow operations for 2010 totaled 62,500, down 4 percent from 2009.

The three operation classes: cattle, beef cows, and milk cows, are classified into size groups independently. Therefore, it is possible to have more beef cow operations in a particular size group than cattle operations. As an example, an operator with 75 cattle and 40 beef cows would be classified in the 50-99 size group for cattle and 1-49 size group for beef cows.

The number of operations with hogs totaled 69,100 for 2010, down 3 percent from 2009. Places with 2,000 or more head accounted for 86 percent of the inventory.

The number of operations with sheep totaled 81,000 for 2010, down 1 percent from 2009. Of all sheep operations that include breeding sheep, 93.8 percent were comprised of 1-99 head, 5.1 percent had 100-499 head, and the remaining 1.1 percent were operations with 500 head or more. Operations with 1-99 head account for 35.8 percent of the inventory, 100-499 head account for 20.1 percent of the inventory, and 500+ head account for 44.1 percent of the inventory.

The number of operations with goats totaled 152,000 for 2010, unchanged from a year earlier. Angora goat operations totaled 6,000, up 9 percent from 2009. Milk goat operations totaled 31,000, up 3 percent from 2009. Meat goat operations totaled 128,000, down 2 percent from a year earlier. Total goat operations will be equal to or less than the sum of angora, milk and meat goat operations since places which own more than one goat type count as only one operation.

Special Note - State level numbers are published in conjunction with the Census of Agriculture every five years. The numbers of operations at the U.S. level are published on an annual basis.

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