

Wisconsin Agriculture and Economics



Wisconsin cash receipts totaled \$9.89 billion in 2008, a jump of 10 percent over 2007. Receipts from livestock, dairy, and poultry comprised 64 percent of the total marketings of all commodities, down from 70 percent the previous year. Milk accounted for \$4.57 billion of all sales by farmers, while sales of meat animals totaled \$938 million. Poultry sales rose 9 percent in 2008, while sales of miscellaneous livestock were up 1 percent.

In 2008, cash receipts for crops totaled \$3.57 billion, 34 percent higher than the previous year. The increase was driven by the growth in corn marketings, which rose 46 percent to \$1.68 billion. Soybean receipts, at \$412 million, grew 25 percent. Total vegetable marketings jumped 31 percent. This was due in part to a 38 percent increase in potato receipts. Higher receipts for cranberries helped total fruit marketings grow by 23 percent.

Wisconsin farm production expenditures totaled \$9.40 billion in 2008, up 12 percent from last year's total of \$8.38 billion. The largest increase in expenditures was in machinery other than tractors & self-propelled machinery, up 38 percent. Seeds & plants and tractors & self-propelled machinery also experienced large increases of 35 and 31 percents, respectively. Expenditures per Wisconsin farm averaged \$120,513 in 2008, below the national average of \$140,075.

The values of farmland being sold for development fell sharply over the past year. Sales data in 2008 showed fewer acres of agricultural land being diverted to other uses, while sales of land continuing in agriculture increased. The value of land continuing in agricultural use continued to increase, rising 12 percent to \$3,940 per acre. Land being diverted to other uses dropped 24 percent to \$7,725 per acre, indicating that development pressure has eased somewhat over the past year. The total value of all agricultural land sold fell 4 percent, from \$4,365 in 2007 to \$4,185 in 2008. A sharp drop in the number of acres being diverted to other uses contributed to the decline in overall value.

The number of farms in Wisconsin, at 78,000, was down 500 from 2007. There were 1,900 fewer farms with gross sales less than \$10,000, compared to the previous year. This was balanced by an increase of 900 farms where sales were \$250,000 or greater. Land in farms remained steady, at 15.2 million acres, and the average size of a Wisconsin farm was 195 acres.