

Livestock & Dairy

In 2006, Wisconsin produced 23.4 billion pounds of milk, a 2 percent increase over the previous year. The number of milk cows grew throughout the year, and milk per cow rose from 18,500 pounds in 2005 to 18,824 in 2006. Milk prices began the year at \$15.00 per hundredweight (cwt.), dipped to a low of \$11.90 in July, and rebounded to \$14.90 by December. The fluctuating price led to a decrease in both cash receipts and value of production. Cash receipts fell from \$3.53 billion to \$3.08 billion, and value of production dropped from \$3.57 to \$3.11 billion.

Wisconsin maintained its status as the nation's largest cheese producer in 2006. Total cheese production rose 3 percent from 2.41 billion pounds in 2005 to 2.47 billion pounds in 2006. Italian cheese production rose 9 percent to 1.18 billion pounds and comprised 48 percent of Wisconsin's production. Production of American cheeses fell 6 percent to 821 million pounds. Specialty cheese production grew to 387 million pounds in 2006, accounting for 16 percent of the state's total cheese production.

In 2006, Wisconsin produced 379 million pounds of butter, a slight decrease of 1 percent from 2005. The state's 11 butter plants accounted for 26 percent of the nation's production.

Total inventory of cattle and calves on January 1 was unchanged from 2006 to 2007, at 3.40 million head. The number of milk cows continued to increase, up 5,000 head from last year. Beef cows increased by 6 percent to 265,000 head. Slaughter price per cwt. of cattle decreased 5 percent to \$63.30, while calf prices remained steady at \$163.00. The value of production rose 2 percent to \$872 million.

As of December 1, 2006, Wisconsin's swine inventory rose by 20,000 head from the previous year to 450,000. Meat production totaled 219 million pounds (live weight basis), an increase of 2 percent. Price per cwt. dropped by \$4.60 to \$42.50, lowering the value of production from \$112 million in 2005 to \$105 million in 2006.

Sheep and lamb inventory grew to 92,000 as of January 1, 2007. The price per cwt. for sheep dropped 20 percent to \$34.70, and lamb prices fell 18 percent to \$84.70. The lower prices led to cash receipts of \$5.17 million in 2006, down from \$6.43 million in 2005. Total goat inventory increased to 46,000 in 2007, with Wisconsin having the largest number of milk goats in the nation, at 33,000.

Egg production decreased 3 percent to 1.28 billion eggs for the year ending November 30, 2006. There were 4.70 million layers, with an average of 273 eggs per layer. After a sharp decline in egg prices last year, the price per dozen rebounded to 42.4 cents in 2006. The higher egg price led to a 14 percent increase in value of production, from \$39.7 million in 2005 to \$45.3 million in 2006.

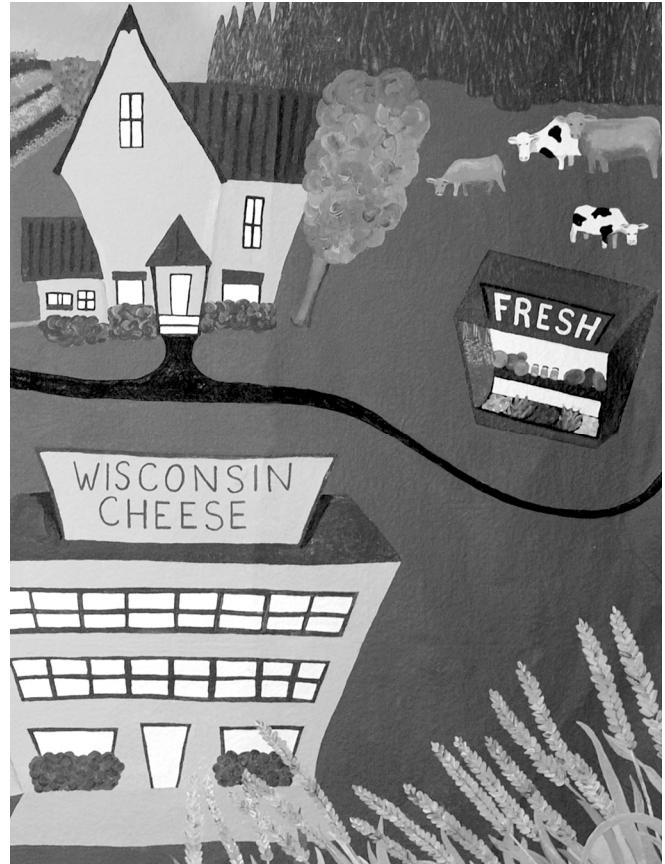


Illustration by Laurie Schammel, DATCP

In 2006, broiler production increased by 2 million head to 38.3 million broilers. The price of broilers dropped 5 cents to 39 cents per pound. The drop in price led to a 6 percent decline in value of production, despite the increase in number of broilers.

The sales value of trout remained constant in 2006, at \$1.57 million. The number of trout sold jumped 19 percent from 990,000 in 2005 to 1.18 million in 2006. Trout distributed for conservation and restoration uses increased to 6.70 million fish, 13 percent over the previous year.

Wisconsin produced 885,100 mink pelts in 2006, a rise of 14 percent over 2005 and more than any other state. After a dramatic increase last year, the average price per pelt returned to a more moderate value of \$47.50. Accordingly, the total value of pelts produced fell to \$42.0 million.

Honey production rose 12 percent from 5.31 million pounds in 2005 to 5.95 million pounds in 2006. The number of colonies remained constant, at 64,000. Yield per colony increased to 93 pounds. The price of honey declined 5 cents to \$1.14. Wisconsin moved into seventh place in the nation for overall production.