

## Foreword

Over the years, I've frequently talked with Minnesota farmers about the importance of continually looking for new ways to do things more efficiently and effectively. It's not enough to continue running a business the same way it's been run for decades. Times change, markets change, and in order to stay relevant, farmers need to keep pace just like any other small business operators.

To run a business effectively, you need current and accurate information. This allows you to make sound production and marketing decisions that will pay off in the long run. Publications such as this *Minnesota Agricultural Statistics* book and the *Census of Agriculture* help give all of us better insight into agricultural trends. Estimates of crop and livestock production, farm income and expenses, farm numbers and land in farms, and many others, help the entire agricultural community plan for the future of Minnesota agriculture.

I want to express my gratitude to all the farmers and agribusinesses that made this book possible by responding to surveys conducted by the Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service.



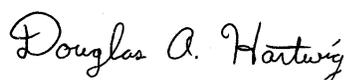
*Gene Hugoson, Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Agriculture*



On behalf of the staff in the Minnesota office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, I am proud to present the "Minnesota Agricultural Statistics 2004". The agricultural data in this book provides the facts on which sound decisions can be based in promotion of Minnesota agriculture. It is through the cooperative efforts and funding by the United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture that we are able to produce this publication.

Many thanks go out to the Minnesota producers, agribusiness people, County Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service staff and University of Minnesota Extension Service personnel who voluntarily provide the data presented in this annual bulletin. We count agriculture because "Agriculture Counts" in Minnesota and the United States.

If you need more information, e-mail us at [nass-mn@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-mn@nass.usda.gov) or call us at 1-800-453-7502. You can also find all of our data on our web site at [www.nass.usda.gov/mn/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/mn/).



*Douglas A. Hartwig, Director  
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