

Foreword

Over the years, one of the messages I've often shared with Minnesota farmers is that to maximize profitability, they need to constantly be 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.

Running a farming business effectively requires having current and accurate information in order to make sound production and marketing decisions. 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*



Although Minnesota is a major producer of corn, soybeans, and spring wheat, farmers in the State also produce a wide variety of other crops. This year we are featuring on our cover many of the speciality crops grown in Minnesota. These crops are grown throughout the State, but especially in the Red River Valley of Northwestern Minnesota.

We hope this publication will help tell the story of trends in Minnesota agriculture. If you need more information in a particular area, please let us know. Your ideas will help us improve this important service. E-mail us at nass-mn@nass.usda.gov or call us at **1-800-453-7502**. Also, visit our web site at www.nass.usda.gov/mn/.

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