

NEWS RELEASE

OHIO AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

National Agricultural Statistics Service
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RELEASE OF 2002 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE DATA FOR OHIO

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) announced today that data from the 2002 Census of Agriculture - the Nation's largest agricultural information-gathering project - is now available for all counties, States, and the U.S.

There is a significant difference in the measurements from the 1997 Census of Agriculture to the 2002 Census of Agriculture. For the first time, the data for every county and state have been statistically adjusted to account for farms missed or misclassified in the census. For more information about this new methodology, go to (NASS website news release on methodology)..

The 2002 number of Ohio farms was 77,797, a net decrease of 940 from the 78,737 farms reported in 1997. For purposes of the Census of Agriculture, a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. Farms containing between 50 and 999 acres decreased by 4,987. Farms under 50 acres increased by 3,640 while farms 1,000 acres and larger increased by 407.

There were 14.6 million acres in Ohio farms in 2002, a little less than 56% of the land area in the State. This is a decrease of about 155,000 acres from total land in farms in 1997.

In 2002, the average Ohio farm included 187 acres, had \$57,341 in sales and government payments and had net cash farm income of \$8,929. The principal operator was 53.8 years old and had operated the present farm for 21.3 years. The average value of sales decreased by over \$5,400 when compared to 1997, primarily because of unfavorable weather conditions during 2002. Average government payments to farm operators in 2002 were \$2,100 above those in 1997 because of changes in government programs.

Individuals and family groups operated 91 percent of Ohio's farms in 2002 and received 53 percent of total receipts from sales and government payments. Partnerships accounted for 6 percent of the farms and 18 percent of receipts from sales and government payments. Incorporated farms were only 2 percent of the total but accounted for 28 percent of the gross receipts from sales and government payments. Eighty-eight percent of the corporations were family held and had ten or fewer stock holders. Other farms, (cooperative, estate, institutional, etc.) accounted for the remainder of the farms and gross receipts.

Twenty five percent of all farm operators in Ohio in 2002 were women. However, just under ten percent of the principal farm operators were women. The 2002 Census of Agriculture was the first to gather information for multiple operators involved with a single farming operation.

2002 Census of Agriculture final data provide consistent and detailed production, economic, demographic and environmental data including facts on number and type of farms, land use, value of sales and government payments, production expenses, hired labor, computer and Internet use, livestock and poultry inventory and sales, aquaculture, irrigation, crop acreage and production, gender and race of operator, production contracts, number of people in farm households, tenure of operator, chemical use, value of land and buildings, production contracts, organic acreage and a myriad of other topics.

Census publications and a CD-ROM for queries are also available for sale through the National Technical Information Service at 1-800-999-6779. The CD-ROM should be available later this month.

NASS collects and provides a vast array of production, economic, demographic and environmental facts about U. S. agriculture through regularly scheduled weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual reports. For more information about agriculture statistics, visit NASS online at www.usda.gov/nass/ or call 1-800-727-9540.

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