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South Dakota

FARM COMPUTER USAGE

News Release

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FARMS WITH INTERNET ACCESS UP FROM 2 YEARS AGO

SIoux FALLS, July 29, 2003 -- In a recent computer usage and ownership study conducted by the USDA's South Dakota Agricultural Statistics Service, 45 percent of all South Dakota farms reported having Internet access. This is up from 43 percent reported two years ago, when the study was last conducted. Having access to a computer and usage for farm business both increased from prior levels indicated in the 2001 study. Sixty-one percent of the farms in South Dakota now have access to a computer, up from 56 percent two years earlier. Thirty-three percent of the farms use a computer for farm business, up 2 points from 2001.

The 2003 survey showed 6 percent of South Dakota farms purchased agricultural inputs over the Internet, up from 4 percent in 2001. Seven percent conducted agricultural marketing activities over the Internet, compared to 5 percent in 2001. Seven percent accessed National Agricultural Statistics Service reports over the Internet, an increase of 1 point, while 12 percent accessed other USDA reports or services over the Internet, up from 8 percent in 2001.

South Dakota conducts a survey every June to provide estimates of crop acres planted, grain in storage, livestock inventories, and land values. In 1997, 1999, 2001, and again in 2003, questions were added to the survey that asked the operator about Internet access and use of computers. These figures are based on responses that represent all sizes and types of farms.

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