



Cotton and Cottonseed Farming

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Production down 13 percent, sales value up 25 percent, since 2007.

Three states...

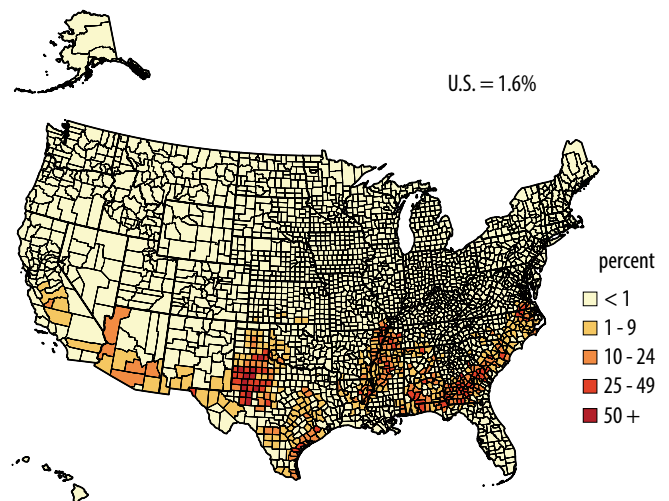
... account for more than half of U.S. cotton and cottonseed production and sales.

Top States in Sales (\$ billions)

Texas	1.6
Georgia	1.0
California	0.7
Arkansas	0.4
North Carolina	0.4
Mississippi	0.4
Alabama	0.3
Tennessee	0.3
Missouri	0.2
Arizona	0.2

In 2012, the U.S. cotton and cottonseed industry had sales of \$6.1 billion. Cotton production is heavily concentrated in a few states and counties across the southern part of the country; the industry accounted for 1.6 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales in 2012. The 2012 Census of Agriculture provides a comprehensive picture of the cotton industry, including overall size, value, and location; production costs; and farm and producer characteristics.

Cotton and Cottonseed Sales as Percent of Agriculture Sales, by County, 2012



Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Industry Size, Value, and Location

Cotton and cottonseed sales were 25 percent higher in 2012 than in 2007, when the last agriculture census was conducted, but during the same period, cotton production and cotton-producing farms declined. U.S. farmers produced 16.5 million bales in 2012, down 13 percent from 2007.

The number of farms with cotton declined 2 percent, from 18,605 farms in 2007 to 18,155 farms in 2012. Farms specializing in cotton (that is,

farms with more than half of sales coming from the production of cotton and cottonseed) declined even more, from 9,968 farms in 2007 to 8,915 farms in 2012 (an 11 percent decline).

Texas led the country in cotton production in 2012, with 4.8 million bales produced and \$1.6 billion in cotton and cottonseed sales. Georgia was second, with 2.7 million bales and \$1.0 billion in sales, followed by Arkansas with 1.3 million bales and

\$0.4 billion in sales. These three states accounted for 53 percent of the cotton produced and 51 percent of the value of U.S. cotton and cottonseed sales in 2012. California ranked fourth in amount of cotton produced (1.2 million bales) and third in sales.

At the county level, four of the top ten counties in cotton and cottonseed sales were in California. Kings County, California, ranked first in the nation, with \$211 million or 3 percent of the U.S. total.

Top Counties: Cotton and Cottonseed Sales (\$ millions)	
Kings, CA	211.2
Fresno, CA	191.6
Mississippi, AR	115.0
Kern, CA	99.8
Pinal, AZ	94.0
Gaines, TX	88.4
Dunklin, MO	81.1
Merced, CA	78.5
Lubbock, TX	78.2
Hale, TX	76.7

Does not include counties withheld to avoid disclosing individual data.
Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Production Costs

The 8,915 farms that specialized in cotton production accounted for 55 percent of all cotton sales (\$3.4 billion). Their production costs were \$4.0 billion (14 percent higher than in 2007). Per farm average costs were \$448,667, a 27 percent increase from 2007.

The largest expense was fertilizer, which totaled \$660 million in 2012, or 16 percent of total production costs.

Farm Characteristics

Family or individually owned farms were 69 percent of cotton operations and accounted for 49 percent of sales. Partnerships (including family partnerships) were the second largest category of ownership, accounting for 21 percent of operations and 38 percent of sales. (Table 1)

Table 1
Cotton Farms by Type of Owner

	% of Operations	% of Sales
Family/Individual	69	49
Partnership	21	38
Corporation	9	12
Other	1	1
All	100	100

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Producer Characteristics

The 2012 Census of Agriculture identified characteristics of those responsible for the day-to-day operation of farms specializing in cotton. These farmers on average were younger (56 years old) than principal operators overall (58 years old). Just as in 2007, five percent were women; this is a smaller percentage of female principal operators than for farms overall (14 percent in 2012).

In both 2007 and 2012, four fifths of cotton principal operators considered farming their primary occupation, well above the average for farmers overall in 2012. At the same time, 29 percent earned less than a quarter of their income from farming. Twenty-one percent derived all of their income from the farm. (Table 2)

Table 2
Cotton Producers: Key Characteristics, 2007 and 2012
 (principal operators of farms specializing in cotton)

	2007	2012	All Farms 2012
	percent		
Gender			
Male	95	95	86
Female	5	5	14
Age			
Under 45 years	21	21	16
45 to 64 years	53	51	51
65 years and older	26	28	33
Primary Occupation			
Farming	81	81	48
Other	19	19	52
Percent of Income from Farming			
< 25%	31	29	70
25% to 49%	10	11	8
50% to 74%	17	17	9
75% to 99%	24	22	7
100%	18	21	6
Average Age (years)	55.2	55.8	58.3

Principal operator is the person responsible for day-to-day operation of the farm. A farm "specializing in cotton" has more than half of its sales come from cotton and cottonseed.
Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

To learn more about cotton and cottonseed farming, the 2012 Census of Agriculture, and how to access national, state, and county data, go to:

www.agcensus.usda.gov