

# 2024 TOTAL Survey

---

## Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land (TOTAL) Briefing

March 12, 2026

# Agenda

---

- Overview and Survey Design
- Highlights of the Results
  - Landlord Ownership Arrangements
  - Economics of Land Ownership
  - Acquisition and Transfer of Agricultural Land
  - Land Uses
  - Demographics of Landlords

# Overview and Survey Design

---

# Overview and Survey Design

- An integrated survey of farm finance and land ownership
  - Provides updated information on land ownership, income, expenses, debt, assets, and demographic/other landlord characteristics
- Data to address current farm sector issues
  - Land acquisitions and transfers
  - Management and conservation decisions
  - Sale and lease of mineral/development/wind/recreation rights
  - Lease structure and tenant relationships
- Representative of *all* agricultural landowners, including operating and non-operating landlords in all States.
- A Special Study of the Census of Agriculture Program

## Overview and Survey Design *(continued)*

- The data are a count of **landlord entities and arrangements**
  - Although entities could have multiple owners, the survey counts these landlord entities as one
- TOTAL data are reported for the **state in which the rented land exists**, not the state where the landlord resides
- Consistent with the Census of Agriculture, public grazing land was excluded from TOTAL
- There were 2 separate questionnaires used for data collection
  - Questionnaire for farm operating landlords
  - Questionnaire for non-operating landlords
    - The farm operator questionnaire also collects data for all agricultural land owned, not just land rented out

# What's New, What's Different for 2024

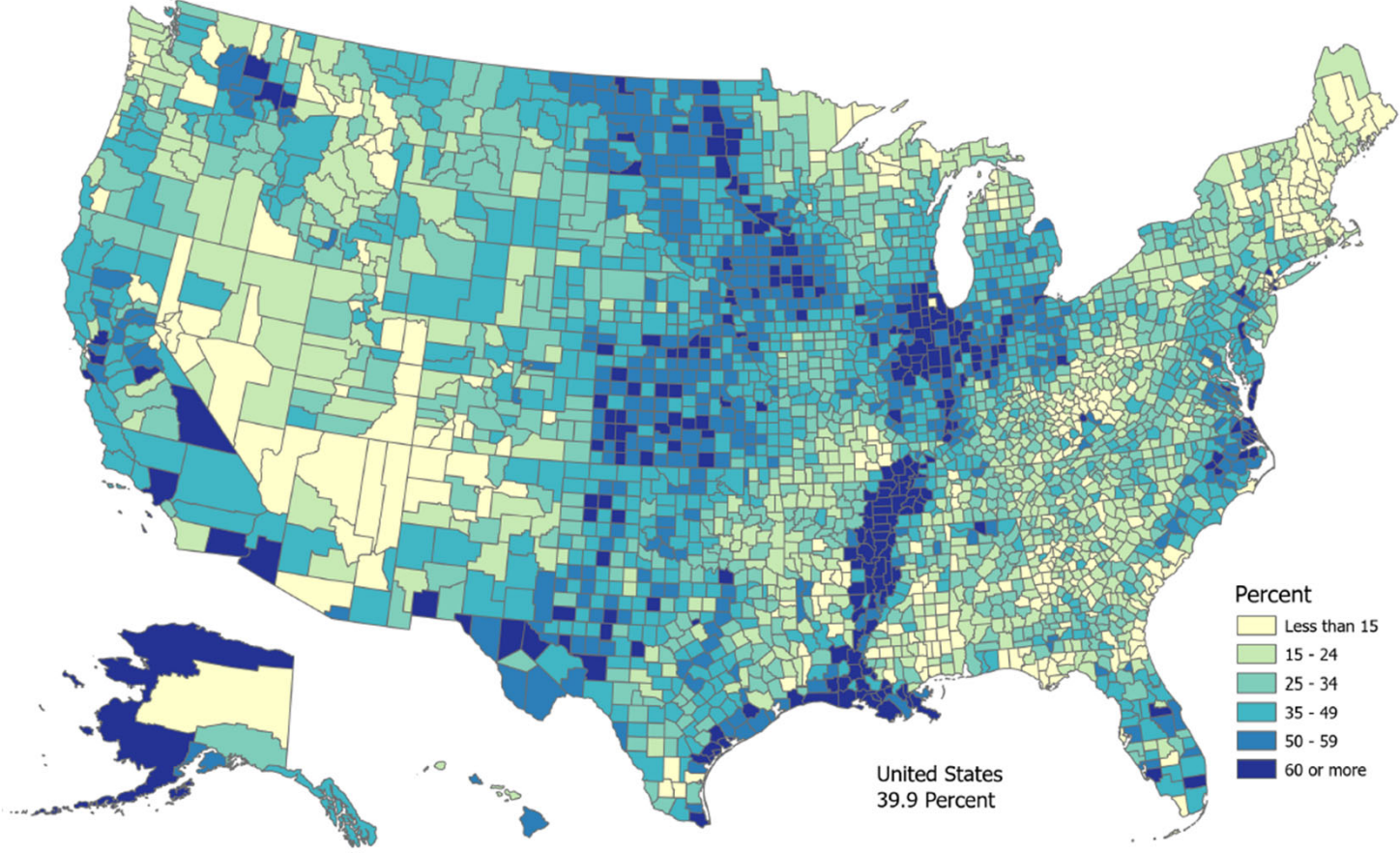
- Ownership types changed
- Demographic collected for all non-operating landlords
- No state level data published
- More data collected on how acres were acquired and will transition, with time horizons for both

# Survey Design for the 2024 TOTAL Survey

- The 2024 TOTAL Survey is a combination of a multiple frame survey of operating landowners and an area-based survey for non-operator landowners. The area frame non-operator landlord list was a GIS approach, based on Core Logic and FSA.
  - The U.S. sample included all 50 states.
  - The Non-operating Landlord sample size was 17,293.
  - The Operating Version had a sample size of 40,282.

# Land Rented or Leased, 2022

## As a Percent of Total, by County

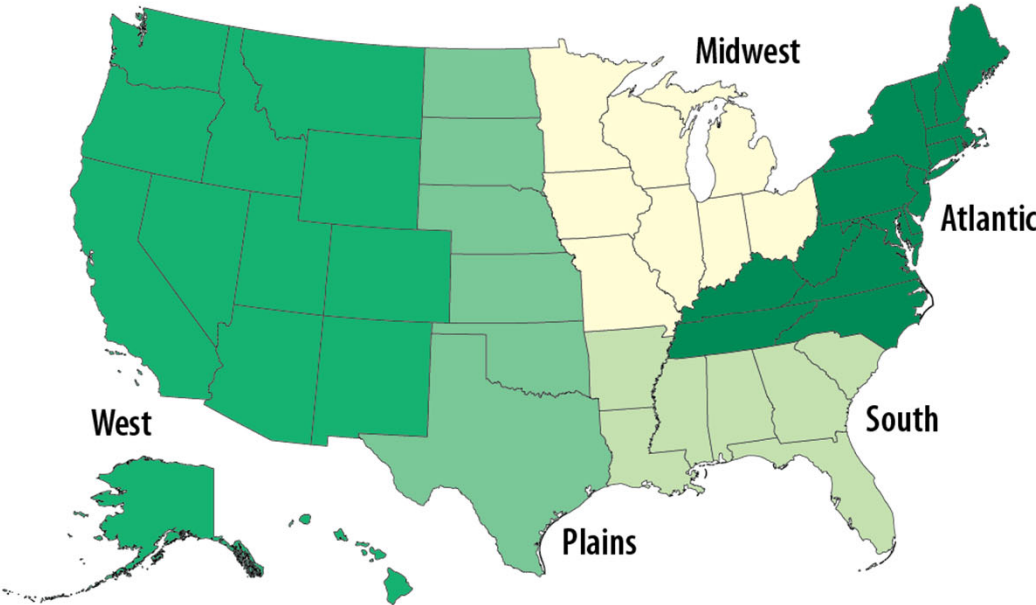


Source: USDA-NASS 2022 Census of Agriculture

# Landlord Entities and Land Owned, 2014 and 2024

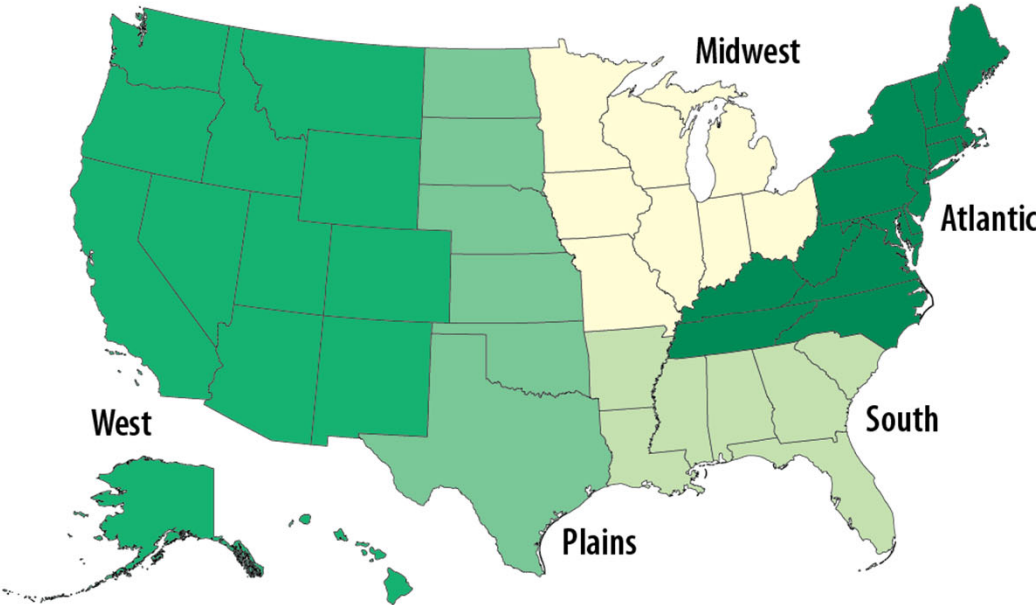
	2014 TOTAL	2024 TOTAL
<b>Entities</b>		
Landlord Entities	2,059,228	2,092,491
<b>Land (acres)</b>		
Land Owned and Operated	557,281,866	528,202,088
Land Owned and Rented to Others	353,768,136	347,841,870

# Owned Acres Rented to Others by Region, 2024



Region	Owned Acres Rented to Others (million)	% of Total Acres Rented Out
Atlantic	20.2	6
South	24.9	7
Midwest	73.9	21
Plains	149.4	43
West	79.4	23
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>347.8</b>	

# Landlord Entities by Region, 2024



Region	Landlord Entities	% of Total Entities
Atlantic	423,742	20
South	215,440	10
Midwest	797,637	38
Plains	435,235	21
West	220,436	11
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>2,092,491</b>	

## Land Rented to Others by Type, 2024 (acres)

	Non-operating Landlords	% Change From 2014	All Landlords	% Change From 2014
Owned land rented to others	276,082,757	-3	347,841,870	-1
Cropland	166,545,595	-8	204,785,330	-8
Pasture	97,863,143	5	129,229,368	10
Other land	11,674,018	31	13,827,171	41

# Landlord Ownership Arrangements

---

## Landlord Entities, Ownership Type and Owned Acres Rented Out, 2024

	Number of Landlord Entities	Owned Acres Rented Out	
		(million)	% of Total
<b>Operating Landlord</b>	<b>262,448</b>	<b>71.8</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Non-operating Landlord</b>	<b>1,830,043</b>	<b>276.1</b>	<b>79</b>
Privately Owned	1,234,261	104.8	38
Trust	308,823	73.5	27
Family-Owned Legal Entity	191,352	73.1	26
Non-Family Legal Entity & Other Ownership Types	61,016	15.9	6
Multiple Types of Ownership	34,592	8.7	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,092,491</b>	<b>347.8</b>	

## Number of Owners per Entity, Non-operating Landlords, 2024

	2024	% Total
Number of owners	3,778,863	
Entities with one owner	840,565	46
Entities with two owners	724,629	40
Entities with three or more owners	264,849	14
If two or more owners, co-owners married	611,575	

# Economics of Land Ownership

---

## Economic Profile of Landlord Entities, 2014 and 2024 (\$ billion)

	2014	2024	% Change
Value of Land and Buildings	1,132.0	1,659.4	47
Rent Received	31.2	34.1	9
Operating Expenses*	9.2	12.0	30
Capital Expenses	1.9	4.6	137
Debt	32.8	50.7	55

\*Operating Expenses = Production Expenses + Ownership Expenses

# Financial Details of Non-operating and Operating Landlords, 2024

Percent of Landlord Entities	Non-operating Landlords	Operating Landlords
Landlord Entities with No Debt	93	88
Landlord Entities with No Capital Expenses	94	88
Landlord Entities with Fully Paid For Acres	94	91
Operating Expenses as a Percent of Rent Received	34	39

## Economic Profile of Landlord Entities, by Region, 2024 (\$ billion)

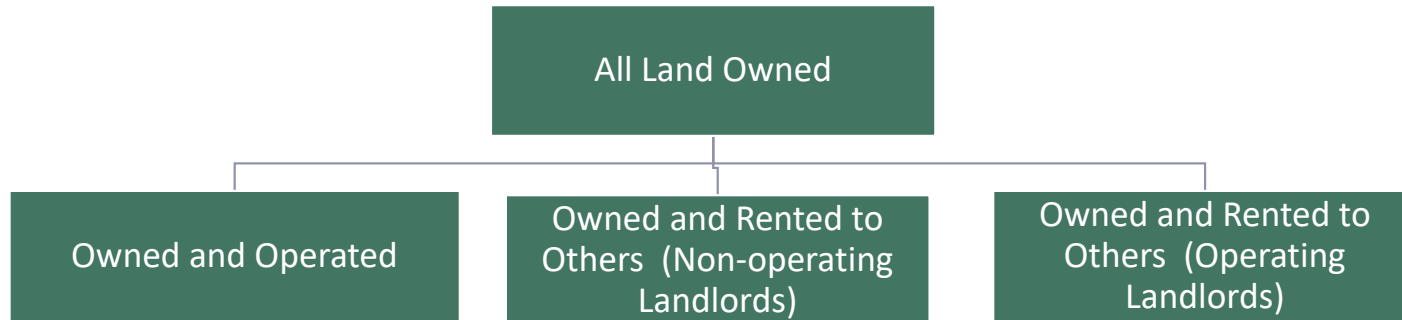
Region	Value of Land and Buildings	Rent Received	Operating Expenses*	Capital Expenses	Debt
Atlantic	136.0	2.0	1.2	0.8	6.5
South	132.8	2.7	0.9	0.4	4.5
Midwest	631.6	15.3	4.6	1.1	18.2
Plains	463.9	8.9	3.2	0.8	11.7
West	295.1	5.2	2.2	1.5	9.7
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>1,659.4</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>50.7</b>

\*Operating Expenses = Production Expenses + Ownership Expenses

# Acquisition and Transfer of Agricultural Land

---

# Land Components



# Acres Acquired by Each Method

## As a Percent of Total

	Non-operating Landlord	Operating Landlord	All Owned Farmland
<b>Purchased</b>			
From a nonrelative	25	38	33
From a relative	14	19	24
At an auction	2	2	3
<b>Other Acquisition Methods</b>			
Inherited through a will	40	35	29
Acquired through a trust	11	4	7
Received as a gift/donation	3	1	2
Obtained in some other way	4	2	3

## Acquired by Most Recent Year Acquired *(percent)*

	2019-2024	2014-2018	Prior to 2014
<b>Purchased</b>			
From a nonrelative	17	15	68
From a relative	15	15	72
At an auction	18	14	68
<b>Other Acquisition Methods</b>			
Inherited through a will	19	14	67
Acquired through a trust	25	25	50
Received as a gift/donation	15	8	77
Obtained in some other way	16	12	72

# Land Expected to Transition in the Next 5 Years, by Region

As a Percent of All Land Owned

	U.S.	Atlantic	South	Midwest	Plains	West
<b>Land Owned (<i>million acres</i>)</b>	876	62.4	64.8	160	327.9	260.8
<b>Transition to Others</b>						
Sell to a nonrelative	3	2	3	2	3	3
Sell to relative	1	1	1	1	3	0.4
Gift or donate	1	1	0.2	1	1	1
<b>Other Transition Methods</b>						
Put or keep in a trust	10	4	5	13	8	14
Put or keep in a will	15	16	17	16	17	12

# Land Expected to Transfer Ownership in the Next 5 Years

## Owned Acres Rented Out and All Owned Farmland

	Non-operating Landlord	All Owned Farmland
	<i>(1,000 acres)</i>	
<b>Transition to Others</b>		
Sell to a nonrelative	12,849	22,773
Sell to relative	2,916	12,756
Gift or donate	2,225	7,394
<b>Other Transition Methods</b>		
Put or keep in a trust	59,514	91,478
Put or keep in a will	108,661	135,204

# Land Uses

---

## Rights Sold and Leased (1,000 acres)

	Rights Sold		Rights Leased	
	Non-operating Landlords	All Owned Farmland	Non-operating Landlords	All Owned Farmland
Oil and Gas	1,654	11,153	16,533	39,276
Mineral	2,294	12,258	4,716	10,552
Development	875	3,462	NA	NA
Solar	NA	NA	5,138	7,330
Wind	NA	NA	12,791	22,073
Recreational and Other	(D)	(D)	11,817	44,298

NA represents not available; (D) represents withheld due to disclosure of individual records

# Demographics of Landlords

---

# Economic Characteristics by Demographic Group, 2024

As a Percent of All Total

	Number of principal landlords	Acres rented out	Rent received	Operating expenses	Value of land and buildings	Debt
	<i>(million)</i>		<i>(\$ billion)</i>			
<b>Total</b>	1.8	276	27	9	1,378	36
<i>Percent of Total</i>						
<b>Age</b>						
< 55	12	9	9	17	11	31
55 to 64	18	14	16	16	15	20
65 to 74	33	33	31	30	31	28
75 to 84	25	28	29	24	28	17
85+	11	15	15	13	15	4

# Economic Characteristics by Demographic Group, 2024

As a Percent of All Total

	Number of Principal Landlords	Acres Rented Out	Rent Received	Operating Expenses	Value of Land and Buildings	Debt
	<i>(million)</i>		<i>(\$ billion)</i>			
<b>Total</b>	1.8	276	27	9	1,378	36
<i>Percent of Total</i>						
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	65	61	60	64	62	81
Female	35	39	40	36	38	19

## Landlord Characteristics

- The average age of principal landlord in 2024 is 69.2, up from 66.5 in 2014.
- Over 35% of principal landlords are 75 years or older, and 11% are 85 and older.
- Over half (52%) have never farmed.

# Summary Highlights

---

## Summary Highlights

- There were 2.1 million landlord ownership arrangements. 87% were non-operating landlords who owned 79% of the rented land and 13% were operating landlords who owned 21% of the rented land.
- Landlords received \$34.1 billion in 2024 rental income.
- The value of land and buildings for owned acres rented out was \$1.7 trillion.
- Non-operating landlords owned 93% of the acreage debt-free and operating landlords owned 88% of acreage debt-free.
- Landowners acquired most of their land prior to 2014. Less than 25% of landowners acquired land in the past 5 years.

# Summary Highlights

- A relatively small share of owned acres are expected to transition to others in the next five years.
  - The land expected to transfer in the next 5 years is 43 million acres, or 5% of all farmland.
  - 23 million acres, or 2.6% of all farmland, are expected to be sold to a non-relative.
  - 20 million acres, or 2.3% of all farmland, are expected to be sold to a relative or given as a gift.
- 227 million acres (26%) are expected to transition via will or trust; landowners expect to keep or put 135 million acres in a will and 91.5 million of those acres in a trust.

# Release Products

---

- U.S. and Regional Data in Quick Stats
- Survey Page [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide\\_to\\_NASS\\_Surveys/TOTAL/index.php](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Surveys/Guide_to_NASS_Surveys/TOTAL/index.php)
  - Pre-Defined Queries
  - Highlights Document
  - Methodology and Quality Measures
- Data Release – Thursday, March 12, 2026, 12:00 noon ET

# Questions

---

All Reports Available at  
[www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov)

For Questions  
[nass@usda.gov](mailto:nass@usda.gov)

# 2024 TOTAL Survey

---

## Tenure, Ownership, and Transition of Agricultural Land (TOTAL) Briefing

Presented by Bryan Combs  
March 12, 2026