In 2017, the United States had 112,451 producers who identified as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, accounting for 3.3 percent of the country’s 3.4 million producers. The majority of Hispanic producers were in Texas, California, New Mexico, and Florida. They were younger and more likely to have recently started farming than U.S. producers overall. They may be of any race, but are largely white. Hispanic-operated farms accounted for 5.6 percent of U.S. agriculture sales and 3.6 percent of U.S. farmland.

Number and Location

The 2017 Census of Agriculture revised the demographic data collected to better capture the contributions of all persons involved in agricultural production. In response to detailed questions about farm decision making, more farms reported multiple individuals involved in farm operations. As a result of the new approach to counting producers, the total number of U.S. producers increased 7 percent between 2012 and 2017. The increase in the number of Hispanic producers was 13 percent. Hispanic-operated farms increased 8 percent between 2012 and 2017 to 86,278 farms.

In Texas, with more Hispanic producers than any other state, Hispanic producers are 10 percent of the state’s total producers. They made up a larger share of total producers in New Mexico, where 30 percent of all producers identified as Hispanic, and in California, where 12 percent of all producers identified as Hispanic.

Hispanic-operated Farms as Percent of Total Farms, by County, 2017

In six Texas counties, 80 percent or more of farms were Hispanic-operated: Starr (96 percent), Zapata (94 percent), Brooks (88 percent), Jim Hogg (84 percent), Duval (81 percent), and Webb (80 percent).
Producer Characteristics

Hispanic producers are younger on average than U.S. producers overall (55.0 years compared with 57.5 in 2017), and more likely to be a beginning farmer (36 percent of Hispanic producers had farmed 10 years or fewer, compared with 27 percent of all producers). Fewer Hispanic producers (65 percent) lived on their farm or ranch than U.S. producers overall (74 percent).

Farm Characteristics

Hispanic-operated farms sold $21.8 billion in agricultural products in 2017, with 59 percent ($12.8 billion) in crop sales and 41 percent ($9.0 billion) in sales of livestock and livestock products. These farms accounted for 5.6 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales. They received $158 million in government payments in 2017.

Farms and Land

Hispanic-operated farms accounted for 32 million acres of farmland, 3.6 percent of the U.S. total. The majority (61 percent) of these farms were less than 50 acres in size. The average size of Hispanic-operated farms was 372 acres.

Farm Specialization

Twenty-one percent of Hispanic-operated farms specialized in production of specialty crops, compared with 9 percent of all U.S. farms.

About the Census

The Census of Agriculture, conducted once every five years, is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Results from the 2017 and earlier censuses are available at national, state, and county levels.

See the searchable database Quick Stats, the new Census Data Query Tool, downloadable PDF reports, maps, and a variety of topic-specific products including profiles by race, ethnicity, and sex.

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture.

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