

Farm Producers

Nearly one-third of all U.S. producers have farmed for 10 or fewer years



ACH22-2/February 2024

Between 2017 and 2022, the number of U.S. producers held steady at 3.4 million, while the number of farms continued to decline. While the average age of farmers continued to rise, the number of beginning farmers - those who have farmed for 10 or fewer years - increased as well, with over 1 million beginning producers counted in the 2022 Census of Agriculture.

3.4 million producers



58.1 years average age



1.9 million farms



Total Producers

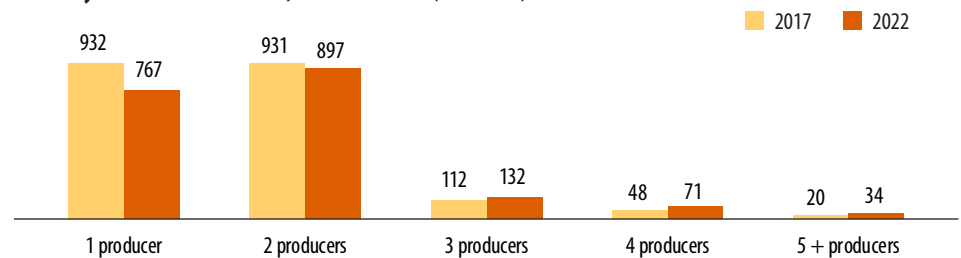
In 2022, 3.4 million producers operated 1.9 million farms covering 880.1 million acres that generated food, fuel and fiber for Americans and people around the world. The number of producers did not significantly change, while the number of farms decreased 6.9% since 2017 when the last ag census was conducted. The share of farms reporting more than one decision maker changed from 54% in 2017 to 60% in 2022.

While the number of producers between the ages of 35-64 declined 9%, the number of producers 65 and over increased 12%, continuing the trend of an aging producer population. The number of young producers, those under 35, also increased slightly.

	2017	2022	% change
Total Number of Producers (millions)	3.40	3.37	-0.8
Age <35	0.29	0.30	3.9
Age 35-64	1.96	1.78	-9.0
Age 65+	1.15	1.29	12.1

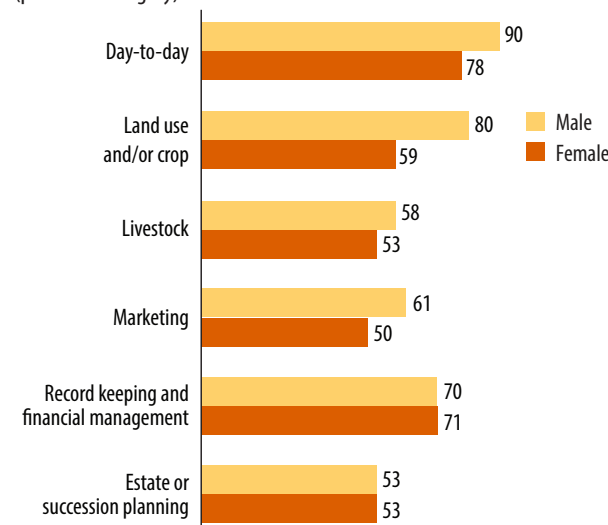
The total number of producers decreased slightly between 2017 and 2022, from 3.4 million to 3.37 million. The number of farms with only one or two producers declined, with the sharpest drop in farms reporting a single producer. All categories of farms with three or more producers increased.

Farms by Number of Producers, 2017 and 2022 (thousands)



Farm Decision Making by Type of Decision and Sex of Producer, 2022

(percent of category)



Male producers had higher rates of involvement in land use and/or crop, livestock, and marketing decisions than female producers.

Female producers were most involved in day-to-day, record keeping and financial management decisions.

Snapshot of U.S. Producers, 2022

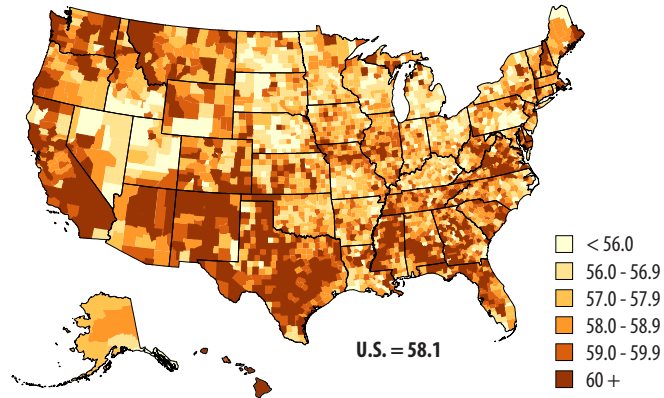
U.S. total = 3,374,044

	% of total
Male	64
Female	36
Age <35	9
Age 35-64	53
Age 65+	38
10 years or less farming	30
11 years or more farming	70
Lived on their farm	70
Did not work off farm	38
Worked off farm 1 to 199 days	22
Worked off farm 200+ days	40
Primary occupation farming	42
Primary occupation other than farming	58
With military service	9
Hispanic	3
American Indian	1.7
Asian	0.7
Black	1.2
Native Hawaiian	0.1
White	95.4
More than one race	0.9

Average Age Continues to Rise

The average age of all U.S. farm producers in 2022 was 58.1 years, up 0.6 years from 2017, continuing a long-term trend of aging in the U.S. producer population. Producers also tend to be experienced; they have been farming an average of 23.4 years.

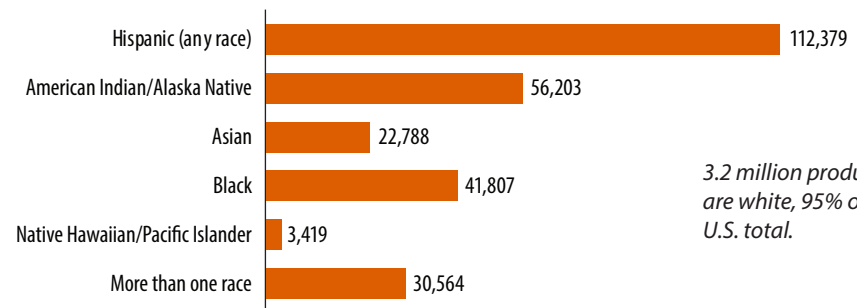
Average Age of Producers by County, 2022



On average, producers are older in southern states and younger in Midwestern states.

Producers by Ethnicity and Race

Consistent with Office of Management and Budget specifications for federal statistical agencies, the Census of Agriculture asked separate questions for ethnicity and race.



3.2 million producers are white, 95% of the U.S. total.

Demographics in the Census of Agriculture

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. Demographic information is available at national, state, and county levels, as well as for classes of farm and congressional districts.

Results from the 2022 Census, as well as previous censuses, are available online. See the searchable database Quick Stats, downloadable PDF reports, maps, and a variety of topic-specific products.

Highlights featuring demographic groups and profiles by race, ethnicity, and gender will become available throughout 2024.

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

Military Service

Accounting for 9% of the U.S. total, 305,753 producers had served or were serving in the U.S. military in 2022. Producers with military service are largely male (94%) and their average age is a full decade older than producers as a whole.

They are experienced farmers, with 77% having farmed 11 years or more. For more than half of these producers (51%), farming is their primary occupation.

At the county level, the share of producers with military service was highest in the southeastern United States.

68.2 Average age of producers with military service.

Beginning Producers

Beginning farmers have 10 or fewer years of farming experience. New and beginning producers increased in both the number of producers and share of all producers. Slightly over 1 million of the 3.4 million producers in 2022 were beginning farmers. Their average age was 47.1, and their farms were smaller than average in both acres and sales.

Top States	%
Rhode Island	41.4
Alaska	38.7
Maine	35.9
Colorado	35.6
New Hampshire	35.3
Hawaii	35.2
Georgia	34.4
Idaho	34.1
Nevada	33.9
Florida	33.9

As a percent of producers in the state, Rhode Island ranks first in beginning farmers.