



South Dakota Department of Agriculture Office of the Secretary

523 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501-5926

Phone (605) 773-5425 / Fax (605) 773-5926

1-800-228-5254

<http://sdda.sd.gov/>

My Fellow South Dakotans,

For more than a century, agriculture has been South Dakota's number one industry. Today, agriculture generates more than \$21 billion in annual economic activity and employs 40 percent of South Dakotans.

Yet agriculture is not a one-size-fits-all industry. As this edition of South Dakota Agriculture demonstrates, it does not matter how large or small an operation may be, agriculture has opportunities for all.

Over the years, our farmers and ranchers have become more specialized in the commodities they produce, but our industry as a whole has become much more diverse. We do not lead the nation in many individual production categories, but we are near the top in a vast array of areas, including corn, wheat, sunflowers, flax, soybeans, alfalfa, oats, hay, bison, pheasants, honey, cattle, sheep and swine. This tremendous variety—South Dakota is the “land of infinite variety” after all—speaks to the productivity of our land and the skill of our producers.



Using the information provided in this publication—now in its 70th year—allows our agriculturists to effectively raise and market our products. We cannot continue to grow this industry without information and the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) staff has done another outstanding job.

Agriculture remains the life-blood of South Dakota. It is not just our number one industry—it is a career, a passion and a way of life. In the 19th century homesteaders used a mule and a moldboard plow to break the thick prairie sod. In the 21st century, their descendents work the same land with no-till drills and combines equipped with Global Positioning Systems. Although the tools have changed, agriculture remains the common thread linking the citizens, businesses and communities of our state.

Sincerely,

Jon L. Farris

Acting Secretary of Agriculture

Agriculture – South Dakota's #1 Industry