

# ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Agriculture has always been a vital part of the lives of Illinois citizens and the economy of the state. Illinois is gifted with some of the richest agricultural resources in the world. The fertile soil, favorable climate, availability of excellent transportation via water, highway, rail and air, good marketing opportunities and a productive work force are some of the many resources that allow Illinois to be recognized as a world supplier of food, feed, and fiber. The variations in soil types, climate and topography in the state make it possible for Illinois farmers to produce a wide variety of agricultural commodities. Approximately 1,500 different soil types can be found in Illinois.

## **“VALUE ADDED” AGRICULTURE**

Food and agricultural product manufacturing and processing contribute significantly to Illinois' economy. Nationally, Illinois ranks among the leading states in the number of food and agricultural processing companies, including ethanol production, meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, vegetable processing and many others.

## **AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY**

The diversity in soil types allows farmers to grow many well known crops and lesser known specialty crops including alfalfa, amaranth, apples, bell peppers, blueberries, broccoli, buckwheat, canola, Christmas trees, clover, cucumbers, field corn, ginseng, grain sorghum, grass seed, herbs, horseradish, mushrooms, nursery products, oats, peaches, popcorn, potatoes, potted plants, pumpkins, rye, seed corn, snap beans, sod, soybeans, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter wheat and others. Livestock is produced using a wide variety of methods ranging from one ostrich in a pen to thousands of hogs in total confinement production. Other agricultural animals raised include beef cattle, bees, bison, broilers, buffalo, catfish, crayfish, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, goats, horses, hybrid striped bass, layers, llamas, mink, minnows, rabbits, sheep, tilapia, turkeys and others.

## **FARMS AND LAND VALUES**

In 2006, there were 72,400 farms in Illinois that contained 27.3 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 2006 was 377 acres. The average per acre value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2007, was \$4,330 per acre, compared to \$3,800 per acre on January 1, 2006. The average per acre value of cropland increased 16 percent from \$3,850 to \$4,460 in 2007. Solid corn prices brought on by the demand for ethanol led to increased land values in 2006. Other factors influencing the price of land came from the IRS 1031 Tax-Free Exchange and the fact that farmland returns competed well with stocks, bonds and money markets in 2006.

## **COMMODITY PRODUCTION AND MARKETING**

Illinois ranked second among all states in corn and soybean production in 2006. Production of corn for grain during 2006 totaled 1.82 billion bushels, 6 percent more than produced in 2005. The corn yield averaged 163 bushels per acre, 20 bushels per acre more than in 2005. Soybean production in 2006 totaled 482 million bushels, 10 percent more than in 2005. The soybean yield in 2006 was 48 bushels per acre, 1.5 bushels above 2005.

In 2006, Illinois pork producers marketed 1.47 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois fifth among all states. Cash receipts from pork sales declined seven percent from the previous year. Cattle and calf marketings during 2006 totaled 682 million pounds, one percent less than in 2005. Illinois ranked 18th in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

## **CASH RECEIPTS**

Total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois for 2006 totaled 8.64 billion dollars, 2 percent below 2005. Illinois ranked 7th among all states in total cash receipts in 2006. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 2006 totaled 6.84 billion dollars, down 2 percent from 2005 and placed Illinois third among all states in total crop cash receipts in 2006. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 2006 totaled 1.79 billion dollars, which was down 10 percent from 2005 and placed Illinois 25th among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts.

In 2006, corn accounted for 41.6 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 29.1 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 8.5 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to 2005, cash receipts for corn increased one percent and cash receipts for soybeans decreased less than one percent.

In 2006, hogs accounted for 9.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 6.9 percent and dairy products accounted for 3.2 percent. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.4 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 2006. Compared to 2005, cash receipts for all livestock categories declined.