

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 2008, there were 75,900 farms in Illinois that contained 26.7 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 2008 was 352 acres. The average per acre value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2009, was \$4,530 per acre, compared to \$4,550 one year previously. The average per acre value of cropland decreased 4 percent from \$4,850 to \$4,670.

COMMODITY PRODUCTION AND MARKETING

Illinois ranked second among all states in corn and soybean production in 2008. Production of corn for grain during 2008 totaled 2.13 billion bushels, 7 percent less than produced in 2007. The corn yield averaged 179 bushels per acre, 4 bushels per acre more than in 2007. Soybean production in 2008 totaled 428 million bushels, 19 percent above the previous year. The soybean yield in 2008 was 47 bushels per acre, 3.5 bushels above 2007.

In 2008, Illinois pork producers marketed 1.74 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois sixth among all states. Cattle and calf marketings during 2008 totaled 623 million pounds, down 21 percent from the previous year. Illinois ranked 22nd in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

CASH RECEIPTS

Total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois for 2008 totaled 16.4 billion dollars, 30 percent above 2007. Illinois ranked 5th among all states in total cash receipts in 2008. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 2008 totaled 14.2 billion dollars, up 36 percent from 2007 and placed Illinois third among all states in total crop cash receipts. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 2008 totaled 2.13 billion dollars, which was up 1 percent from 2007 and placed Illinois 25th among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts.

In 2008, corn accounted for 54.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 25.5 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 7.2 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to the previous year, cash receipts for corn increased 49 percent and cash receipts for soybeans increased 17 percent.

Hogs accounted for 5.9 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 3.6 percent and dairy products accounted for 2.3 percent. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.2 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 2008. Compared to the previous year, cash receipts for cattle decreased 21 percent, while cash receipts for dairy decreased 2 percent. Cash receipts for hogs and pigs increased 16 percent from 2007.