



# News Release

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## **Certified organic farming continues to grow in Kentucky**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released its 2015 Certified Organic Production Report today from the survey conducted earlier this year. The survey queried all known USDA-certified organic farms across Kentucky.

“Production of organic crops and livestock continues to grow in Kentucky,” said David Knopf, director of the NASS Eastern Mountain Regional Office in Kentucky. “It’s a small portion of all agricultural products raised in the Commonwealth, but still very important growth for those certified farms.”

In 2015, Kentucky’s USDA-certified organic farms sold a total of \$9.4 million in organically produced commodities, including \$3.4 million in crops sales and \$6 million in sales of livestock, poultry and their products.

“Sales have almost tripled since 2011 (last time only certified farms were surveyed),” Knopf said, “while the number of certified farms increased from 42 to 86.”

Milk led all sales totaling \$4.7 million, or 49 percent of all sales. Field crops and vegetables followed with \$1.6 million and \$1.5 million in sales, respectively. Cattle and other livestock round out the top five. Average sales were \$108,977 per farm.

“Field crops and vegetable production have shown the most growth in recent years,” Knopf added. “Thirty-six percent of all sales were crops, up from 24 percent in 2011.”

The 86 certified organic farms comprise 7,497 acres of land. Fifty-four percent, or 4,016 acres, is cropland, and 3,481 is in pasture. An additional 289 acres are transitioning to organic production on certified farms.

In Kentucky, 50 percent of the farms sold at least some products directly to consumers, via farm stands, farmers’ markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), and other arrangements. Twenty-six percent sold to retail or food service, and 58 percent of farms used wholesale markets to distribute their products. Eighteen farms sold products through a CSA.

Of the 86 operators, 47 percent have been farming less than 10 years, and 56 percent have grown or raised certified organic products less than five years. Forty farms plan to increase production during the next five years and 31 expect to maintain production.

The 2015 Certified Organic Production Report provides acreage, production and sales data for a variety of certified organic crops and inventory and sales data for certified organic livestock commodities. The 2015 Certified Organic Production Survey included all known farm operators who produced certified organic crops and/or livestock.

To learn more about this and other NASS surveys and corresponding data in Kentucky, visit [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Kentucky/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Kentucky/). To sign up to be counted in the Census and other surveys, visit <https://www.agcounts.usda.gov/cgi-bin/counts/>.