

FARM NUMBERS

The New England farm count for 2008 totaled 32,970 farms, a loss of 100 farms from a year earlier. Of the total 2008 farm count, 63 percent, or 20,690 farms had less than \$10,000 in sales. Land in farms in the six-state region, at 4.02 million acres, was 30,000 acres below 2007. The decline in the number of farms and land in farms reflects a continuing consolidation in farming operations and diversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses. In New England, farm numbers were below 2007 in the state of Maine. Farm land reductions occurred in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont. Maine accounted for the most land in farms in New England in 2008 with 1.35 million acres, followed by Vermont with 1.22 million acres. The average size of a farm in New England was 122 acres in 2008, ranging from 57 acres per farm in the highly populated state of Rhode Island to 174 acres per farm in the dairy state of Vermont.

Number of farms and land in farms were revised for 2007 at the U.S. and state level based on the Census of Agriculture. The Census of Agriculture, conducted every five years, provides a base from which the annual surveys measure the change from that base. At the end of this five-year cycle, the annual estimates are revised based on inter-census trends. The 2007 Census of Agriculture showed a significant increase in the number of farms, and reversed the downward trend that was shown in the annual estimates of Farm Numbers since the 2002 Census of Agriculture. NASS believes that some of the increase is due to methodological changes that allowed NASS to more accurately count small farms in the 2007 Census.

NASS concluded that the most appropriate action was not to revise the farm number series between 2002 and 2006. The 2007 Census of Agriculture will form a new base for farm numbers that will be used to anchor the annual estimates for 2008 and beyond. For more information regarding revisions to previous year estimates, please refer to the National release: *Farms, Land in Farms and Livestock Operations, 2008 Summary*. Revisions for 2003 – 2007 are available from *Farms and Land in Farms, Final Estimates 2003-2007*. Both publications were published in February, 2009 and are available online from the NASS website.

The definition of a farm has remained the same since 1974: any place which produced and sold, or normally would have produced and sold, \$1,000 worth of agricultural products during the year. Activities included as agriculture, however, have undergone modifications in recent years. In the years since 1997, commodities are defined as agriculture based on the 1997 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as jointly developed by the United States Office of Management and Budget, Statistics Canada, and the Mexican Institute of National Statistics. Land in farms includes crop and livestock acreage, wasteland, woodland, pasture, land in summer fallow, idle cropland, land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program and other set aside or commodity acreage programs. It excludes public, industrial, and grazing association land and nonagricultural land. For further details concerning the farm definition history, please access the NASS website www.nass.usda.gov.



Photos courtesy of Starry Night Farm, Warner, NH

**FARMS: Number and Land in Farms by Economic Sales Class, 1999 - 2008
and Value per Acre January 1, 1999 - 2008**

State and Year	Farms ¹	Economic Sales Class ²		Land In Farms	Economic Sales Class ²		Average Farm Size	Farm Real Estate Value per Acre January 1 ³
		\$1,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 or Over		\$1,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 or Over		
	Number				1,000 Acres		Acres	Dollars
Connecticut								
1999	4,250	2,850	1,400	370	140	230	87	6,500
2000	4,200	2,850	1,350	360	140	220	86	7,050
2001	4,200	2,850	1,350	360	130	230	86	7,700
2002	4,200	2,850	1,350	360	140	220	86	8,500
2003	4,200	2,850	1,350	370	150	220	88	9,500
2004	4,200	2,850	1,350	380	150	230	90	10,400
2005	4,200	2,850	1,350	390	150	240	93	11,200
2006	4,200	2,850	1,350	400	160	240	95	12,100
2007 *	4,900	3,100	1,800	410	140	270	84	12,700
2008	4,900	3,050	1,850	400	130	270	82	12,700
Maine								
1999	7,100	4,900	2,200	1,320	490	830	186	1,300
2000	7,100	4,900	2,200	1,350	520	830	190	1,400
2001	7,150	4,200	2,950	1,350	440	910	189	1,500
2002	7,200	5,100	2,100	1,370	540	830	190	1,600
2003	7,200	5,100	2,100	1,370	540	830	190	1,750
2004	7,200	5,100	2,100	1,370	540	830	190	1,870
2005	7,100	5,000	2,100	1,360	530	830	192	1,990
2006	7,100	5,000	2,100	1,350	520	830	190	2,110
2007 *	8,100	5,300	2,800	1,350	480	870	167	2,230
2008	8,000	5,200	2,800	1,350	480	870	169	2,200
Massachusetts								
1999	6,100	3,450	2,650	540	200	340	89	5,800
2000	6,100	3,500	2,600	540	210	330	89	6,500
2001	6,100	3,700	2,400	520	210	310	85	7,300
2002	6,100	3,850	2,250	520	220	300	85	8,100
2003	6,100	3,850	2,250	520	220	300	85	9,300
2004	6,100	3,850	2,250	520	220	300	85	9,920
2005	6,100	3,850	2,250	520	220	300	85	10,500
2006	6,100	3,850	2,250	520	220	300	85	11,700
2007 *	7,700	4,800	2,900	520	210	310	68	11,900
2008	7,700	4,800	2,900	510	210	300	66	12,300
New Hampshire								
1999	3,300	2,400	900	440	210	230	133	2,300
2000	3,300	2,400	900	440	220	220	133	2,400
2001	3,300	2,400	900	440	230	210	133	2,550
2002	3,400	2,500	900	450	240	210	132	2,800
2003	3,400	2,500	900	450	240	210	132	3,100
2004	3,400	2,500	900	450	240	210	132	3,400
2005	3,400	2,500	900	460	250	210	135	3,780
2006	3,400	2,500	900	460	250	210	135	4,240
2007 *	4,150	2,900	1,250	470	230	240	113	4,800
2008	4,150	2,900	1,250	470	230	240	113	4,900

¹ Any establishment from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or would normally be sold during the year. Commodities are defined as agriculture based on the 1997 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

² Economic sales classes are based on the gross value of sales, which include sales of agricultural products such as crops, livestock, horses, honey, furs, fish, nursery and greenhouse products, rabbits, etc. Government program payments from the previous year are also included.

³ Average farm real estate is the value of farmland and buildings.

* 2007: New base for farm numbers that will be used to anchor the annual estimates for 2008 and beyond. SOURCE: 2007 Census of Agriculture.

**FARMS: Number and Land in Farms by Economic Sales Class, 1999 - 2008
and Value per Acre January 1, 1999 - 2008**

State and Year	Farms ¹	Economic Sales Class ²		Land In Farms	Economic Sales Class ²		Average Farm Size	Farm Real Estate Value per Acre January 1 ³
		\$1,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 or Over		\$1,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 or Over		
	Number				1,000 Acres		Acres	Dollars
Rhode Island								
1999	800	450	350	60	30	30	75	6,900
2000	800	450	350	60	30	30	75	7,300
2001	830	470	360	60	30	30	72	7,700
2002	850	490	360	60	30	30	71	8,300
2003	850	490	360	70	32	38	82	9,300
2004	850	490	360	70	32	38	82	10,900
2005	850	490	360	70	30	40	82	12,800
2006	850	490	360	70	30	40	82	15,300
2007 *	1,220	750	470	70	30	40	57	16,400
2008	1,220	740	480	70	30	40	57	16,800
Vermont								
1999	6,700	4,000	2,700	1,300	370	930	194	1,600
2000	6,600	4,000	2,600	1,270	380	890	192	1,700
2001	6,600	4,000	2,600	1,270	390	880	192	1,800
2002	6,600	4,050	2,550	1,260	400	860	191	1,900
2003	6,500	4,050	2,450	1,250	390	860	192	2,050
2004	6,400	3,950	2,450	1,250	390	860	195	2,150
2005	6,300	3,850	2,450	1,250	390	860	198	2,320
2006	6,300	3,850	2,450	1,250	390	860	198	2,480
2007 *	7,000	4,000	3,000	1,230	350	880	176	2,740
2008	7,000	4,000	3,000	1,220	340	880	174	2,900
New England								
1999	28,250	18,050	10,200	4,030	1,440	2,590	143	2,670
2000	28,100	18,100	10,000	4,020	1,500	2,520	143	2,883
2001	28,180	17,620	10,560	4,000	1,430	2,570	142	3,116
2002	28,350	18,840	9,510	4,020	1,570	2,450	142	3,387
2003	28,250	18,840	9,410	4,030	1,572	2,458	143	3,811
2004	28,150	18,740	9,410	4,040	1,572	2,468	144	4,122
2005	27,950	18,540	9,410	4,050	1,570	2,480	145	4,462
2006	27,950	18,540	9,410	4,050	1,570	2,480	145	4,912
2007 *	33,070	20,850	12,220	4,050	1,440	2,610	122	5,230
2008	32,970	20,690	12,280	4,020	1,420	2,600	122	5,308

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² Economic sales classes are based on the gross value of sales, which include sales of agricultural products such as crops, livestock, horses, honey, furs, fish, nursery and greenhouse products, rabbits, etc. Government program payments from the previous year are also included.

³ Average farm real estate is the value of farmland and buildings.

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FARMS: Agricultural Land Value per Acre, January 1, 1999 - 2008

Region and Year	Farm Real Estate Value per Acre ^{1,2}	Cropland Value per Acre ²	Pastureland Value per Acre ³
New England			
1999	2,670	2,840	2,630
2000	2,883	3,240	3,000
2001	3,116	3,510	3,230
2002	3,387	5,240	3,590
2003	3,811	5,920	3,880
2004	4,122	6,270	4,350
2005	4,462	6,770	4,740
2006	4,912	7,370	5,290
2007	5,230	7,690	6,360
2008	5,308	7,930	6,370

¹ Average farm real estate is the value of farmland and buildings.

² Farm real estate and cropland values include CT, ME, MA, NH, RI and VT.

³ Pastureland values include CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, RI and VT.