

Farm and Ranch Irrigation

For more detailed data, see the Census of Agriculture found at www.agcensus.usda.gov

Irrigated Acreage in Pennsylvania Down from 2003:

There were 1,090 farms with 17,359 acres being irrigated in Pennsylvania with a total of 13,000 acre-feet of water on all acres irrigated during 2008 down from 1,589 farms and 19,633 acres in 2003.

Producers report irrigating corn, corn for silage/greenchop, soybeans, alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures, all other hay, and tobacco. They also report irrigating land in vegetables, including sweet corn, tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, and land in orchards.

Eighty-four farms report irrigating 384 acres with gravity systems while 394 farms report using a sprinkler system on 10,710 acres. Drip, trickle or low-flow micro sprinklers are being used on 770 farms for a total of 6,671 acres.

In Pennsylvania, a total of 562 farms report 880 wells capable of being used, of which 786 are being utilized. The average depth reported on those wells is 214 feet, with an average of 82 feet to water depth, 175 feet to the depth of the bowels, and an average of 123 gpm

pumping capacity. The average operating pressure reported was 33 psi with an average engine size of 16 hp operating at an average of 387 hours.

Total energy expenses were reported at \$772,000 to power 1,378 pumps on 908 farms in Pennsylvania. This breaks down to be \$59.98 per acre for water from wells and \$50.46 per acre for surface water irrigation.

The Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey is conducted every five years as a supplement to the Census of Agriculture that expands upon the basic irrigation data collected in the 2007 Census of Agriculture. In the publication NASS provides details on acres and yield of irrigated crops, quantity of water applied, method of water application, irrigation expenditures and other data on farm and ranch irrigation. In 2008, for the first time ever NASS included all horticultural specialty farms in the survey. The irrigation information for these operations has been published separately. For more information about the Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

