



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL FIELD OFFICE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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2017 Census of Agriculture data now available
Farms down 10 percent in Pennsylvania
Organic farm numbers increased 75 percent from 2012 in Pennsylvania
Military veterans engaged in production on 14 percent of Pennsylvania farms

HARRISBURG, PA --- April 12, 2019 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Northeastern Regional Field Office announced the results of the 2017 Census of Agriculture with new information about 53,157 Pennsylvania farms and ranches and those who operate them, including first-time data about on-farm decision making, down to the county level. The number of farms are down for Pennsylvania by 10 percent from 2012 but most of this decrease can be attributed to the mid-size farms of 50 to 179 acres being lost, according to King Whetstone, Northeastern Regional Field Office Director.

“The Census shows new data that can be compared to previous censuses for insights into agricultural trends and changes down to the county level,” said NASS Administrator Hubert Hamer. “We are pleased to share first-time data on topics such as military status and on-farm decision making. To make it easier to delve into the data, we are pleased to make the results available in many online formats including [a new data query interface](#), as well as traditional data tables.”

Census data provide valuable insights into demographics, economics, land and activities on U.S. farms and ranches. Some key Pennsylvania highlights include:

- The average age of all producers was 54.8 years of age, compared to 53.7 years in 2012.
- The number of female producers increased by 15 percent from 2012.
- The per farm average net income increased from \$29,593 in 2012 to \$42,020 in 2017.
- The total value of production of all products is \$7.8 billion, an increase of 5% over \$7.4 billion in 2012.
- Organic farm numbers increased by 75 percent from 2012.
- Value of sales is \$708 million for organic farming, up from \$79 million in 2012.

Other demographic highlights include:

- New and beginning producers with 10 years or less of farming comprised of 23,106 producers.
- Producers with military service was published for the first time with 7,549 producers represented.

Results are available in many online formats including [video presentations](#), [a new data query interface](#), maps, and traditional data tables. To address questions about the 2017 Census of Agriculture data, @USDA_NASS will host a live Twitter “Ask the Census Experts” #StatChat on Friday, April 12 at 1 p.m. ET. All Census of Agriculture information is available at www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.

The Census tells the story of American agriculture and is an important part of our history. First conducted in 1840 in conjunction with the decennial Census, the Census of Agriculture accounts for all U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. After 1920, the Census happened every four to five years. By 1982, it was regularly conducted once every five years. Today, NASS sends questionnaires to nearly 3 million potential U.S. farms and ranches. Nearly 25 percent of those who responded did so online. Conducted since 1997 by USDA NASS – the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture – it remains the only source of comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the nation and is invaluable for planning the future.

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