

USDA COUNTS FARMS BECAUSE AMERICA COUNTS ON FARMERS

Last year, more than 20,000 of your fellow farmers and ranchers completed the survey. Your participation in ARMS ensures that policy makers and others, including farmers and ranchers like you, base decisions on facts that come straight from the source.

ARMS is conducted in three phases that continue throughout the year. Growers are surveyed during the following data collection periods:

ARMS 1: Survey screening
May - July

ARMS 2: Production practices and costs survey
September – December

ARMS 3: Costs and returns survey
January - April

For more information, visit us at:
www.nass.usda.gov/go/arms

The results of this survey will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law.

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United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS)

www.nass.usda.gov/go/arms



The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's primary source of information on the production practices, resource use, and economic well-being of America's farms and ranches. The results of this survey give farmers, ranchers, and many others factual insights into many aspects of farming, ranching, and conditions in agricultural communities.

Farmers and ranchers rely on good information to make decisions every day. Good data are also critical for federal farm policy decision making. That's why the information provided by farmers and ranchers in ARMS is so important.



ARMS tells the story of American agriculture to a public that has less and less direct contact with the farm community. Through ARMS, American farmers and ranchers tell us that they:

- **Are family farmers:** Approximately 98 percent of all farms are owned and operated by families, and 88 percent of farm production originates on such farms.

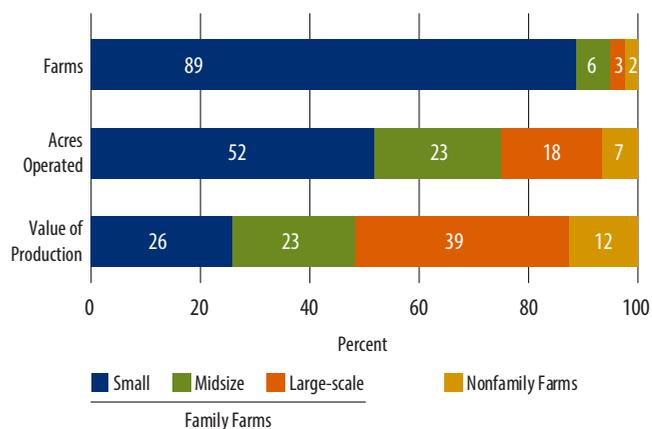
- **Support local markets:** Local sales of fruits and vegetables by produce farmers amounted to nearly \$7.6 billion in 2016.

- **Are conservationists:** 40 percent of combined acreage planted to corn, cotton, soybeans, and wheat were in no-till or strip-till systems aimed at improving soil health and limiting nutrient run-off. Hog producers have steadily adjusted their manure management practices to become more environmentally friendly.

- **Face significant year-to-year financial risks:** The typical annual change (up or down) in a farmer's household income amounts to \$20,000, eight times that of a non-farm household.

- **Readily adopt new technologies:** Automated guidance systems for farm equipment, which ease farmer fatigue and pinpoint precise field locations, have been adopted on half of planted acres for major crops. While less than 1 percent of cows are milked using robotic milkers, 35 percent of cows are monitored by computerized systems that gather data on each milking.

Small family farms accounted for 89 percent of all U.S. farms and 26 percent of production in 2017.



Note: Farms are sorted by their annual gross cash farm income (GCFI): under \$350,000 (small); between \$350,000 and \$999,999 (midsize); and \$1 million or more (large). Nonfamily farms where the principal operator, and people related to the principal operator, do not own a majority of the farm business.

Source: USDA 2017 Agricultural Resource Management Survey