



May 2009

On February 4, 2009, the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service released the results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture. The results surprised many involved in agriculture. Probably the most surprising number was that for the first time since World War II we saw an increase in the number of farms. Across the United States, the number of farms rose four percent. Farms in New England increased 17 percent. Thirty-nine of the fifty states had increases in farm numbers. Many of these farms had less than \$2,500 of sales. We also saw a continuation of some trends that are not necessarily new here in New England, though their growth at the national level did surprise some. These trends included direct marketing for human consumption, organically produced agriculture commodities, and agri-tourism.

We have included selected statistics for each New England State and county in this annual bulletin. The U.S. and State reports are also available at www.agcensus.gov. The complete results include tabulation by type of farm, size of farm, and by county. Other Census of Agriculture reports that are available or will soon be available are tabulations by Congressional District, water shed, and zip code.

From the moment the Census numbers hit the press, our staff has been fielding calls from the agricultural community eager to use the data to promote their state and county programs. Our thanks go out to the thousands of farm operators across the region who participated in the Census of Agriculture and all the other surveys that we conduct throughout the year. We understand the time commitment needed to complete these questionnaires and fully appreciate your effort. You **are** the heart and soul of our program, for without your cooperation, the rest of the story could not be accurately written.

We also appreciate the cooperation extended by the leaders of State agencies that support agriculture in each of the New England States. Their financial contributions allow us to provide data users with a printed copy of this annual report each year. Finally, I would like to recognize Kathy Schmitt for her assistance in preparing this publication. Her extra effort to solicit photos from local farms allows us to showcase agriculture in each of the six New England States.

Sincerely,

Gary R. Keough
Director