

Highlights of the 2022 Census of Agriculture

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Introduction

The short analysis captures the highlights of the 2022 Census of Agriculture. The results of this Census were released in February of 2024. This analysis will highlight some of the results from the national Census as well as results from Michigan. It should be noted that these figures are dependent on responses by farmers. Over time it appears that the response rate for various surveys has been declining. While these figures provide a good overview of the state of agriculture, some figures such as the number of farms, land in farms and sales may be understated.

The results indicate that the long term trends of farming are continuing. With the exception of farms with \$500,000 or more in sales, the number of farms continues to decline. Sales rose faster than expenses in 2022 compared to 2017 which led to an increase in net farm income.

National Overview

According to the results of the 2022 Census of Agriculture, there were 1.90 million farms. The total number of acres in farms was 880.1 million. This represents about 41 percent of all the land in the U.S. and does not include federally owned land that the federal government rented to livestock producers for grazing. The average farm was 463 acres; an increase of 22 acres or 5.0 percent from 2017. The average value of land and buildings rose from \$1.312 billion in 2017, to \$1.781 billion 2022; an increase of 35.7 percent. The price of farmland continues to rise.

The market value of agricultural products in 2022 was \$532.09 billion. This was an increase of \$154.56 billion or 39.8 percent from 2017. Farm sales can vary widely from year to year based on commodity prices or weather. Production expenses rose from \$326.39 billion in 2017, to \$424.14 billion in 2022; an increase of 29.9 percent.

The Census of Agriculture indicates that there were approximately 140,000 fewer farmers in 2022 compared to 2017. More than two thirds of this decline were farms with less than \$2,500 in sales (a farm is defined as any place that sold or normally would have sold \$1,000 in agricultural products). Of the 1.90 million farms in 2022; 381,259 or 20.0 percent had sales in excess of \$100,000. There were 173,025 farms with sales in excess of \$500,000.

Michigan Overview

According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture Michigan had 45,581 farms, a decline of 2,060 compared to 2017. The average size was 208 acres and the median farm only had 50 acres. Only 2,152 farms were more than 1,000 acres. This is likely due to the fact that some Michigan farms produce high value fruits and vegetables, and many farms are part-time or hobby operations. Michigan farms are considerably smaller than the national average. More than one third of farms had sales of less than \$2,500 in 2022.

In 2022, Michigan had 9.47 million acres of land devoted to agricultural production. The amount of land devoted to agriculture declined by slightly less than 300,000 acres compared to 2017. Competition for land has put upward pressure on land prices and land rents.

The value of agricultural products sold in 2022 was \$12.21 billion, an increase of \$3.99 billion or 48.5 percent from 2017. Farm production expenses were \$9.79 billion an increase of \$2.58 billion or 35.8 percent. Net farm income in 2022 was \$2.98 billion or on average \$65,422 per farm. Net farm income was essentially twice as high in 2022 as it was in 2017.

As noted above more than one-third of the farms in Michigan had sales of less than \$2,500. It appears that the number of farms that had less than \$100,000 in sales have declined while the number of farms with sales in excess of \$100,000 has increased. The number of farms with sales in excess of \$100,000 has increased by about 800, while the number of farms with sales of less than \$2,500 has declined by more than 2,300.

References

U.S. Government Accountability Office. *Managing Federal Lands and Water*, <https://www.gao.gov/managing-federal-lands-and-waters>

U.S. Department of Agriculture (2024). 2022 Census of Agriculture.