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Tools for Community Self-determination

Umatilla County, Oregon Local Farm & Food Economy

Highlights of a data compilation
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for
Oregon Rural Action

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Umatilla County (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2009)

73,347 residents receive \$2.2 billion of income annually. Although income from manufacturing and retail jobs has fallen over the past ten years, personal income still increased 145% from 1969 – 2009, after dollars were adjusted for inflation. Strong population growth [*see below*] has contributed to this increase. The largest source of personal income is transfer payments (from government programs such as pensions), which account for \$503 million (23%) of personal income [*see below*].

Government jobs rank second, with \$432 million. Capital income (from interest, rent or dividends) brings in \$352 million of personal income. Health care jobs are next, with \$147 million.

Manufacturing jobs produce \$124 million of personal income, while retail jobs rank sixth, with \$103 million. Note that income from public sources makes up 42% of all personal income in the county.

Income earned from transfer payments includes \$176 million of retirement and disability insurance benefits, \$195 million of medical benefits, \$56 million of income maintenance benefits, \$30 million of unemployment insurance, and \$17 million of veteran's benefits.

Government income includes \$84 million of income earned by federal workers, \$102 million for state government workers, and \$235 million earned by local government staff. Military personnel earn \$11 million of personal income.

Although population has increased 65% since 1969, there has been only limited public planning to assure a secure and stable food supply.

Issues affecting low-income residents of Umatilla County:

Over 24,000 residents (36%) earn less than 185% of federal poverty guidelines. At this level of income, children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch at school. These lower-income residents spend \$48 million each year buying food, including \$9 million of SNAP benefits (formerly known as

¹ Nick Wojciak contributed substantial research to this report.

food stamps) and additional WIC coupons. The county's 1,658 farmers receive an annual combined total of \$30 million in subsidies (23-year average, 1987-2009), mostly to raise crops such as wheat or corn that are sold as commodities, not to feed Umatilla County residents. *Data from Federal Census of 2000, Bureau of Labor Statistics, & Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

8% percent of the county's households (over 5,600 residents) earn less than \$10,000 per year. *Source: Federal Census American Community Survey 2005-2009.*

20% of Oregon adults aged 18-64 carry no health insurance. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

Food-related health conditions:

26% of Oregon residents reported in 2009 that they eat five or more servings of fruit or vegetables each day. 74% do not. This is a key indicator of health, since proper fruit and vegetable consumption has been connected to better health outcomes. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

56% of Oregon adults reported in 2009 they have at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five or more days per week, or vigorous physical activity for 20 or more minutes three or more days per week. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

7% of Oregon residents have been diagnosed with diabetes as of 2010. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.* Medical costs for treating diabetes and related conditions in the county are estimated at \$42 million per year. Costs for the state of Oregon as a whole total \$2.2 billion. *Source: American Diabetes Association cost calculator.*

61% of Oregon residents are overweight (33%) or obese (28%). *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

The county's farms (Agricultural Census, 2007)

Agricultural Census data for 2007 were released February 4, 2009

The Census of Agriculture defines a "farm" as "an operation that produces, or would normally produce and sell, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products per year."

Land:

- 1,658 farms. This is 4% of Oregon farms.
- Umatilla County had 1% more farms in 2007 than in 2002. Some of this may be due to census takers making better contact with small farms.
- 304 (18%) of these are 1,000 acres or more in size.
- 857 (52%) farms are less than 50 acres.
- Average farm size is 873 acres, significantly more than the state average of 425 acres.
- The county has 1.4 million acres of land in farms.
- This amounts to 9% of the state's farmland.
- Umatilla County holds 440,000 acres of harvested cropland.
- 142,000 of these acres are irrigated.
- Average value of land and buildings per farm was \$1 million. This was more than the 2007 state average of \$804,000.

Sales:

With the exception of foods sold directly to consumers (see below), farmers typically sell commodities to wholesalers, brokers or manufacturers that require further processing or handling to become consumer items. The word “commodities” is used in this report to mean the crops and livestock sold by farmers through these wholesale channels. The term “products” encompasses commodity sales, direct sales, and any other sales.

- The county’s farmers sold \$320 million of crops and livestock in 2007.
- Farm product sales increased by 56% from 2002 to 2007.
- \$245 (77%) million of crops was sold.
- \$75 (23%) million of livestock and products were sold.
- 1,026 (62%) of the county’s farms sold less than \$10,000 of products in 2007.
- Total sales from these small farms were \$2 million, 0.6% of the county’s farm product sales.
- 337 (20%) of the county’s farms sold more than \$100,000 of products.
- Total sales from these larger farms were \$308,000, 96% of the county’s farm product sales.
- 55% of the county’s farms (913 of 1,658) reported net losses in 2007. This is less than the Oregon average of 65%.
- 552 (33%) of Umatilla County farmers collected a combined total of \$19 million of federal subsidies in 2007.

Top farm products of Umatilla County (2007). *Note that sales data for aquaculture, fruits, tree nuts, and berries, ornamentals, horses and ponies, sheep, goats, and their products, Christmas trees, and milk were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality. Therefore, these products are not included in this chart.*

Product	\$ millions
Wheat	92
Cattle and calves	66
Vegetables	61
Forage crops (hay, etc.)	45
Corn	8
Barley	1

Production Expenses:

- Hired farm labor was the single largest expense for Umatilla County farmers in 2007, totaling \$39 million (15%).
- Livestock and poultry purchases ranked as the second most important expense, at \$31 million (12%).
- Fertilizer, lime, and soil conditioners cost farmers \$30 million (11%).
- Land and building rental totaled \$22 million (8%).
- Supplies, repairs, and maintenance expenses were \$21 million (8%).
- Farmers charged \$20 million to depreciation (8%).
- Chemical purchases cost \$18 million (7%).

Cattle & Dairy:

- 695 farms hold an inventory of 68,000 cattle.
- 82,000 cattle worth \$66 million were sold by county farmers in 2007.
- 542 farms raise beef cows.
- 16 farms raise milk cows.

- 6 farms produced corn for silage.
- 421 farms produced 199,000 tons of forage crops (hay, etc.) on 44,000 acres.
- 299 farms sold \$45 million of forage.

Other Livestock & Animal Products:

- 38 farms hold an inventory of 256 hogs and pigs.
- 47 farms sold 404 hogs and pigs in 2007.
- 118 farms hold an inventory of 8,454 sheep and lambs.
- 138 farms sold sheep, goats, and lambs in 2007. *Note that sales data for sheep, goats, and lambs were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 126 farms hold an inventory of 2,508 laying hens.
- 8 farms raise broiler chickens.
- 2 farms engage in aquaculture.
- 106 farms raise horses and ponies.

Grains, Oil Seeds, & Edible Beans:

- 288 farms produced \$104 million of grains, oil seeds, and edible beans.
- 29 farms produced 2 million bushels of corn on 9,332 acres, worth \$8 million.
- This amounts to an average price per bushel of corn of \$4.00. *Note that this price is an approximation, and does not necessarily represent an actual price at which corn was sold.*
- 263 farms produced 16 million bushels of wheat on 303,000 acres, worth \$92 million.
- This amounts to an average price per bushel of wheat of \$5.75. *Note that this price is an approximation, and does not necessarily represent the actual price at which wheat was sold.*
- This includes
 - 243 farms produced 15 million bushels of winter wheat on 269,000 acres.
 - 72 farms produced 1.5 million bushels of spring wheat on 34,000 acres.

Vegetables & Melons (some farmers state that Ag Census data does not fully represent vegetable production):

- 103 farms worked 41,000 acres to produce vegetables, selling \$61 million.
- This represents a 2% decrease in the number of farms (from 102 in 2002) and an 8% decrease in sales (from \$66 million), from 2002 levels.
- 33 farms raised potatoes.

Fruits (some farmers state that Ag Census data does not fully represent fruit production):

- 143 farms in the county hold 5,077 acres of orchards.
- 131 farms sold fruits, nuts and berries. *Note that sales data for fruits, nuts, and berries were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*

Nursery & Greenhouse Plants:

- 29 farms sold ornamentals in 2007. *Note that sales data for ornamentals were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- This represents an increase of 12% in the number of farms (from 26).
- 7 farms sold Christmas trees.

Direct & Organic Sales:

- 217 farms sell \$3.6 million of food products directly to consumers. This is a 26% increase of number of farms (172 in 2002) selling direct over 2002, and a 450% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$653,000.
- This amounts to 1.1% of farm product sales, nearly three times the national average of 0.4%.
- 7 farms in the county sold \$272,000 of organic products, accounting for less than 1% of Oregon's organic sales.
- For comparison, 799 farms in Oregon sold \$88 million of organic food products.
- 7 farms market through community supported agriculture (CSA).
- 108 farms produce and sell value-added products.

Conservation Practices:

- 435 farms use conservation methods such as no-till, limited tilling, filtering field runoff to remove chemicals, fencing animals to prevent them from entering streams, etc.
- 395 farms practice rotational or management intensive grazing.
- 16 farms generate energy or electricity on the farm.

Other Crops:

- 2 farms produced oats for grains. *Note that data for acreage, production, and sales of oats were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 32 farms produced 220,000 bushels of barley on 6,040 acres, worth \$1 million.

**Limited-resource farms and others in Umatilla County
(Census of Agriculture, 2007)**

Small family farms:	Farms	Percent	Acres	Percent
Limited-resource	184	11%	16,716	1%
Retirement	333	20%	162,048	11%
Residential/lifestyle	607	37%	115,556	8%
Farming occupation/lower sales	166	10%	98,669	7%
Farming occupation/higher sales	81	5%	132,822	9%
 Large family farms	 53	 3%	 140,451	 10%
Very large family farms	114	7%	483,403	33%
Nonfamily farms	120	7%	297,656	21%
Total	1,658		1,447,321	

Definitions of terms (Agricultural Census 2007):

Limited-resource farms have market value of agricultural products sold gross sales of less than \$100,000, and total principal operator household income of less than \$20,000.

Retirement farms have market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$250,000, and a principal operator who reports being retired.

Residential/lifestyle farms have market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$250,000, and a principal operator who reports his/her primary occupation as other than farming.

Farming occupation/lower-sales farms have market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$100,000, and a principal operator who reports farming as his/her primary occupation.

Farming occupation/higher-sales farms have market value of agricultural products sold of between \$100,000 and \$249,999, and a principal operator who reports farming as his/her primary occupation.

Large family farms have market value of agricultural products sold between \$250,000 and \$499,999.

Very large family farms have market value of agricultural products sold of \$500,000 or more.

Nonfamily farms are farms organized as nonfamily corporations, as well as farms operated by hired manager.

County and State Highlights

Umatilla County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):

- 1,658 farms, 1% more than in 2002.
- Umatilla County has 1.4 million acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$320 million of products in 2007.
- \$245 million (77%) of these sales were crops.
- \$75 million (23%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 1 to 9 acres with 429 farms (26%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres with 428 (26%) farms.
- 304 farms (18%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 857 farms (52%) are less than 50 acres.
- 1,026 farms (62%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 337 farms (20%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Umatilla County ranks 1st in Oregon and 1st in the United States for acreage of green peas, with 19,000.
- The county ranks 1st in the state for acreage of vegetables, with 41,000.
- Umatilla County ranks first in the state for acreage of wheat, with 303,000.
- The county ranks 1st in Oregon for sales of grains, oilseeds, and dry beans and peas, with \$104 million.
- Umatilla County ranks 1st in the state for sales of vegetables, with \$61 million.
- The county ranks third in the state for sales of cattle and calves, with \$66 million.
- Umatilla County ranks 3rd in Oregon for inventory of pheasants, with 9,051.
- The county ranks 4th in the state for inventory of bee colonies, with 5,245.
- Umatilla County ranks fourth in the state for sales of agricultural products
- The county ranks 4th in Oregon for crop sales.
- Umatilla County ranks 5th in the state for livestock and poultry sales.
- The county ranks fifth in the state for sales of forage crops (hay, etc.), with \$45 million.
- Umatilla County ranks 5th in Oregon for sales of sheep, goats, and their products, but *sales figures were not reported by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- The county ranks 6th in the state for acreage of forage, with 44,000.
- Umatilla County ranks seventh in Oregon for inventory of cattle and calves, with 68,000.
- The county ranks 7th in the state for inventory of sheep and lambs, with 8,454.
- Umatilla County ranks 8th in the state for acreage of field and grass seed crops, with 18,000.
- The county ranks eighth in Oregon for sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, but *sales figures were not reported by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- Umatilla County ranks 8th in the state for inventory of horses and ponies, with 3,861.
- 217 farms sell \$3.6 million of food products directly to consumers. This is a 26% increase of number of farms (172 in 2002) selling direct over 2002 and a 450% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$653,000.
- This amounts to 1.1% of farm product sales, nearly three times the national average of 0.4%.

State of Oregon highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):

- 38,553 farms, 4% less than in 2002.
- Oregon has 16 million acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$4.4 billion of products in 2007.
- \$3 billion (68%) of these sales were crops.
- \$1.4 billion (32%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres with 14,142 farms (37%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 1 to 9 acres with 9,546 (25%) farms.
- 2,564 farms (7%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 23,688 farms (61%) are less than 50 acres.
- 26,035 farms (68%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 4,678 farms (12%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Oregon ranks 1st in the U.S. for acreage of Christmas trees, with 67,000.
- The state ranks 1st in the country for acreage of field and grass seed crops, with 557,000.
- Oregon ranks first in the country for sales of Christmas trees, with \$117 million.
- The state ranks 3rd in the U.S. for sales of ornamentals, with \$989 million.
- Oregon ranks 3rd in the country for sales of forage crops (hay, etc.), with \$698 million.
- The state ranks fourth in the country for sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, with \$516 million.
- Oregon ranks 9th in the U.S. for sales of sheep, goats, and their products, with \$21 million.
- The state ranks 9th in the country for acreage of vegetables, with 150,000.
- Oregon ranks ninth in the country for inventory of sheep and lambs, with 217,000.
- The state ranks 10th in the U.S. for vegetable sales, with \$339 million.
- 6,274 farms sold \$56 million of food directly to consumers. This is a 2% decrease in the number of farms selling direct (6,383 in 2002), and a 163% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$21 million.
- Direct sales were 1.3% of farm product sales, over three times the national average of 0.4%.
- If direct food sales made up a single commodity, the value of these sales would outrank the state's 15th-most important product, chicken eggs.
- 933 farms farm organically, with a total of 46,000 acres of harvested cropland, and 42,000 acres of pastureland.
- 16,000 acres on 470 farms are undergoing organic conversion.
- 799 farms in Oregon sold \$88 million of organic food products, including \$42 million of crops (this may include ornamental and greenhouse crops), \$3 million of livestock and poultry, and \$43 million of products from livestock and poultry (such as milk or eggs).
- 311 farms market through community supported agriculture (CSA).
- 1,753 farms produce value-added products.
- 9,327 farms use conservation methods such as no-till, limited tilling, filtering field runoff to remove chemicals, fencing animals to prevent them from entering streams, etc.
- 9,694 farms practice rotational management of intensive grazing.
- 631 farms generate energy or electricity on the farms.

Oregon's top farm products in 2010 (Economic Research Service)

See chart on next page.

	\$ millions
1 Ornaments	760
2 Cattle & calves	446
3 Dairy products	412
4 Wheat	326
5 Hay	253
6 Potatoes	139
7 Onions	129
8 Ryegrass	123
9 Pears	90
10 Cherries	78
11 Fescue	73
12 Hazelnuts (filberts)	67
13 Blueberries	64
14 Grapes	63
15 Chicken eggs	52
16 Mint	43
17 Blackberries	35
18 Hops	31
19 Corn	27
20 Apples	26
21 Corn, sweet	26
22 Beans, snap	20
23 Sheep and lambs	19
24 Bluegrass, Kentucky	19

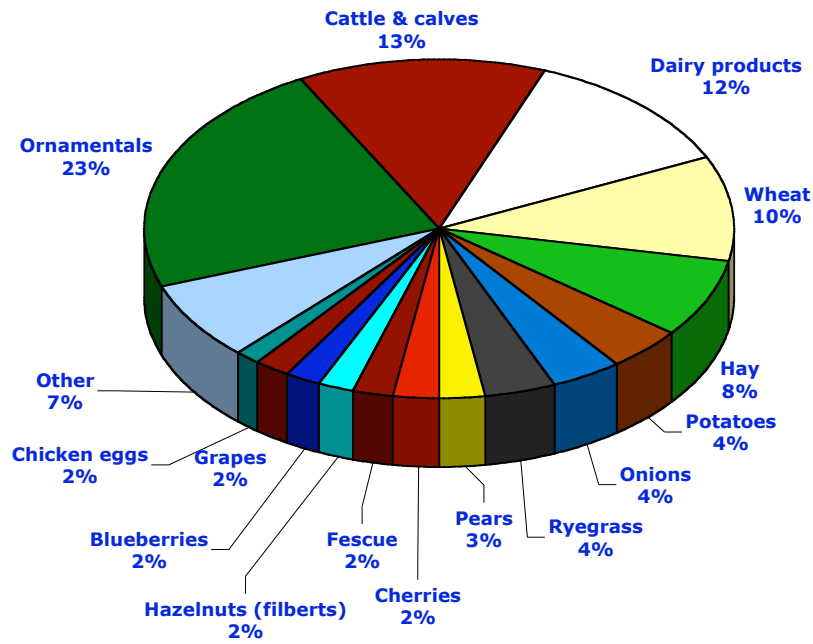
Note: broiler chickens were also listed among Oregon's top 25 products, but sales figures for these products were not released by ERS, in an effort to protect confidentiality.

Note also that at \$56 million, direct sales from farmers to consumers amount to more than the value of the 15th-ranking product, chicken eggs.

Oregon's top farm products in 2010 (Economic Research Service)

See table on previous page

Top farm products in Oregon, 2010



Source: USDA Economic Research Service

Balance of Cash Receipts and Production Costs (BEA):

Umatilla County ranchers and farmers sell \$319 million of food commodities per year (1987-2009 average), spending \$341 million to raise them, for an average loss of \$22 million each year. This is a net loss of 7% of sales. *Note that these sales figures compiled by the BEA may differ from cash receipts recorded by the USDA Agriculture Census (above).*

Overall, farm producers spent \$500 million more producing crops and livestock than they earned by selling these products from 1987 to 2009. Farm production costs exceeded cash receipts for 19 years of that 23-year period. Moreover, 55% of the county's farms and ranches reported a net loss to the 2007 Census of Agriculture. Umatilla County farmers and ranchers earned \$56 million less by selling farm products in 2009 than they earned in 1969 (in 2009 dollars).

Farmers and ranchers earn another \$34 million per year of farm-related income — primarily custom work, and rental income (23-year average for 1987-2009). Federal farm support payments are relatively small, averaging \$30 million per year for the entire county for the same years.

The county's consumers:

See also information covering low-income food consumption and food-related health conditions, page 1-2 above.

Umatilla County consumers spend \$195 million buying food each year, including \$113 million for home use. Most of this food (\$175 million) is sourced outside the county. Only \$3.6 million of food products (1.1% of farm cash receipts and 1.8% of the county's consumer market) are sold by farmers directly to consumers.

Estimated change in net assets (that is, assets minus liabilities) for all county households combined was a loss of \$383 million in 2009 alone (BLS). This places additional pressure on Umatilla County consumers trying to buy food.

Farm and food economy summary:

Farmers lose \$22 million each year producing food commodities, while spending \$150 million buying inputs sourced outside of the county. From the standpoint of the county as a whole, these external input purchases take money away from the local economy. This is a total loss of \$172 million to the county.

Meanwhile, consumers spend \$175 million buying food from outside. Thus, total loss to the county is \$350 million of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to more than the value of all food products raised in the county.

Umatilla County: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Umatilla County residents purchase \$195 million of food each year, including \$114 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 24.7
Fruits & vegetables	20.9
Cereals and bakery products	14.6
Dairy products	12.2
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	41.2

If Umatilla County residents purchased 15% of their food for home use directly from county farmers, this would generate \$17 million of new farm income for the county. This would require each resident of the region to buy, on average, less than \$5.00 of food directly from farmers each week.

Northeast Oregon: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Northeast Oregon residents purchase \$322 million of food each year, including \$189 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 40.8
Fruits & vegetables	34.5
Cereals and bakery products	24.1
Dairy products	20.2
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	68.2

If Northeast Oregon residents purchased 15% of their food for home use directly from farmers in the region, this would generate \$28 million of new farm income. This would require each resident of the region to buy, on average, less than \$5.00 of food directly from farmers each week.

Pendleton: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Pendleton residents purchase \$225 million of food each year, including \$131 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 28.6
Fruits & vegetables	24.2
Cereals and bakery products	16.8
Dairy products	14.1
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	47.7

Baker County: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Baker County residents purchase \$43 million of food each year, including \$25 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 5.4
Fruits & vegetables	4.6
Cereals and bakery products	3.2
Dairy products	2.7
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	9.0

Union County: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Union County residents purchase \$66 million of food each year, including \$39 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 8.4
Fruits & vegetables	7.1
Cereals and bakery products	5.0
Dairy products	4.2
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	14.1

Wallowa County: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Wallowa County residents purchase \$18 million of food each year, including \$11 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 2.3
Fruits & vegetables	2.0
Cereals and bakery products	1.4
Dairy products	1.1
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	3.9

Metro Boise: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Metro Boise residents purchase \$1.9 billion of food each year, including \$1.1 billion to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 239
Fruits & vegetables	202
Cereals and bakery products	141
Dairy products	118
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	400

Oregon: markets for food eaten at home (2009):

Oregon residents purchase \$10 billion of food each year, including \$6 billion to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 1,287
Fruits & vegetables	1,089
Cereals and bakery products	759
Dairy products	636
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	2,150

Key data sources:

Bureau of Economic Analysis data on farm production balance

<http://www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/reis/>

Food consumption estimates from Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey

<http://www.bls.gov/cex/home.htm>

U.S. Census of Agriculture

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>

USDA/Economic Research Service food consumption data:

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/foodconsumption/>

USDA/ Economic Research Service farm income data:

<http://ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/finfidmu.htm>

For more information:

To see results from *Finding Food in Farm Country* studies in other regions of the U.S.:

<http://www.crcworks.org/locales.html>

To read the original *Finding Food in Farm Country* study from Southeast Minnesota (written for the Experiment in Rural Cooperation): <http://www.crcworks.org/ff.pdf>

To view a PowerPoint presented in March, 2008, by Ken Meter at Rep. Collin Peterson's (D-MN) Minnesota agricultural forum, called the "Home Grown Economy":

<http://www.crcworks.org/crcppts/petersonkm08.pdf>

To get a brief list of essential food facts, many of which are cited in the presentation above,

<http://www.crcworks.org/foodmarkets.pdf>

To link to further analysis of farm and food economies in the U.S.:

<http://www.crcworks.org/econ.html>

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