

USA Agricultural Census 1987 – Main Results

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes given at the end of the tables.

NUMBER AND AREA OF HOLDINGS CLASSIFIED BY SIZE OF TOTAL AREA OF HOLDINGS		
Holding size classes	Number of holdings	Area (ha)
Total	2 087 759	390 311 617
0.4 and under 4 ha	183 257	272 630
4 and under 20.2 ha	412 437	4 476 213
20.2 and under 56.7 ha	488 112	17 438 750
56.7 and under 105.2 ha	348 825	26 792 985
105.2 and under 202.4 ha	286 206	41 649 371
202.4 and under 404.7 ha	200 058	56 066 105
404.7 and under 809.4 ha	102 078	56 174 838
809.4 ha and above	66 786	187 440 725

LEGAL STATUS OF THE HOLDER	Number of holdings	Area (ha)
Total	2 087 759	390 311 617
An individual or a household	1 809 324	253 940 639
Two or more individuals or households	199 559	62 032 194
Corporation	66 969	48 336 320
Others	11 907	26 002 464

LAND TENURE OF HOLDINGS	Number of holdings	Area (ha)
Total	2 087 759	390 311 617
Holdings under one form of tenure	1 478 747	179 947 878
Owned or in ownerlike possession	1 238 547	128 605 281
Rented from others	240 200	51 342 597
Holdings under more than one form of tenure	609 012	210 363 739

HOLDERS BY SEX	Total	Male	Female
Holders	2 087 759	1 956 118	131 641

HOLDERS BY AGE	Number of holders
Total	2 087 759
under 25 years	35 851
25 to 34 years	242 688
35 to 44 years	411 153
45 to 54 years	454 910
55 to 64 years	495 816
65 years and over	447 341

LAND USE	Area (ha)
Total land	390 311 617
Agricultural land	345 462 550
Total Cropland	179 406 456
Harvested cropland	114 213 182
Pastured cropland	26 296 721
Other cropland	38 896 553
Land under permanent meadows/pastures	166 056 094
Wood or forest land	32 332 504
All other land	12 516 563

IRRIGATION	Holdings reporting	Area (ha)
Irrigated land	291 628	18 772 032

TEMPORARY CROPS (on arable land)	Number of holdings reporting
Maize for grain	627 602
Maize for silage	160 544
Wheat	352 237
Barley	89 948
Sorghum	89 642
Oats	206 192
Rice	12 013
Cotton	43 046
Tobacco	136 682
Soybeans	441 899
Potatoes	14 782
Groundnuts	18 905

PERMANENT CROPS	Number of holdings reporting
Apples	36 710
Avocados	6 902
Grapes	23 236
Plums / Prunes	8 789
Grapefruit	4 998
Oranges	14 312
Pecan nuts	21 431

LIVESTOCK	Number of holdings reporting	Total number of head
Cattle, total	1 176 346	95 847 299
Male	-	27 730 528
Female	-	68 116 771
For milk production	-	10 084 697
Pigs	243 398	52 271 120
Sheep	92 489	11 059 397
Goats	45 032	2 246 587
Horses	415 565	2 456 951
Chickens	144 438	375 577 186

MACHINERY / EQUIPMENT	Number of holdings reporting	Units
Wheel tractors	1 842 654	4 609 388
Harvester-Thresher (combines)	568 846	667 128
Mowers	585 603	652 193
Balers	702 477	822 927
Motor trucks	1 808 431	3 437 042

FERTILIZERS / PESTICIDES	Number of holdings reporting use
Chemical fertilizers	1 379 259

USA Agricultural Census 1987 – Explanatory Notes

Historical outline: The 1987 Census of Agriculture was the 23rd undertaken in the United States of America. The first agricultural census was taken in 1840 as part of the sixth decennial census of population. From 1840 to 1950, agricultural censuses were taken every ten years, while from 1954 to 1974 agricultural censuses were taken every five years, for years ending in 4 and 9. In 1976 an adjustment in timing was established, to let agricultural censuses coincide with economic censuses; for this reason collection of data was established on a 5 year cycle, for years ending in 2 and 7.

Organization: The 1987 Census of Agriculture was carried out by an agency of the US Department of Commerce: the US Bureau of the Census. The Agriculture Division was the division, of the Bureau of the Census, mostly involved in census undertaking; collaboration was also given by the Economic and Programming Division, the Field Division, the Data Preparation Division, and various Data Processing and Publication Divisions.

Enumeration period: The mailout/mailback enumeration method (adopted in the 50 states for the first time in 1969) started with an initial mailing of questionnaires between 16 and 21 December 1987. A reminder card and five follow-up mailings were carried out at 1 month intervals between January and June 1988.

Reference date: The reference dates/periods are: 31 December 1987 for inventory data, and the calendar year 1987 for data on production.

Definition: A farm is any place involved in agricultural operations under the day-to-day control of an individual or a management, having US \$1000 or more in total value of sales of agricultural products, during the reference year.

Coverage: The census covered all places meeting the farm definition in the 50 states.

Frame: The Census Bureau compiled the mailing list for the 1987 Census of Agriculture from mail lists of previous censuses and from current administrative records of various federal agencies concerned with agriculture. The list was integrated with additional addresses drawn from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Methods: The mailout/mailback enumeration method required compilation of a mailing list of names and addresses of possible agricultural operators. The mailing list was organized by state in eight geographic segments. The Census Bureau assembled a list of over 16 million possible farm addresses, which were subsequently reduced to approximately 4.1 million addresses. An initial mailing of questionnaires was carried out, followed by a reminder/thank you card and five followup mailings. A telephone follow-up operation was used for selected large non respondent operations. As a result, a total of 2,087,759 farms were enumerated.

Data source: US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census - 1987 Census of Agriculture - United States - Vol. 1, Part 51 - November 1989.

Mailing address: Data User Services Division, Customer Services, Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233; Tel. (301) 763-1113 (General Information).