
Introduction

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Ranking of Congressional Districts report presents selected 2012 Census of Agriculture statistics ranked by congressional districts. Rankings are based on congressional districts (CD) of the 113th Congress.

Data are ranked by congressional district for all States, except Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming which are “at large” States. The State total is presented for the district. The statistics presented in this report include:

- Operator characteristics
- Farm characteristics
- Selected value of agricultural products sold
- Selected livestock and poultry inventories
- Selected crops harvested

USES OF CENSUS DATA

The census of agriculture provides a detailed picture of U.S. farms and ranches every five years. It is the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every State and county or county equivalent. Census of agriculture data are routinely used by farm organizations, businesses, State departments of agriculture, elected representatives and legislative bodies at all levels of government, public and private sector analysts, the news media, and colleges and universities. The data are frequently used to:

- Show the importance and value of agriculture at the county, state, and national levels;
- Provide agricultural news media and agricultural associations’ benchmark statistics for stories and articles on U.S. agriculture and the foods we produce;

- Compare the income and costs of production;
- Provide important data about the demographics and financial well being of producers;
- Evaluate historical agricultural trends to formulate farm and rural policies and develop programs that help agricultural producers;
- Allocate local and national funds for farm programs, e.g. extension service projects, agricultural research, soil conservation programs, and land-grant colleges and universities;
- Identify the assets needed to support agricultural production such as land, buildings, machinery, and other equipment;
- Create an extensive database of information on uncommon crops and livestock and the value of those commodities for assessing the need to develop policies and programs to support those commodities;
- Provide geographic data on production so agribusinesses will locate near major production areas for efficiencies for both producers and agribusinesses;
- Measure the usage of modern technologies such as conservation practices, organic production, renewable energy systems, internet access, and specialized marketing strategies;
- Develop new and improved methods to increase agricultural production and profitability;
- Plan for operations during drought and emergency outbreaks of diseases or infestations of pests.

AUTHORITY

The 2012 Census of Agriculture is required by law under the "Census of Agriculture Act of 1997," Public Law 105-113 (Title 7, United States Code, Section 2204g). The law directs the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a census of agriculture every fifth year after. The census of agriculture includes each State, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa.

FARM DEFINITION

The census definition of a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year. The definition has changed nine times since it was established in 1850. The current definition was first used for the 1974 Census of Agriculture and has been used in each subsequent agriculture census. This definition is consistent with the definition used for current USDA surveys.

DATA COMPARABILITY

In general, these data are not comparable with the 2007 congressional district ranking publication for most States. Due to redistricting that occurred between the 2007 and 2012 censuses, the physical composition of many CDs changed significantly. In addition, a few changes were made to the 2012 census that affect comparability for some data items. See 2012 Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series, Part 51, Appendix B (http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_US/usappxb.pdf) for a detailed discussion of these changes.

REFERENCE PERIOD

Reference periods for the 2012 Census of Agriculture were similar to those used in the 2007 Census of Agriculture. Livestock and poultry inventories were measured as of December 31 of the census year.

TABLES AND APPENDICES

Tables. Provide congressional district rankings for selected data.

Appendix A. Provides information about the methodology used to assign farms to congressional districts. It also includes definitions of specific terms used in this publication.

Appendix B. Lists each congressional district in the state and provides the county name for each county that is contained within the district.

RESPONDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

In keeping with the provisions of Title 7 of the United States Code, no data are published that would disclose information about the operations of an individual farm or ranch. All tabulated data are subjected to an extensive disclosure review prior to publication. Any tabulated item that identifies data reported by a respondent or allows a respondent's data to be accurately estimated or derived, was suppressed and coded with a 'D'. However, the number of farms reporting an item is not considered confidential information and is provided even though other information is withheld.

RANKINGS, SUBJECT SERIES, SPECIAL STUDIES, AND CUSTOM TABULATIONS

Reports based on the 2012 Census of Agriculture, such as the Ranking of Congressional Districts and the American Indian Reservations publications, and reports that supplement data collected in the census, such as the 2013 Farm and Ranch Irrigation Survey, are published in print and on the internet.

Custom-designed tabulations may be developed when data are not published elsewhere. These tabulations are developed to individual user specifications on a cost-reimbursable basis and shared with the public. Quick Stats, NASS's online database that allows data users to build customized queries, should be investigated before requesting a custom tabulation.

All NASS publications and custom tabulations are subject to a thorough disclosure review prior to

release to prevent the disclosure of any individual respondent data. Requests for custom tabulations can be submitted via the internet from the NASS home page, by mail, or by e-mail to:

DataLab
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Room 5307
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250 – 2054
or
Datalab@nass.usda.gov

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

- (D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.
- (Z) Less than half of the unit shown.