

# Crossroads Resource Center

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## **Tools for Community Self-determination**

### **Des Moines Region (Iowa) Local Farm & Food Economy**

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for  
**Food & You, LLC<sup>2</sup>**

June 12, 2012

*Covers Dallas, Jasper, Madison, Marion, Polk, Story & Warren Counties in Iowa*

#### **Des Moines Region (Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2010)**

711,294 residents receive \$29 billion of income annually. Personal income increased 166% from 1969 to 2010, after dollars were adjusted for inflation, in part due to an increase in population. The largest source of personal income is salaries for finance and insurance workers, with \$4.9 billion. The second most important income sources are transfer payments (from government programs such as pensions), and capital income (from interest, rent or dividends), each of which account for \$4.2 billion of personal income [see below]. Government jobs rank fourth, with \$4.1 billion. Health care professions bring in \$2.4 billion of personal income. Manufacturing jobs produce \$1.9 billion of personal income, and construction jobs bring in \$1.5 billion. Note that income from public sources makes up 28% of all personal income in the region.

Income earned from transfer payments includes \$1.5 billion of retirement and disability insurance benefits; \$1.5 billion of medical benefits; \$425 million of income maintenance benefits; \$270 million of unemployment insurance; and \$96 million of veterans' benefits.

Government income includes \$738 million of income earned by federal workers and \$3.1 billion earned by state and local government workers. Military personnel earn \$164 million of personal income.

Although population has increased more than 50% since 1969, there has been only limited public planning to assure a secure and stable food supply.

#### **Issues affecting low-income residents of the Des Moines region:**

Over 156,000 residents (23%) 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 \$317 million each year buying food, including \$47 million of SNAP benefits (formerly known

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<sup>1</sup> Considerable research assistance was provided by Nick Wojciak.

<sup>2</sup> This research is being undertaken to advance the Healthy Polk 2020 priority to "ensure access to affordable, healthy food for everyone."

as food stamps) and additional WIC coupons. The region's 6,989 farmers receive an annual combined total of \$82 million in subsidies (22-year average, 1989-2010), mostly to raise crops such as corn or soybeans that are sold as commodities, not to feed local residents. *Data from Federal Census of 2006-2010, Bureau of Labor Statistics, & Bureau of Economic Analysis.*

5.5% percent of the region's households (over 39,000 residents) earn less than \$10,000 per year. *Source: Federal Census of 2006-2010.*

10% of all adults aged 18-64 in the Des Moines metro region carried no health insurance in 2010. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

### **Food-related health conditions:**

19% of metro Des Moines residents reported in 2009 that they eat five or more servings of fruit or vegetables each day. 81% do not. This level of adequate consumption is lower than the 2002 rate of 21%. 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.*

49% of Des Moines metro adults report 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. This is an improvement over 42% in 2003. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

7% of metro Des Moines residents have been diagnosed with diabetes. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.* Medical costs for treating diabetes and related conditions in the metro region are estimated at \$415 million per year. Costs for the state of Iowa as a whole total \$1.7 billion. *Source: American Diabetes Association cost calculator.*

65% of Des Moines metro residents are overweight (39%) or obese (26%), up from 57% in 2002. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

### **The region's farms (Agricultural Census, 2007)**

*Agriculture 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:*

- 6,989 farms. This is 8% of Iowa farms.
- The Des Moines region had 4% less farms in 2007 than in 2002.
- 542 (8%) of these are 1,000 acres or more in size.
- 2,578 (37%) farms are less than 50 acres.
- Average farm size is 300 acres, less than the state average of 331 acres.
- The region has 2.1 million acres of land in farms.
- This amounts to 7% of the state's farmland.
- 4,475 of these acres are irrigated.
- 1.6 million acres of cropland in the Des Moines region was harvested in 2007.
- Average value of land and buildings per farm was \$1 million. This was slightly less than the 2007 state average of \$1.1 million.

*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 region’s farmers sold \$1 billion of crops and livestock in 2007.
- Farm product sales increased by 68% from 2002 to 2007.
- \$745 million of crops were sold.
- \$298 million of livestock and products were sold.
- 3,326 (48%) of the region’s farms sold less than \$10,000 of products in 2007.
- Total sales from these small farms were \$6.4 million, 1% of the region’s farm product sales.
- 1,773 (25%) of the region’s farms sold more than \$100,000 of products.
- Total sales from these larger farms were \$958 million, 92% of the region’s farm product sales.
- 33% of the region’s farms (2,295 of 6,989) reported net losses in 2007. This is more than the Iowa average of 26%.
- 5,018 (72%) of the Des Moines region’s farmers collected a combined total of \$44 million of federal subsidies in 2007.

**Top farm products of the Des Moines region (2007).** *Note: \*\* denotes sales data has been suppressed.*

<b>Product</b>	<b>\$ millions</b>
Corn	488
Soybeans	190**
Hogs and pigs	99**
Cattle and calves	93

*Production Expenses:*

- Land and building rental was the largest single expense for the Des Moines region farmers in 2007, totaling \$109 million (15% of production expenses).
- Fertilizer, lime, and soil conditioners ranked as the second most important, at \$84 million (12%).
- Feed purchases totaled \$83 million (11%).
- Farmers charged \$73 million to depreciation (10%).
- Livestock and poultry purchases cost farmers \$70 million (10%).
- Purchases of seeds totaled \$68 million (9%).
- Supplies, repairs, and maintenance totaled \$48 million (7%).
- Chemical purchases cost farmers \$43 million (6%).
- Interest expenses were \$40 million (6%).

*Cattle & Dairy:*

- 2,086 farms hold an inventory of 156,000 cattle.
- 107,000 cattle were sold by farmers in 2007 for total sales of \$93 million.
- 1,772 farms raise beef cows.
- 48 farms raise milk cows.
- 167 farms produced corn for silage.
- 2,337 farms produced 287,000 tons of forage crops (hay, etc.) on 91,000 acres.
- 1,218 farms sold at least \$6.4 million of forage. *Note that data for forage sales in Madison and Marion counties were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this total is incomplete.*

*Other Livestock & Animal Products:*

- 333 farms hold an inventory of 485,000 hogs and pigs.
- 365 farms sold 1.1 million hogs and pigs in 2007.
- 360 farms hold an inventory of 15,000 sheep and lambs.
- 427 farms sold at least \$2.2 million worth of sheep, goats, and lambs in 2007. *Note that data for sales of sheep, goats, and lambs in Dallas County were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this total is incomplete.*
- 275 farms hold an inventory of at least 280,000 laying hens. *Note that data for inventory of laying hens in Madison County were suppressed by the USDA, so this total is incomplete.*
- 60 farms raise broiler chickens.
- 1 farm engages in aquaculture.
- 330 farms raise horses and ponies.

*Grains, Oil Seeds, & Edible Beans:*

- 3,518 farms produced \$715 million of grains, oil seeds, and edible beans.
- 3,143 farms produced 151 million bushels of corn on 897,000 acres, worth \$488 million.
- This amounts to an average price per bushel of corn of \$3.23. *Note that this price is an approximation, and does not necessarily represent an actual price at which corn was sold.*
- 2,738 farms produced 30 million bushels of soybeans on 573,000 acres, worth at least \$190 million. *Note that data for sales of soybeans in Dallas County were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this total is incomplete.*
- The total value of corn and soybeans amounted to at least 65% of all farm product sales in 2007. *Note that data for sales of soybeans in Dallas County were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this percentage is incomplete.*
- 8 farms produced wheat. *Note that data for acreage, bushels, and sales of wheat were suppressed by the USDA in all wheat producing counties in an effort to protect confidentiality.*

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

- 108 farms worked at least 589,000 acres to produce vegetables, worth at least \$1 million. *Note that data for acreage of vegetables in Madison County and sales of vegetables in Dallas and Madison counties were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so these totals are incomplete.*
- 37 farms raised potatoes.

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

- 147 farms in the region hold 626 acres of orchards.
- 126 farms sold \$1.5 million of fruits, nuts, and berries.

*Nursery & Greenhouse Plants:*

- 93 farms sold at least \$5.5 million worth of ornamentals in 2007. *Note that data for sales of ornamentals in Dallas, Madison, Marion, and Story counties were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this total is incomplete.*
- This represents a decrease of 10 in the number of farms since 2002.
- 28 farms sold Christmas trees.

*Direct & Organic Sales:*

- 317 farms sell \$1.72 million of food products directly to consumers. This is a 13% increase of number of farms (280 in 2002) selling direct, and a 15% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of 1.5 million.
- This amounts to 0.2% of farm product sales, one half the national average of 0.4%.
- Story County leads the region in direct sales, with \$443,000.
- 35 farms in the region sold at least \$166,000 of organic products. *Note that data for sales of organic products in Jasper, Madison, and Marion counties were suppressed by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality, so this total is incomplete.*
- For comparison, 542 farms in Iowa sold \$34 million of organic food products.
- 49 farms market through community supported agriculture (CSA).
- 221 farms produce and sell value-added products.

*Conservation Practices:*

- 3,042 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.
- 1,023 farms practice rotational or management intensive grazing.
- 36 farms generate energy or electricity on the farm.

*Other Crops:*

- 100 farms produced 111,000 bushels of oats on 1,895 acres.

**Limited-resource farms and others in Des Moines region  
(Census of Agriculture, 2007)**

<b>Small family farms:</b>	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Limited-resource	555	8%	45,550	2%
Retirement	1,162	17%	146,467	7%
Residential/lifestyle	2,737	39%	247,160	12%
Farming occupation/lower sales	712	10%	110,560	5%
Farming occupation/higher sales	496	7%	239,792	11%
<b>Large family farms</b>	449	6%	379,545	18%
<b>Very large family farms</b>	431	6%	732,529	35%
<b>Nonfamily farms</b>	447	6%	196,207	9%
<b>Total</b>	6,989		2,097,810	

*Definition 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**

### **Dallas County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 912 farms, 3% less than in 2002.
- Dallas County has 297,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$186 million of products in 2007.
- \$110 million (59%) of these sales were crops.
- \$76 million (41%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 243 farms (27%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 238 (26%) farms.
- 86 farms (9%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 347 farms (38%) are less than 50 acres.
- 405 farms (44%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 258 farms (28%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Dallas County ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in Iowa for inventory of colonies of bees, but *inventory figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- The county ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the state for acreage of popcorn, but *acreage figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- Dallas County ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the state for sales of poultry and eggs, but *sales figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 54 farms sold \$191,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 59% increase in the number of farms selling direct (34 in 2002), and a 6% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$181,000.
- Direct sales were 0.1% of farm product sales, one quarter the national average of 0.4%.

### **Jasper County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 1,166 farms, 4% less than in 2002.
- Jasper County has 428,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$255 million of products in 2007.
- \$182 million (71%) of these sales were crops.
- \$73 million (29%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 278 farms (24%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 180 to 499 acres, with 268 (23%) farms.
- 109 farms (9%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 372 farms (32%) are less than 50 acres.
- 429 farms (37%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 426 farms (37%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Jasper County ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in Iowa for sales of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas, with \$180 million.
- The county ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the state for crop sales.
- Jasper County ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the state for acreage of corn for grain, with 220,000.
- 48 farms sold \$177,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a decrease of 2 in the number of farms selling direct, and a 40% decrease in direct sales since 2002 sales of \$297,000.
- Direct sales were 0.1% of farm product sales, one quarter the national average of 0.4%.

**Madison County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 956 farms, 3% less than in 2002.
- Madison County has 283,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$111 million of products in 2007.
- \$65 million (59%) of these sales were crops.
- \$46 million (41%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 282 farms (29%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 242 acres, with 242 (25%) farms.
- 65 farms (7%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 347 farms (36%) are less than 50 acres.
- 516 farms (54%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 163 farms (17%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Madison County ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in Iowa and 1<sup>st</sup> in the U.S. for acreage of flower seeds, with 1,952.
- The county ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in the state for inventory of pullets for laying flock replacement, but *inventory figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- Madison County ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the state for sales of ornamentals, but *sales figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 26 farms sold \$103,000 of food directly to consumers. This is an increase of 4 in the number of farms selling direct, and a 34% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$77,000.
- Direct sales were 0.1% of farm product sales, one quarter the national average of 0.4%.

**Marion County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 951 farms, 10% less than in 2002.
- Marion County has 246,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$93 million of products in 2007.
- \$66 million (71%) of these sales were crops.
- \$27 million (29%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 319 farms (34%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres, with 232 (24%) farms.
- 55 farms (6%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 312 farms (33%) are less than 50 acres.
- 523 farms (55%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 196 farms (21%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Marion County ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in Iowa for sales of ornamentals, but *sales figures were not released by the USDA in an effort to protect confidentiality.*
- 24 farms sold \$126,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a decrease of 6 in the number of farms selling direct, and a 4% decrease in direct sales since 2002 sales of \$131,000.
- Direct sales were 0.1% of farm product sales, one quarter the national average of 0.4%.

**Polk County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 738 farms, 3% less than in 2002.
- Polk County has 249,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$122.7 million of products in 2007.
- \$105.4 million (86%) of these sales were crops.
- \$17.3 million (14%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 10 to 49 acres, with 230 farms (31%) in this category.

- The next most prevalent is 50 to 179 acres, with 152 (21%) farms.
- 82 farms (11%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 351 farms (48%) are less than 50 acres.
- 360 farms (49%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 212 farms (29%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Polk County ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in Iowa for sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, with \$366,000.
- The county ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the state for sales of horses and ponies, with \$1.3 million.
- Polk County ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the state for acreage of sod, with 1,351.
- The county ranks fifth in the state for sales of ornamentals, with \$5.3 million.
- Polk County ranks 5<sup>th</sup> in Iowa for sales of Christmas trees, with \$49,000.
- 45 farms sold \$382,000 of food directly to consumers. This is an increase of 1 in the number of farms selling direct, and a 43% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$267,000.
- Direct sales were 0.3% of farm product sales, less than the national average of 0.4%.

**Story County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 1,077 farms, 10% more than in 2002.
- Story County has 352,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$201 million of products in 2007.
- \$162 million (81%) of these sales were crops.
- \$39 million (19%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 265 farms (25%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres, with 243 (23%) farms.
- 94 farms (9%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 389 farms (36%) are less than 50 acres.
- 386 farms (36%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 368 farms (34%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Story County ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in Iowa for sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, with \$361,000.
- The county ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the state for crop sales.
- Story County ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the state for inventory of turkeys, with 181,000.
- The county ranks eighth in the state for sales of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas, with \$158 million.
- 57 farms sold \$443,000 of food directly to consumers. This is a 50% increase in the number of farms selling direct (38 in 2002), and a 57% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$282,000.
- Direct sales were 0.2% of farm product sales, one half the national average of 0.4%.

**Warren County highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 1,189 farms, 11% less 1,338 than in 2002.
- Warren County has 242,000 acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$75.2 million of products in 2007.
- \$55.5 million (74%) of these sales were crops.
- \$19.7 million (26%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 409 farms (34%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 10 to 49 acres, with 357 (30%) farms.
- 51 farms (4%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 460 farms (39%) are less than 50 acres.

- 707 farms (59%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 150 farms (13%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Warren County ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in Iowa for sales of forage crops with \$2.8 million.
- The county ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state for sales of horses and ponies, with \$524,000.
- Warren County ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the state for inventory of horses and ponies, with 1,696.
- The county ranks sixth in the state for sales of Christmas trees, with \$47,000.
- Warren County ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in Iowa for sales of fruits, tree nuts, and berries, with \$264,000.
- 63 farms sold \$298,000 of food directly to consumers. This is an increase of 1 in the number of farms selling direct, and a 14% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$261,000.
- Direct sales were 0.4% of farm product sales, the same as the national average of 0.4%.

**State of Iowa highlights (Agriculture Census 2007):**

- 93,000 farms, 2% more than in 2002.
- Iowa has 31 million acres of land in farms.
- Farmers sold \$20 billion of products in 2007.
- \$10 billion (50%) of these sales were crops.
- \$10 billion (50%) of these sales were livestock.
- The most prevalent farm size is 50 to 179 acres, with 24,692 farms (27%) in this category.
- The next most prevalent is 180 to 499 acres, with 22,354 (24%) farms.
- 7,451 farms (8%) are 1,000 acres or more.
- 26,533 farms (29%) are less than 50 acres.
- 35,816 farms (39%) sold less than \$10,000 in farm products.
- 33,058 farms (36%) sold more than \$100,000 in farm products.
- Iowa ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the U.S. for sales of hogs and pigs, with \$4.8 billion.
- The state ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the country for acreage of corn for grain, with 14 million.
- Iowa ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the country for acreage of soybeans for beans, with 8.6 million.
- The state ranks first in the country for acreage of laying hens, with 54 million.
- Iowa ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the U.S. for inventory of hogs and pigs, with 19 million.
- The state ranks 1<sup>st</sup> in the country for inventory of pullets, with 11 million.
- Iowa ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the U.S. for sales of grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas, with \$10 billion.
- The state ranks third in the country for sales of agricultural products.
- Iowa ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the country for crop sales.
- The state ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the U.S. for livestock sales.
- Iowa ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the country for sales of cattle and calves, with \$3.6 billion.
- The state ranks fourth in the country for sales of sheep and goats, with \$40 million.
- Iowa ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the country for acreage of oats, with 67,000.
- The state ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the country for inventory of cattle and calves, with 4 million.
- Iowa ranks 8<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. for acreage of corn for silage, with 221,000.
- Iowa ranks ninth in the county for inventory of turkeys, with 4 million.
- Statewide vegetable sales totaled \$16.3 million in 2007.
- 2,987 farms sold \$16.5 million of food directly to consumers. This is a 22% increase in the number of farms selling direct (2,455 in 2002), and a 42% increase in direct sales over 2002 sales of \$11.65 million.
- Direct sales were 0.1% of farm product sales, one quarter the national average of 0.4%.
- If direct food sales made up a single commodity, the value of these sales would rank above the state's 10<sup>th</sup> most important product, oats.
- 566 farms farm organically, with a total of 58,000 acres of harvested cropland, and 10,000 acres of pastureland.
- 15,000 acres on 290 farms are undergoing organic conversion.
- 542 farms in Iowa sold \$34 million of organic food products, including \$19 million of crops (this may include ornamental and greenhouse crops), \$3.3 million of livestock and poultry, and \$12 million of products from livestock and poultry (such as milk or eggs).
- 487 farms market through community supported agriculture (CSA).
- 2,246 farms produce value-added products.
- 41,000 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.
- 10,000 farms practice rotational or management intensive grazing.
- 539 farms generate energy or electricity on the farms.

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

*Due to data suppression at the local level, such a chart cannot reasonably be constructed for the [region] itself. The data in the table and pie chart below are for [the state] as a whole. See chart on next page.*

	<b>\$ billions</b>
1 Corn	8.026
2 Hogs	5.309
3 Soybeans	4.802
4 Cattle & calves	2.920
5 Chicken eggs	0.824
6 Dairy products	0.713
7 Hay	0.115
8 Ornamentals	0.092
9 Sheep & lambs	0.028
10 Oats	0.006
11 Wheat	0.003
12 Honey	0.003
13 Apples	0.002

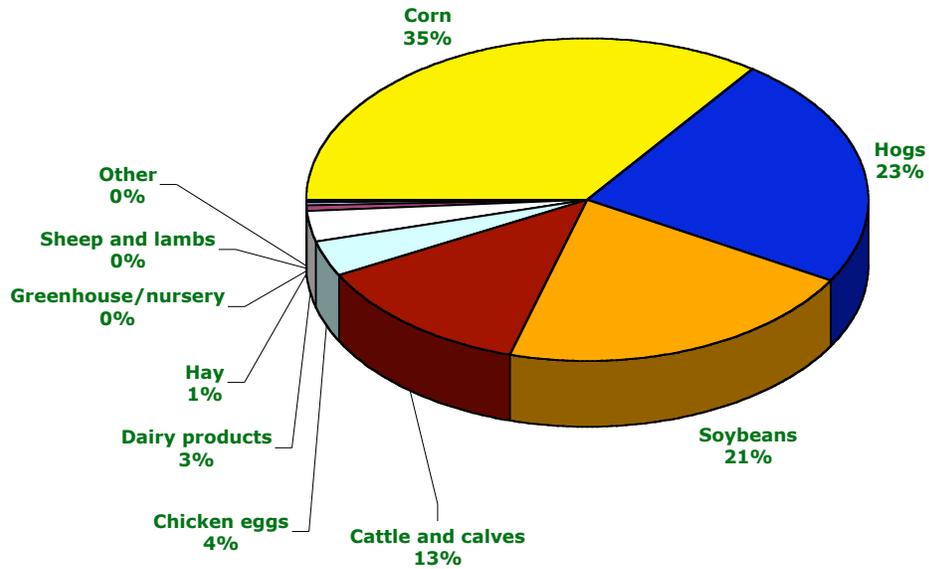
*Note: turkeys, broilers, and sweet corn were also listed among Iowa's top 18 products, but sales figures for these products were not released by ERS, in an effort to protect confidentiality.*

Note also that at \$16.5 million, direct sales from farmers to consumers amount to more than the value of the 10<sup>th</sup>-ranking product, oats.

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

See table on previous page

**Top Farm Products in Iowa, 2010**



Source: USDA Economic Research Service

**Balance of Cash Receipts and Production Costs (BEA):**

Des Moines region farmers sell \$897 million of food commodities per year (1989-2010 average), spending \$831 million to raise them, for an average gain of \$66 million each year. This is an average net cash income of \$9,400 per farm. *Note that these sales figures compiled by the BEA may differ from cash receipts recorded by the USDA Agriculture Census (above).*

Overall, farm producers earned a surplus of \$1.4 billion by selling crops and livestock over the years 1989 to 2010. Yet farm production costs exceeded cash receipts for five years of that 22-year period. Moreover, 33% of the region's farms reported that they lost money in 2007 (Ag Census), and Des Moines region farmers and ranchers earned \$250 million less by selling commodities in 2010 than they earned in 1969 (in 2010 dollars).

Farmers and ranchers earn another \$53 million per year of farm-related income — primarily custom work, and rental income (22-year average for 1989-2010). Federal farm support payments are a more important source of net income than commodity production itself, averaging \$82 million per year for the region for the same years.

**The region's consumers:**

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

Des Moines region consumers spend \$1.7 billion buying food each year, including \$1.1 billion for home use. Most of this food is produced outside the region, so the region's consumers spend about \$1.6 billion per year buying food sourced outside. Only \$1.7 million of food products (0.2% of farm cash receipts and 0.1% of the region's consumer market) are sold by farmers directly to consumers.

Estimated change in net assets (that is, assets minus liabilities) for all region households combined was a loss of \$1.6 billion in 2009 alone (BLS). This places additional pressure on Des Moines region consumers trying to buy food.

**Farm and food economy summary:**

Farmers earn \$66 million each year producing food commodities, and spend \$430 million buying inputs sourced outside of the region. Even when farmers make money, these input purchases result in substantial losses to the region as a whole. Overall, farm production creates a loss of \$360 million to the region as a whole, even if individual farms prosper.

Meanwhile, consumers spend \$1.6 billion buying food from outside. Thus, total loss to the region is \$1.9 billion of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to more than double the value of all food commodities raised in the region.

**Des Moines region: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Des Moines region residents purchase \$1.7 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	\$ 226
Fruits & vegetables	183
Cereals and bakery products	151
Dairy products	124
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	408

If Des Moines region residents purchased \$5.00 of food for home use directly from farmers in the region, this would generate \$185 million of new farm income for the region.

**Dallas County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Dallas County residents purchase \$162 million of food each year, including \$99 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 20.5
Fruits & vegetables	16.6
Cereals and bakery products	13.7
Dairy products	11.3
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	36.9

**Jasper County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Jasper County residents purchase \$93 million of food each year, including \$57 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 11.7
Fruits & vegetables	9.5
Cereals and bakery products	7.8
Dairy products	6.4
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	21.1

**Madison County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Madison County residents purchase \$39 million of food each year, including \$24 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 4.9
Fruits & vegetables	4.0
Cereals and bakery products	3.3
Dairy products	2.7
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	8.9

**Marion County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Marion County residents purchase \$84 million of food each year, including \$51 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 10.6
Fruits & vegetables	8.6
Cereals and bakery products	7.1
Dairy products	5.8
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	19.2

**Polk County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Polk County residents purchase \$1.1 billion of food each year, including \$653 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 135
Fruits & vegetables	109
Cereals and bakery products	90
Dairy products	74
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	244

**Story County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Story County residents purchase \$224 million of food each year, including \$137 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 28
Fruits & vegetables	23
Cereals and bakery products	19
Dairy products	16
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	51

**Warren County: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Warren County residents purchase \$115 million of food each year, including \$70 million to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$14.6
Fruits & vegetables	11.8
Cereals and bakery products	9.8
Dairy products	8.0
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	26.3

**Iowa: markets for food eaten at home (2009)**

Iowa residents purchase \$7.6 billion of food each year, including \$4.6 billion to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 963
Fruits & vegetables	778
Cereals and bakery products	644
Dairy products	530
“Other,” incl. Sweets, fats, & oils	1,738

**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/?submit=fffc>

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>

For further information: <http://www.crcworks.org/>

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