



# Crossroads Resource Center

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

## **Ten Rivers region (Oregon) Food & Farm Economy**

*Highlights of a data compilation covering Benton, Lincoln and Linn Counties*  
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for

### **Ten Rivers Food Web Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon Oregon State University Extension**

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#### **Ten Rivers region** (*Benton, Lincoln and Linn Counties, Oregon*)

226,000 residents earn \$5 billion of annual income

#### **The county's farms (2002)**

3,632 farms.

- Average size is 151 acres. Two-thirds of farms are less than 50 acres
- Average value of land and buildings is \$494,000
- 391,000 acres of total cropland (7% of Oregon's cropland)
- \$188 million of crop sales
- \$55 million sales of livestock and products
- 74% of the region's farms (2,692) sell less than \$10,000 of products per year
- 8% (331) of the region's farms sell more than \$100,000 of products per year
- \$1.3 million in farm subsidies collected by growers
- 2,079 farms (57% of the region's farms) sell livestock and related products
- 36 dairy farms sold \$20 million of dairy products
- 400 farms raise 2.4 million chickens (including 14% of the state's broilers)
- Total poultry & egg sales amounted to \$6.7 million
- 477 farms raise sheep and lambs, with a total inventory of 62,128 animals (25% of Oregon's animals)
- Total sheep and lamb sales amounted to \$5.4 million (30% of Oregon's sales)
- 1,587 (44% of the region's) farms have cattle, holding a total of 43,300 animals
- 29,500 cattle were sold by 1,268 farms in 2002 (3% of the state's total)
- Total cattle sales were \$14 million
- Although cattle sales changed little from 1997 to 2002, 466 fewer farms sold cattle, for a decline of 27% in the number of farms selling cattle
- 125 farms hold an inventory of 2,593 hogs and pigs (12% of Oregon's total)
- One million bushels of wheat (3% of the state's total) are produced by 87 farms

## *Highlights of Ten Rivers Region Farm & Food Economy (Oregon)*

- 21 farms raise 52,000 tons of corn silage
- 302,000 bushels of oats produced on 42 farms
- 149 farms raise 14,960 acres of vegetables (12% of Oregon's vegetable acreage)
- 85,000 tons of forage (hay) produced on 987 farms
- 15 farms raise 3,878 hundredweight of potatoes
- 306 farms tend 3,408 acres of orchard
- \$1.8 million of organic foods were sold by 66 farms
- This is 13% of Oregon's organic farms, and 18% of the state's organic sales
- 771 farms (20% of the region's farms) sell \$3 million of food directly to consumers
- This is 11% of the state's farms selling direct, and 14% of the value of Oregon's direct sales

### *Demographics of farm operators (all):*

5,745	White (96%)
5	African American
63	Native American or Alaska native
17	Native Hawaiian or Asian-Pacific Islander
18	Asian
31	More than one race
123	Latino

### *Principal operators:*

2,996	Male(82%)
636	Female

The region's farmers produce \$ 316 million of food commodities per year (1987-2004 average), spending \$286 million to raise them, gaining an average surplus of \$30 million in production costs each year. This is a total gain of \$540 million over the last 18 years. *[All dollar figures in this section are listed in 2004 dollars].*

2004 was a strong year for Ten Rivers farmers, who earned \$70 million above production costs, a rise of \$50 million from the previous year. Cash receipts for both crops and livestock increased, and production expenses fell. The largest decline in production expenses was a reduction in pay to farm laborers, from \$61 million in 1999 to \$46 million in 2004. Chemical use also declined.

There have been two peaks for farm production in the past three decades. In 1973-1974, and again in 1988, farmers earned \$100 million over costs of production per year. In seven years (1978, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1984, 1995, & 2000), farmers paid more in production costs than they earned from selling their products.

Nevertheless, 67 % of the region's farms reported net losses in 2002. For Lincoln County, losses were even greater, with 80% (298) of the county's 374 farms reporting a net loss.

Income from livestock and livestock products peaked in 1979 and has steadily eroded ever since. In 2004, sales were a little over half their 1979 value of \$100 million.

Crop income has experienced significant swings up and down, but has generally risen from \$150 million in 1969 to \$260 million in 2004.

*Highlights of Ten Rivers Region Farm & Food Economy (Oregon)*

Farmers earn another \$35 million per year of farm-related income — primarily custom work, rental income — and another \$2-3 million of federal supports on average each year. Farm-related income peaked in 1993 at \$63 million per year.

**The county's consumers:**

Ten Rivers consumers spend \$555 million buying food each year. \$324 million of this buys food to eat at home, and \$231 million for eating out. Most of this food is sourced outside the region. \$3 million of food products (1.3%) are sold by farmers directly to consumers, more than twice the national rate.

**Poverty level:**

64,000 residents (28%) live in a household earning less than a living wage. This includes 15,500 residents of Corvallis proper (24% of the region's total). "Living wage" is defined as 185% of the federal poverty guideline — the level at which children are eligible for free or reduced prices for school lunch — but is still not enough to live well.

**Farm and food economy summary:**

Farmers gain \$30 million each year producing food commodities, yet spend \$100 million buying outside inputs, while the region's consumers spend \$330 million buying food from outside. This is a total loss to the region of \$400 million of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to 70 percent of the value of all food commodities raised in the region.

**Ten Rivers region: markets for food eaten at home (BLS)**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 82
Fruits & vegetables	58
Cereals and bakery products	37
Dairy products	43
"Other," incl. sweets, fats, & oils	105

**Local, County & State Food markets (BLS):**

**City of Corvallis: markets for food eaten at home**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 18
Fruits & vegetables	13
Cereals and bakery products	8
Dairy products	9
"Other," incl. sweets, fats, & oils	23

**Benton County: markets for food eaten at home**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 28
Fruits & vegetables	19
Cereals and bakery products	12
Dairy products	14
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	36

**Lincoln County: markets for food eaten at home**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 18
Fruits & vegetables	12
Cereals and bakery products	8
Dairy products	9
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	23

**Linn County: markets for food eaten at home**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 37
Fruits & vegetables	26
Cereals and bakery products	16
Dairy products	19
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	47

**State of Oregon: markets for food eaten at home**

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 1,230
Fruits & vegetables	860
Cereals and bakery products	548
Dairy products	640
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	1,570

**Individual County Highlights (2002 Ag Census):**

**Benton County**

Second in Oregon and in U.S. for Christmas tree sales (\$25 million)  
Fourth in Oregon for acres of vegetables harvested (8,481)  
Fifth in Oregon for sales of vegetables (\$20.8 million)  
Fifth in state for colonies of bees (3,803)  
Sixth in Oregon, and seventh in U.S., for acres devoted to field and grass seed crops (37,082)  
Tenth in state for sales of “other crops and hay” (\$20 million)  
Tenth in Oregon for sales of hogs and pigs (\$114,000)

**Lincoln County**

Twelfth in Oregon for acres devoted to short-rotation woody crops (shrubs, etc.)

**Linn County**

First in state and fifth in U.S. for sales of “other crops and hay” (\$84 million)  
First in Oregon and in U.S. for acres of field and grass seed crops (184,575)  
First in state and ninth in U.S. for sales of sheep and goats (\$4.8 million)  
First in state and 13<sup>th</sup> in U.S. for inventory of sheep and lambs (55,903)  
Second in Oregon for inventory of mink (14,280)  
Third in state for number of broiler chickens (403,845)  
Third in Oregon for acres of sweet corn (4,215)  
Third in Oregon for sales of hogs and pigs (\$378,000)  
Fourth in state for sales of poultry and eggs (\$6.6 million)  
Fourth in Oregon for sales of horses, ponies, mules, etc. (\$1 million)  
Fifth in Oregon for number of layers 20 weeks or older (6,763)  
Sixth in state for sales of milk and milk products (\$14.7 million)  
Eighth in state for sales of nursery, greenhouse, flowers, and sod (\$11 million)  
Ninth in state for aquaculture sales (\$626,000)

**State of Oregon**

First in U.S. for sales of Christmas trees (\$108 million)  
First in U.S. for acres of Christmas trees (67,804)  
First in U.S. for acres of field and grass seed crops (545,000)  
Third in U.S. for sales of field and grass seed crops (\$499 million)  
Third in U.S. for sales of nursery, greenhouse, flowers, and sod (\$806 million)  
Fourth in U.S. for sales of fruit, nuts and berries (\$277 million)  
Seventh in U.S. for sales of vegetables, melons, potatoes and sweet potatoes (\$354 million)  
Tenth in U.S. for sales of sheep, goats and their products (\$17 million)  
Tenth in U.S. for inventory of sheep & lambs (237,076)

**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>

*Note: as seen above, there are cases in which BEA data and Agriculture Census data do not agree with each other.*

**For more information:**

To see results from *Finding Food in Farm Country* studies in other regions of Minnesota, Iowa, California, Hawaii: <http://www.crcworks.org/fffc.pdf>.

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 by Ken Meter at a plenary appearance to the Community Food Security Coalition in October 2006: <http://www.crcworks.org/crcppts/cfsc06.pdf>.

To link to further analysis of farm and food economies in the U.S.: <http://www.crcworks.org/rural.html>.

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