



Crossroads Resource Center

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Tools for Community Self-determination

Coconino County, Arizona Local Food Economy

Highlights of a data compilation

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Coconino County (Arizona)

122,000 residents hold \$2.2 billion in annual purchasing power (2004).

The county's ranches & farms (2002)

Land:

- 213 ranches and farms. This is 3% of Arizona's total.
- 39 of these are 1,000 acres or more, and 106 (half) are less than 50 acres.
- The Agriculture Census does not report total land in farms and ranches for the county for 2002. Total acres in 1997 was 6.2 million, nearly one-quarter of the state's farmland.
- 1,033 acres of harvested cropland.
- 1,942 acres of irrigated land.
- Average value of land and buildings per ranch/farm is \$4.7 million.

Ownership:

- 36 Native American-operated farms, 20 Hispanic, and 1 Asian.
- 46 farms are operated principally by women.

Sales:

- \$11.1 million of crops and livestock sold.
- \$10.3 million of livestock and products sold.
- Thus, 93 % of agricultural sales are livestock or livestock products.
- The number of farms/ranches selling livestock, poultry and related products fell 40% from 1997 to 2002 (213 to 128), while the amount of products sold remained at \$10 million.
- 120 farms and ranches sold less than \$2,500 per year.
- 74% of county farms reported net losses in 2002.
- 16 farms collected \$198,000 in federal support payments. Note that the Bureau of Economic Analysis reports far more government subsidies than does USDA (see below).

Cattle & Dairy:

- 91 ranches and farms hold an inventory of 33,000 cattle. 19,000 (58%) were sold in 2002.
- County cattle sales totaled \$8.5 million, a 15% decrease from 1997.

- 6,700 cattle weighing less than 500 pounds were sold by county ranchers. This is 55% of total cattle sold.
- Coconino County sells 3% of the cattle sold in Arizona.
- The County's cattle inventory was 50,466 in 1997.
- 80% of Coconino County's cattle inventory lived on 14 ranches with 500 or more cattle.
- 25% of the county's cattle ranches raised fewer than 10 animals.
- 3 farms raise milk cows.
- 15 farms produce 2,377 tons of forage crops (hay, etc.).

Other livestock & animal products:

- One farm sells hogs and pigs (There were 6 in 1997).
- 23 farms sell sheep and lambs.
- 22 farms sell poultry and eggs, selling a total of \$10,000 of products.
- There were 12 farms selling poultry in 1997.
- 21 farms sell 430 laying hens.
- 4 farms sell 66 broiler chickens.

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

- 6 farms sell vegetables.
- 6 farms raise 4 acres of snap beans.
- 5 farms raise beets.
- 1 farm raises green onions.
- 1 farm raises chile peppers.
- 1 farm raises squash.
- 1 farm raises sweet corn.
- 5 farms raises tomatoes.

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

- The county has 17 farms with a total of 50 acres of orchards.
- 17 farms raise 36 acres of apples.
- 6 farms raise 4 acres of apricots.
- 1 farm raises figs.
- 1 farm raises grapes.
- 3 farms raise peaches.
- 1 farm raises pears.
- 5 farms raise plums.
- 5 farms raise almonds.
- 5 farms raise pecans.
- 1 farm raises watermelons.

Grains:

- 2 farms sell corn for grain.
- 2 farms sell soybeans.
- 4 farms sell oats for grain, a total of 2,444 bushels.

Direct and organic sales:

- Two farms sold organic foods (the Ag Census does not reveal how much was sold).
- 69 farms in Arizona sold \$3.4 million of organic food products.

- 24 farms sell \$53,000 of food directly to consumers. This is an increase of 33% in the number of farms (18 in 1997) and a doubling of direct sales from 1997 to 2002.

Ranking in Arizona:

- Ranks first in Arizona in sales of sheep and lambs.
- Ranks third in Arizona in sales of goats.
- Ranks third in Arizona in acres of sod harvested.
- Ranks fifth in Arizona in acres of apples.

Balance of Cash Receipts and Production Costs (BEA):

Coconino County ranchers and farmers sell \$5 million of food commodities per year (2002-2004 average), yet spend \$15 million to raise them, losing an average of \$10 million in production costs each year.

74 % of the county's farms and ranches lost money in 2002 (Ag Census). Producers have endured a total loss of \$51 million over the last 16 years, with only three years of positive cash flow selling crops and livestock. Coconino County farmers and ranchers earned \$12 million less from selling commodities in 1969 than they earned in 2004 (in 2004 dollars).

Farmers and ranchers earn another \$700,000 per year of farm-related income — primarily custom work, rental income — and collect another \$900,000 of federal supports, to help cover the costs of farming. (three-year average for 2002-2004). Note that the Bureau of Economic Analysis reports far more government payments than does USDA.

The county's consumers:

Coconino County consumers spend \$250 million buying food each year, including \$150 million for home use. Most of this food is produced outside the region. Only \$53,000 of food products (0.5%) are sold by farmers directly to consumers.

Farm and food economy summary:

Farmers lose \$10 million each year producing food commodities, and also spend \$6 million buying outside inputs, while consumers spend \$215 million buying food from outside. This is a total loss to the region of \$231 million of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to 14 times the value of all food commodities raised in the region.

Coconino County: markets for food (2004):

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 37
Fruits & vegetables	26
Cereals and bakery products	17
Dairy products	19
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	48

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 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 keynote appearance to the Minnesota Rural Partners Summit in July, 2005: <http://www.crcworks.org/metersummit05.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/rural.html>.

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