



Crossroads Resource Center

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Tools for Community Self-determination

Northwest Minnesota's Food & Farm Economy

Highlights of a presentation

by Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center (Minneapolis) for the
Northwest Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership
U of M Crookston Sustainable Development Conference - Oct. 25, 2005

Northwest Minnesota Region

13 Counties — *Clay, Clearwater, Beltrami, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau, Wilkin.*

205,000 residents hold \$ 4 billion in annual purchasing power

The region's farm families

9,765 farm families

- 16 % of Minnesota farms
- 23% of Minnesota farm acreage
- 75% of Minnesota's wheat, barley, sugar beets
- 90% of sunflowers
- 16% of beef cows
- 2 % of vegetable farms
- 3 % of state's orchards
- 16 % of Minnesota's organic production
- 231 farms sell \$833,000 of food directly to consumers

Region's farmers produce \$ 937 million of food per year (1993-2003 average), yet spend \$ 1,136 million to raise it, losing an average of \$ 200 million in production costs each year since 1993. This is a total loss of \$ 2.2 billion over the last 11 years! 40 % of the region's farms lost money in 2002.

The region's consumers:

The region's consumers spend \$403 million buying food each year, mostly from outside the region, while farmers lose \$ 200 million producing crops and livestock each year.

Farm and food economy summary:

Farmers lose \$240 million each year producing food commodities, spending \$ 480 million buying outside inputs, while consumers spend \$ 300 million buying food from outside. This is a total loss of \$ 780 million of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to 93 % of the value of all food commodities raised in the region.

WC Minnesota: markets for food

| | <i>millions</i> |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs | \$ 54.9 |
| Fruits & vegetables | 38.1 |
| Cereals and bakery products | 33.8 |
| Dairy products | 24.9 |
| “Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils | 76.3 |

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/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 link to further analysis of farm and food economies in the U.S.:

<http://www.crcworks.org/rural.html>

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