

GROWTH TRENDS

Current, interesting and useful data from the YCPC

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Family Farms in the United States (US)

The US Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service recently released (3/2015) a report that focuses on family farms. By definition, small family farms have a gross cash farm income of less than \$350,000 annually. Large family farms have a gross cash farm income greater than \$1,000,000.



Based on the **2012 Census of Agriculture Farm Typology Report ...**

Fast Facts about US Family Farms:

- **97%** are family-owned
- **88%** are small family farms
- **58%** of all direct sales to consumers come from small family farms
- **64%** vegetables and **66%** dairy sales come from large family farms
- **18%** of family farms started within last 10 years

Pennsylvania Farm Typology

The USDA farm typology study also presents data by state. This data shows that there are 59,309 family farms in PA, comprising over 7,467,000 acres. The average PA farm is 130 acres. The total market value of all agricultural items sold is \$7,487,141,000 annually. The average per farm is \$126,240. There are 53,981 small family farms in PA.

Not unlike the US as a whole, the vast majority of the total farms in PA are family owned. Just fewer than 3% or 1,761 farms are non-family farms. These non-family farms are often larger than the family-owned farms, with an average size of 272 acres.

As a snapshot of family farms in PA: 19,074 farms grow grains, 1,312 produce tobacco and 3,147 produce fruits, tree nuts and berries and 1,079 produce cut Christmas trees. PA has 7,102 poultry and egg farms, 19,381 farms with cattle and calves and 7,048 dairy farms.

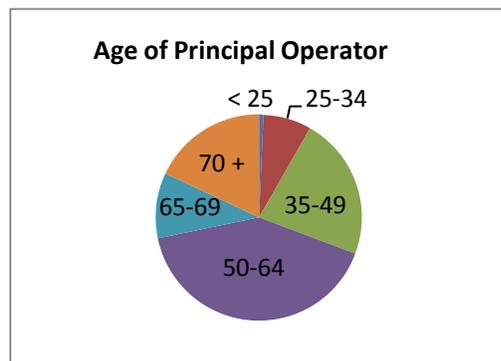
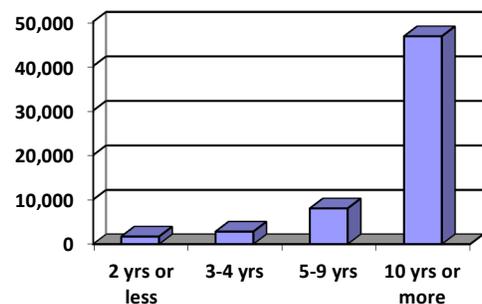


Principal Operator Characteristics of PA Farms

The principal operator is the person who runs the farm, making the day-to-day management decisions. The operator could be an owner, hired manager, cash tenant, share tenant, and/or a partner. In PA, 86% of the principal operators are male and 14% are female. About 52% of principal operators consider farming their primary occupation. About 86% of principal operators reside on the farm. Almost 40% of principal operators report working 200 days or more off the farm. 58,951 of the total 59,309 principal farm operators in PA are White.

It is also interesting to look at how long principal operators in PA have been working in their farms. The chart to the right shows that a huge majority of principal operators of PA family farms (46,723) have been on their present farm for 10 years or more. The average number of years on the present farm is 23 years.

Years on Present Family Farm



The average age of a principal operator in PA is 56.1 years. As shown, about 40% of the total principal operators are between the ages of 50-64. Looking at all principal owners, 41,122 or 70% are over the age of 50 years. A small percentage of the total principal owners are under 35 years (8%). Data shows that the majority of family farms with younger principal owners (under 35) are low to moderate sales, GCFI less than \$349,000.

Other Interesting Information regarding Pennsylvania Family Farms

- 62% of all farms have access to the internet. About half of those use DSL service.
- 4% of farms are corporate farms.
- 4,217 farms (313,373 acres) are under conservation easement.
- 13,937 farms utilize no-till practices.
- 2,234 farms have renewable-energy producing systems.
- 2,612,426 acres are treated with commercial fertilizer, lime and soil conditioners
- 12,715 acres are planted in sweet corn.

CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

For more information on the US Census of Agriculture's farm typology report, visit the USDA Census of Agriculture page at

www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Typology/

To see the entire summary report for Pennsylvania, please follow this link:

http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Typology/typology13_pa.pdf