

Volume 1

State and County Data

Part 39

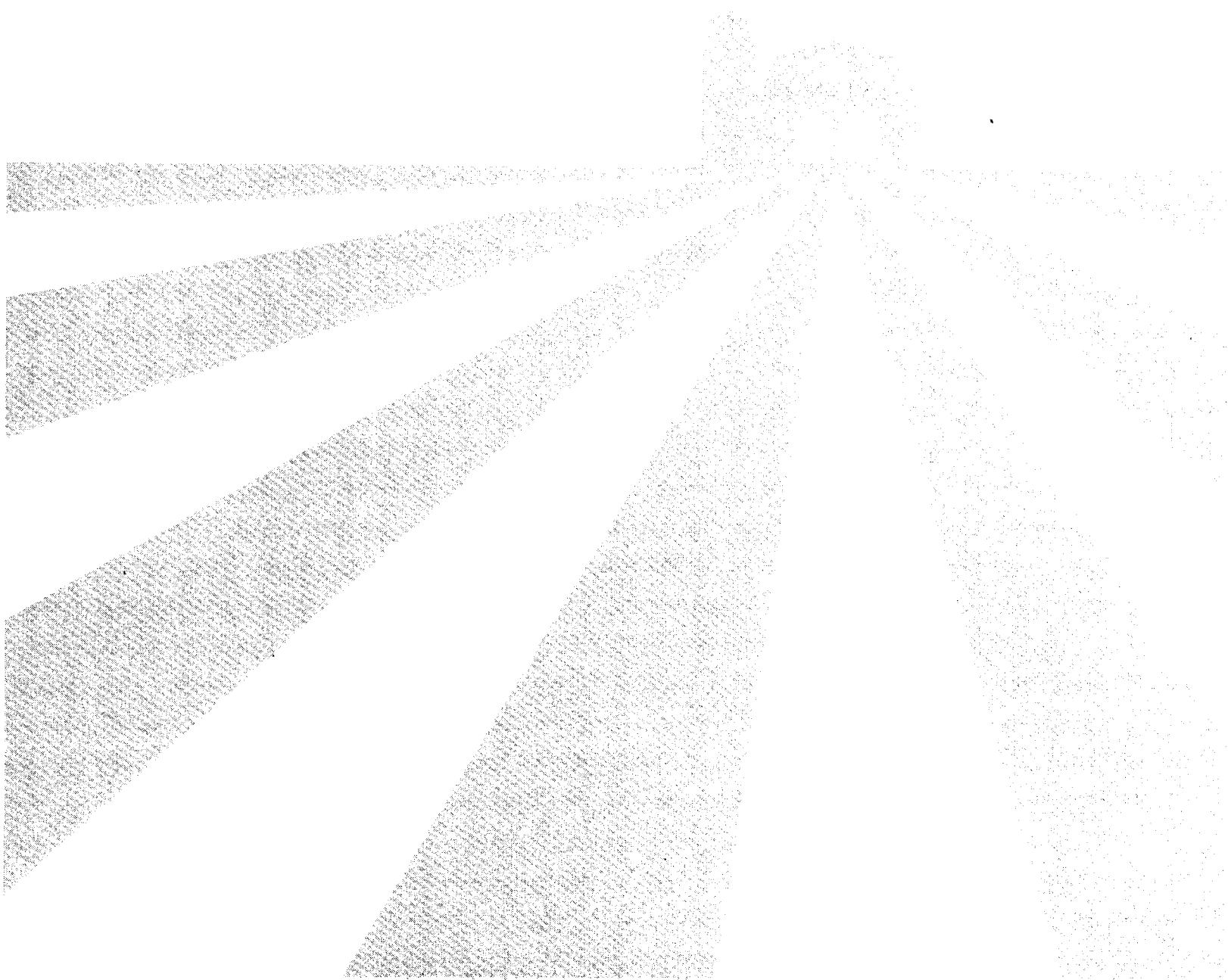
Rhode Island

AC78-A-39

1978

CENSUS OF
AGRICULTURE

U.S. Department of Commerce
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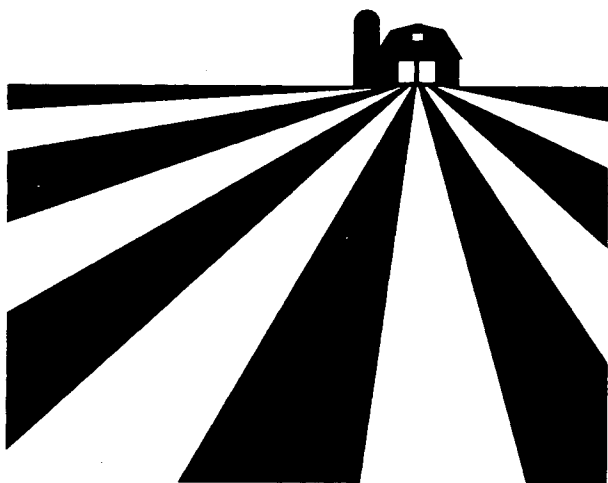


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CENSUS OF
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Issued March 1981



U.S. Department of Commerce
Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary
Courtenay M. Slater,
Chief Economist

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Daniel B. Levine,
Acting Director



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Daniel B. Levine, Acting Director

**Shirley Kallek, Associate Director for
Economic Fields**

**Richard B. Quanrud, Assistant Director for
Economic and Agriculture Censuses**

AGRICULTURE DIVISION
Arnold L. Bollenbacher, Chief

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HISTORY

The census of agriculture provides a periodic statistical picture of the Nation's farming, ranching, and related activities. The 1978 Census of Agriculture is the 21st taken by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

The first agriculture census was taken in 1840 as part of the sixth decennial census. From 1840 to 1950, an agriculture census was taken as part of the decennial census of population. A mid-decade census of agriculture was conducted in 1925, 1935, and 1945. From 1954 to 1974 a census of agriculture was taken for the years ending in 4 and 9. In 1976, Congress authorized the census of agriculture to be taken for 1978 and 1982 to adjust the data reference year to coincide with the 1982 Economic Censuses covering manufacturing, mining, construction, retail trade, wholesale trade, service industries, and selected transportation activities. Thereafter, the agriculture census will revert to a 5-year cycle.

AUTHORITY AND AREA COVERED

The census of agriculture is authorized under the provisions of title 13, United States Code. Section 142(a) provides for the census to be taken in 1979, in 1983, and in every fifth year after 1983. Section 191 provides that the census shall include each State, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands. A census of agriculture will be conducted in American Samoa and the Northern Mariana Islands in conjunction with the 1980 Census of Population and Housing.

FARM DEFINITION

Since 1850, when minimum criteria defining a farm for census purposes were first established, the farm definition has been changed nine times, as the Nation has grown and changed. The current definition was announced on August 12, 1975, in accordance with a joint agreement between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Office of Management and Budget, and the Bureau of the Census. It defines a farm, for statistical purposes, as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agri-

cultural products were sold or normally would have been sold during the census year. The previous definition (used for the 1959, 1964, and 1969 censuses, and for the 1974 preliminary county reports) counted as a farm any place with less than 10 acres from which \$250 or more of agricultural products were sold or normally would have been sold during the census year, or any place of 10 acres or more from which \$50 or more of agricultural products were sold or normally would have been sold during the census year.

METHOD OF ENUMERATION

Evaluation studies of the 1969 and 1974 censuses, which were conducted primarily by mail, indicated that the administrative lists used to create the census mailing list were not adequate to assure complete coverage in the census. Also, censuses prior to 1969, conducted by direct enumeration, had been found by evaluation studies (conducted since 1950) to be progressively less and less complete, as increased mobility of farm operators led to increases in the numbers of nonresident operators, operators farming on a part-time basis, and operators farming two or more separate tracts.

The 1978 Census of Agriculture was conducted primarily by mail for maximum economy, supplemented by a personal canvass of a statistical area segment sample for maximum completeness of coverage. The area segment sample, which consists of selected geographic areas completely canvassed by direct enumeration, provides reliable estimates for States of the number and characteristics of any farms not represented in the mail portion of the census. Estimates for such farms are an integral part of the State totals published for the 1978 census. The direct enumeration sample estimates are statistically reliable only for State totals and have not been allocated to counties. Appendix A provides a more detailed description of how the 1978 census was taken and includes a discussion of census coverage.

COMPARABILITY OF DATA

State totals for 1978 are not directly comparable with totals for 1974 or earlier censuses as they include data for farm operations represented on the mail list plus estimates from the direct enumeration sample for farms not represented on the mail list. The 1974 State level data include only operations represented on the mail list.

Coverage evaluation studies for the 1974 census indicated that 10.7 percent of all farms were not included in the census. Farms missed in the census were usually small and accounted for less than 3 percent of the total value of agricultural products sold and less than 6 percent of the land in farms. The proportion of farms missed in the 1974 census was generally higher in

States having a large proportion of small farms and urbanized areas having a sizable number of part-time farms. Farm counts for 1974, adjusted for the net undercount, are shown in appendix C.

County level data on acreages and inventories for 1978 and 1974 are generally comparable; however, improvements in the coverage of the 1978 census, especially of smaller farms, should be taken into consideration when comparing farm counts.

USE OF SAMPLING

Two types of sampling were used for data collection for the 1978 census. In addition to the State estimates from the direct enumeration sample discussed previously, data for items in sections 22 through 27 of the census report form were collected from only a sample of farms. Data based on a sample are subject to sampling error. Detailed discussions of the census report forms, the use of sampling, and estimates of sampling error are included in appendix A.

GRAPHICS

Several charts and maps presented on the following pages show selected agricultural statistics for this State. The items in the charts and the first four maps are presented for all States. The last four maps present data of particular importance to this State.

TABULAR PRESENTATION

State data—In chapter 1, State tables 1 through 28 show detailed State level data usually accompanied by historical data for one or more censuses. Tables 29 through 35 provide 1978 State data cross-tabulated by various farm classifications.

County summary data—Selected data items are presented by county in chapter 2. Tables 1 through 15 include general data such as land in farms, size of farms, land use, operator characteristics, expenses, and machinery and equipment. Inventory and sales data for livestock, poultry, and animal specialties are contained in tables 16 through 27 and detailed crop data in tables 28 through 35. Tables 36 through 43 present data on foreign ownership, income from customwork, direct sales to consumers, operators by racial group, and female operators.

Individual county data—Five pages of tables are presented in chapter 3 for each county with 10 farms or more in 1978. The tables include final data for each county and are more comprehensive than those in the preliminary reports. Data are provided for all farms and for farms with sales of \$2,500 or more for both 1978 and 1974.

This chapter also includes a set of similar tables for the State as a whole and for those farms in the State not on the mailing list and not included in county tables.

PRELIMINARY REPORTS

Preliminary reports have been published separately for all counties in the United States with 10 farms or more in 1978, each State, the four geographic regions, and the United States. This series provided, at the earliest possible date, information on major data items, with comparable final data from the 1974 census. The data items were standard for each State and county except in table 3 where the selected crops varied by State according to their relative importance in the State. The State preliminary report also included a full set of tables providing data derived from the direct enumeration sample on the estimated number and characteristics of farms not included in county totals because they were not represented on the mailing list.

For major data items at the county level differences between the preliminary and final figures are in general less than 5 percent. At the State level, differences are significantly less.

CENSUS DISCLOSURE RULES

In keeping with the provisions of title 13, United States Code, data that would disclose the operations of an individual farm are not published. However, the number of farms in a given size category or other classification is not considered a disclosure. Appendix A presents additional information on disclosure rules.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Appendix A includes definitions and explanations of selected terms used in the tables.

“SEE TEXT” REFERENCE

Items in the tables which are followed by the reference “See text” are explained or defined in appendix A.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the tables:

- Zero.
- (D) Data withheld to avoid disclosing information for individual farms.
- (X) Not applicable.
- (Z) Less than half of the unit reported.
- (NA) Not available.
- * Independent city.

Highlights of the State's Agriculture: 1978 and 1974

	All farms			Farms with sales of \$2,500 or more		
	1978		1974 ¹	1978		1974 ¹
	Total	Not on mail list	Total	Total	Not on mail list	Total
Farms..... number	866	192	597	520	55	419
Land in farms..... acres	74 585	8 352	61 068	50 107	1 493	44 674
Average size of farm..... acres	86	44	102	96	27	107
Harvested cropland..... acres	24 997	1 293	21 422	21 570	263	19 858
Average per farm..... acres	29	7	36	41	5	47
Farms by size:						
1 to 49 acres..... number	437	111	285	239	41	176
50 to 499 acres..... number	415	81	295	271	14	229
500 to 999 acres..... number	10	-	15	9	-	14
1,000 acres or more..... number	4	-	2	1	-	-
Value of land and buildings: ²						
Average per farm..... dollars	209 667	115 698	153 390	250 922	156 505	164 952
Average per acre..... dollars	2 370	2 660	1 500	2 483	5 765	1 547
Value of machinery and equipment on farms ² \$1,000	16 116	1 473	11 378	12 822	446	9 513
Average per farm..... dollars	18 610	7 670	19 059	24 657	8 117	22 704
Value of agricultural products sold..... \$1,000	26 448	691	22 219	26 044	563	21 973
Average per farm..... dollars	30 541	3 598	37 218	50 084	10 234	52 442
Crops sold..... \$1,000	15 738	527	12 121	15 589	498	11 988
Average per farm..... dollars	18 173	2 744	20 303	29 979	9 063	28 611
Livestock and livestock products sold..... \$1,000	7 478	161	6 774	7 246	64	6 697
Average per farm..... dollars	8 635	837	11 347	13 935	1 171	15 983
Poultry and poultry products sold..... \$1,000	3 232	3	3 300	3 208	-	3 275
Average per farm..... dollars	3 732	16	5 528	6 170	-	7 816
Farms by value of agricultural products sold:						
Less than \$2,500..... number	343	137	184	-	-	9
\$2,500 to \$9,999..... number	225	48	124	225	48	124
\$10,000 to \$39,999..... number	158	5	155	158	5	155
\$40,000 to \$99,999..... number	85	2	85	85	2	85
\$100,000 to \$199,999..... number	31	-	24	31	-	24
\$200,000 or more..... number	21	-	22	21	-	22
Abnormal farms..... number	3	(X)	3	(X)	(X)	(X)
Value of agricultural products sold by farms having sales of--						
Less than \$2,500..... \$1,000	381	128	191	-	-	8
\$2,500 to \$9,999..... \$1,000	1 103	258	623	1 103	258	623
\$10,000 to \$39,999..... \$1,000	3 588	155	3 618	3 588	155	3 618
\$40,000 to \$99,999..... \$1,000	5 450	150	5 196	5 450	150	5 196
\$100,000 to \$199,999..... \$1,000	4 183	-	3 373	4 183	-	3 373
\$200,000 or more..... \$1,000	11 720	-	9 156	11 720	-	9 156
Abnormal farms..... \$1,000	23	(X)	63	(X)	(X)	(X)
Farm production expenses for selected items: ²						
Feed for livestock and poultry..... \$1,000	5 058	117	5 068	4 757	36	4 998
Seeds, bulbs, plants, and trees..... \$1,000	829	96	909	815	90	899
Commercial fertilizer..... \$1,000	1 129	34	1 217	1 072	16	1 194
Other agricultural chemicals..... \$1,000	596	17	501	570	10	493
Petroleum products—gasoline, diesel, etc..... \$1,000	1 522	194	833	1 429	169	798
Hired farm labor..... \$1,000	4 584	122	3 729	4 495	117	3 672
Livestock and poultry inventory:						
Cattle and calves..... number	10 068	637	11 200	8 570	107	10 416
Hogs and pigs..... number	6 557	416	5 029	6 084	69	4 832
Sheep and lambs..... number	2 493	28	1 484	662	-	294
Chickens 3 months old or older..... number	257 669	1 648	283 254	252 648	207	280 978
Crops harvested:						
Corn for all purposes..... acres	3 590	170	3 312	3 303	-	3 234
Irish potatoes..... acres	3 536	2	4 344	3 518	1	4 338
Hay crops..... hundredweight	915 316	240	932 755	914 101	40	931 647
Hay crops..... acres	11 804	1 181	8 689	8 800	328	7 377
All vegetables harvested for sale..... tons, dry	22 842	1 928	17 421	18 459	541	15 432
..... acres	2 249	41	(NA)	2 150	14	1 810

¹Not fully comparable because of direct enumeration sample in 1978 totals; see text.
²1978 data are based on a sample of farms; see text.

RHODE ISLAND

