

1987

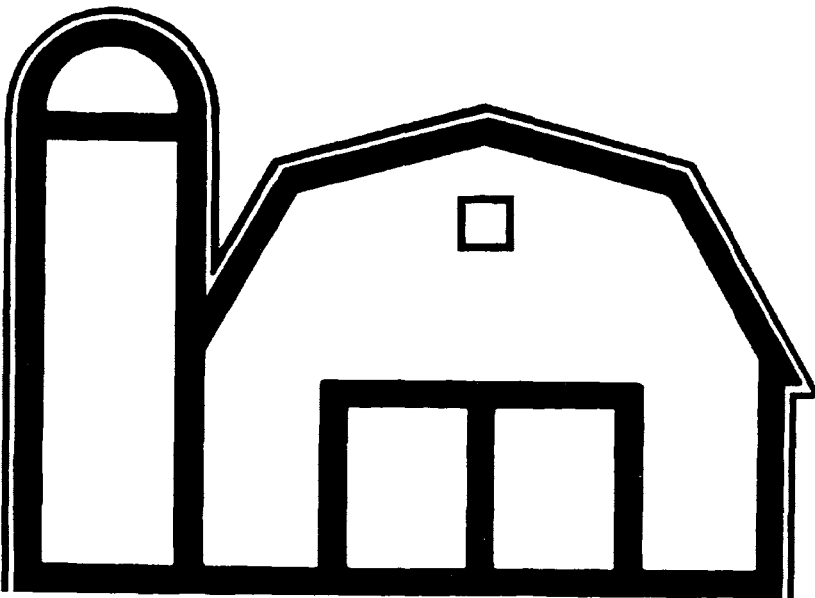
Census of Agriculture

AC87-S-5

Volume 2
SUBJECT SERIES

Part 5

Government Payments and Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold



U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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Government Payments and Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold

Issued September 1990



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PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this publication is to provide a comparison of the farm size classifications in which government payments are combined with value of agricultural products sold versus value of sales alone for places qualifying as farms in the 1987 Census of Agriculture. Traditionally, economic size has been measured by the value of agricultural products sold. However, the programs offered under the 1985 Food Security Act encouraged many farmers to idle large portions of their productive resource base in exchange for direct government payments. The economic size of many of these farms was consequently understated when classified only by the market value of agricultural products sold. Combining government payments received with the market value of agricultural products sold may provide data users with a more accurate measure of the true economic size of farms.

PUBLISHED DATA

Some data presented in this report are available in other published reports for the 1987 Census of Agriculture. Detailed statistics for counties, States, and the United States are presented in 51 separate parts of the Geographic Area Series (Volume 1). Data on government payments received are given in county table 4 and State tables 5, 10, and 47 to 53 of Volume 1, *State and County Data*, and in the U.S. tables of part 51, Volume 1, *Summary and State Data*.

Volume 1 presents data on market value of agricultural products sold and government payments as separate data items. Many of the data items in volume 1 are cross-tabulated by value of sales frequencies as a measure of economic size. This report combines government payments with the value of sales, and the combined value is

cross-tabulated by the same size frequencies used for value of sales in volume 1. Direct comparison of data items can be made between the tables presented here and State table 52 of volume 1.

HISTORY

The 1987 Census of Agriculture is the 23d 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 of population. From 1840 to 1950, an agriculture census was taken as part of the decennial census. A separate mid-decade census of agriculture was conducted in 1925, 1935, and 1945. From 1954 to 1974, a census of agriculture was taken for 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 so that it coincided with the economic censuses covering manufacturing, mining, construction, retail trade, wholesale trade, service industries, and selected transportation activities. This adjustment in timing established the agriculture census on a 5-year cycle collecting data for years ending in 2 and 7. This report presents statistics for States and the United States based upon data from the 1987 Census of Agriculture.

USES OF THE CENSUS

The census of agriculture is the leading source of statistics about the Nation's agricultural production and the only source of consistent, comparable data at the county, State, and national levels. Census statistics are used by Congress in developing and changing farm programs and for determining the effects of these programs. Many national and State programs are designed or allocated on the basis of census data, such as funds for extension services, research, and soil conservation projects. Private industry uses census statistics to provide a more effective production and distribution system for the agricultural community.

AUTHORITY AND AREA COVERED

The census of agriculture is required by law under Title 13, United States Code, sections 142(a) and 191, which directs that a census be taken in 1979, 1983, and in every fifth year after 1983 covering the prior year. The 1987 census includes each State, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the

Virgin Islands of the United States. A census of agriculture will be conducted in American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in conjunction with the 1990 Census of Population and Housing. Data in this report covers only the 50 individual States and the United States.

FARM DEFINITION

Since 1850, when minimum criteria defining a farm for census purposes first were established, the farm definition has been changed nine times. The current definition, first used for the 1974 census, is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold or normally would have been sold during the census year. Government payments were not counted toward the \$1,000 limit.

COMPARABILITY OF DATA

Data on acreages and inventories for 1987 and 1982 are generally comparable. Dollar figures shown for expenses and agricultural product sales are expressed in current dollars and have not been adjusted for inflation or deflation. In general, data for censuses since 1974 are not fully comparable with data for 1969 and earlier censuses due to changes in the farm definition.

The 1978 U.S., region, and state data shown in the 1978 Census of Agriculture publications included data for farms on the mail list plus estimates from an area sample for farms not on the mail list. For comparability, the 1978 data in the 1987 publications include only farms on the mail list.

TABULAR PRESENTATION

This report presents data from the 1987 Census of Agriculture by combining government payments and market value of agricultural products sold.

Data items comparable to those found in volume 1 are provided for the United States in the U.S. summary tables 48 through 53. Selected items are presented for each State and the United States in the State summary tables 48 through 53.

CENSUS DISCLOSURE RULES

In keeping with the provisions of Title 13, United States Code, no data are published that would disclose the operations of an individual farm. However, the number of farms in a given size category or other classification, such as size of farm, is not considered a release of confidential information and is provided even though other information is withheld.

INVENTORIES, PRODUCTION, AND SALES DATA

Inventories of livestock, poultry, and machinery and equipment are measured as of December 31 of the census year. Crop and livestock production, sales, and expense data are for the calendar year, except for a few crops (such as citrus) for which the production year overlaps the calendar year.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

The following abbreviations and symbols are used throughout the tables:

- Represents zero.
- (D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.
- (NA) Not available.
- (S) Withheld because estimate did not meet publication standards on the basis of either the response rate (associated relative standard error) or a consistency review.
- (X) Not applicable.
- (Z) Less than half of unit shown.

REPORT FORM REGIONS FOR THE 1987 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

1987 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS AND VALUE OF SALES 1

