



# Asian Farmers

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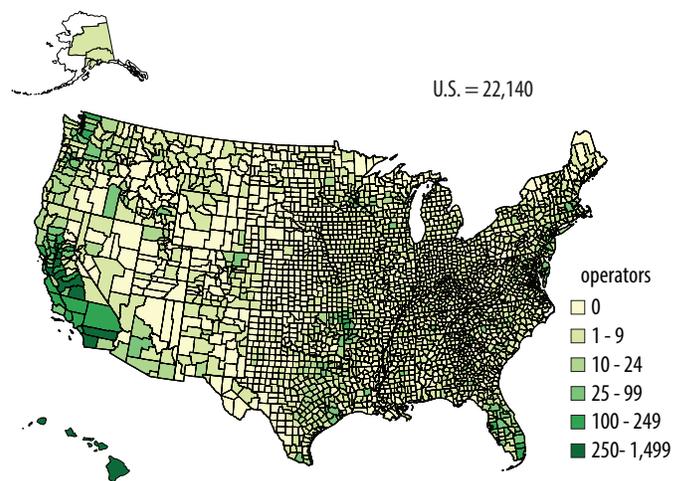
Up 21 percent since 2007; sold \$5.2 billion in agricultural products in 2012.

## 63 percent ...

... of Asian farms specialized in fruits, nuts, vegetables, or nursery crops in 2012.

In 2012, the number of Asian farmers in the United States was 22,140. This was a 21 percent increase since 2007, when the last agriculture census was conducted. Nationally Asian farmers were less than 1 percent of the country's 3.2 million farmers in 2012. Sixty-four percent lived in four states: California, Hawaii, Florida, and Texas. As a proportion of the state's farmers, Hawaii ranked first; 38 percent of all farmers in Hawaii were Asian.

Asian Farm Operators, by County, 2012



Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

## About the Numbers

This *Highlights* document includes data for operators reporting their race only as Asian. An additional 1,927 respondents to the 2012 Census of Agriculture indicated they are Asian in addition to one or more other races. For more information on Asian farmers, see <http://bit.ly/REGprofiles>.

\*Statistically significant change. See <http://bit.ly/AgCensusFAQs>.

## Principal Operators

Of total Asian farmers, 13,669 were principal operators, that is, the person in charge of the farm's day-to-day operations. Farms with Asian principal operators increased 22 percent between 2007 and 2012. In contrast, principal operators of all farms declined 4 percent. (Table 1)

Table 1  
Asian Farm Operators, 2007 and 2012

	2007	2012	% change
<b>Asian farm operators</b>	<b>18,289</b>	<b>22,140</b>	<b>+21%</b>
Total farm operators	3.3 million	3.2 million	-3%
Asians as % of total	0.6%	0.7%	
<b>Asian principal operators</b>	<b>11,214</b>	<b>13,669</b>	<b>+22%</b>
Total principal operators	2.2 million	2.1 million	-4%*
Asians as % of total	0.5%	0.6%	

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Asian operators were younger than operators overall. Only 26 percent of Asian principal operators were 65 years or older, compared with 33 percent of all principal operators. Asian principal operators had slightly less Internet access in 2012 than principal operators of all farms (68 percent versus 70 percent), but their Internet access increased 20 percentage points between 2007 and 2012. They were more likely to be female, have farming as their primary occupation, and work some days off the farm. (Table 2)

Table 2  
Asian Principal Operators, 2007 and 2012

	Asian Principal Operators		All Principal Operators, 2012
	2007	2012	
	(percent)		
<b>Age</b>			
< 35 years	5	5	6
35 to 64 years	70	69	61
65 years+	25	26	33
<b>Gender</b>			
Male / Female	82 / 18	80 / 20	86 / 14
<b>Primary occupation</b>			
Farming / Other	57 / 43	60 / 40	48 / 52
<b>Worked off farm</b>			
Yes/No	71 / 29	67 / 33	61 / 39
<b>Years on present farm</b>			
0 - 4	18	15	8
5 - 9	21	23	14
10 +	61	62	78
<b>Internet access</b>			
Yes / No	48 / 52	68 / 32	70 / 30
Average age (years)	56.4	56.8	58.3

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

## Farm Size and Sales

Asian principal operators sold \$5.2 billion in agricultural products in 2012, including \$3.2 billion in crop sales and \$2.0 billion in livestock sales. They operated 1.5 million acres of farmland. Asian sales represented 1.3 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales, and Asian-operated farmland accounted for 0.2 percent of U.S. farmland.

Farms with Asian operators tend to be smaller in size than farms overall, but have higher sales. In 2012, 90 percent of farms with an Asian principal operators had fewer than 180 acres. Two thirds had sales of less than \$50,000. (Table 3)

Asian operators sold an average of \$382,998 in agricultural products, about double the sales average of farms overall.

Table 3  
Farms with Asian Principal Operator, by Farm Size and Sales, 2012 (percent)

	Asian-operated Farms	All Farms
<b>Farm Size</b>		
< 50 acres	71	39
50 to 179 acres	19	30
180 to 999 acres	8	23
1,000 acres or more	2	8
Total	100	100
<b>Farm Sales</b>		
< \$10,000	43	56
\$10,000 to \$49,999	22	19
\$50,000 to \$249,999	16	13
\$250,000 to \$999,999	10	8
\$1,000,000 or more	9	4
Total	100	100

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

## Top Commodities

More than two thirds of Asian farms specialized in specialty crops, with fruits and tree nuts the most common specialty, followed by vegetables and greenhouse and nursery crops. (Table 4)

Table 4  
Top Farms by Commodity Specialization<sup>a</sup>, 2012 (Asian principal operator)

	No. of Farms	% of Farms
Fruits and nuts	4,924	36
Vegetables	2,109	15
Greenhouse and nursery	1,656	12
Combination crops <sup>b</sup>	1,266	9
Beef cattle	1,192	9

<sup>a</sup>More than half of a farm's sales come from that commodity.

<sup>b</sup>Farms with no single majority commodity and farms specializing in miscellaneous commodities.

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

To learn more about Asian farms and farmers, the 2012 Census of Agriculture, and how to access national, state, and county data, go to:

**[www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov)**