

Because Better Data =  
***Better Decisions***



United States Department of Agriculture  
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Last year, more than 20,000 of your fellow farmers and ranchers completed the survey. Your participation in ARMS ensures that policy makers and others, including farmers and ranchers like you, base decisions on facts that come straight from the source.

The 2017 ARMS will be conducted in three phases. Growers will be surveyed during the following data collection periods:

**ARMS I: Survey screening**  
May - July 2017

**ARMS II: Production practices and costs survey**  
September - December 2017

**ARMS III: Costs and returns survey**  
January - April 2018

For more information, visit us at:  
**[www.nass.usda.gov/go/ARMS](http://www.nass.usda.gov/go/ARMS)**

The results of this survey will be available in aggregate form only, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified, as required by federal law.

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September 2017

## Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS)



The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's primary source of information on the production practices, resource use, and economic well-being of America's farms and ranches. The results of this survey give farmers, ranchers, and many others factual insights into many aspects of farming, ranching, and conditions in agricultural communities.

Farmers and ranchers rely on good information to make decisions every day. Good data are also critical for federal farm policy decision making. That's why the information provided by farmers and ranchers in ARMS is so important.



ARMS tells the story of American agriculture to a public that has less and less direct contact with the farm community. Through ARMS, American farmers and ranchers tell us that they:

■ **Are family farmers:**

Ninety-nine percent of all farms are owned and operated by families, and 89 percent of the value of farm production originates on such farms.

■ **Are conservationists:**

Forty percent of combined acreage planted to corn, cotton, soybeans, and wheat were in no-till or strip-till systems aimed at improving soil health and limiting nutrient run-off. Hog producers have steadily adjusted their manure management practices to become more environmentally friendly.

■ **Face significant year-to-year financial risks:**

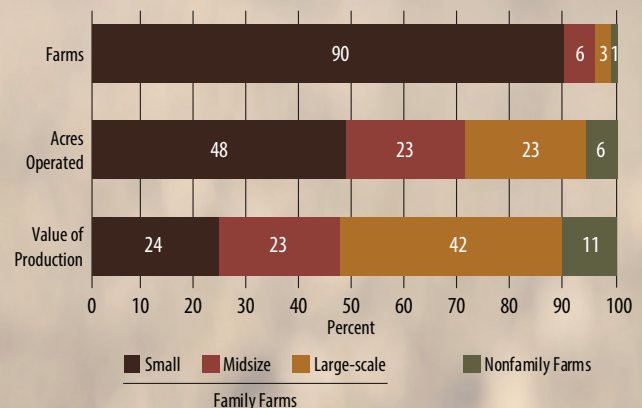
The typical annual change (up or down) in a farmer's household income amounts to \$20,000, eight times that of a non-farm household.

■ **Support local markets:**

Local sales of fruits and vegetables by produce farmers amounted to nearly \$6 billion in 2014.

■ **Readily adopt new technologies:** Automated guidance systems for farm equipment, which ease fatigue and pinpoint precise field locations, have been adopted on half of planted acres for major crops. Over three-quarters of milk production now comes from farms using automatic milking units, reducing the incidence of mastitis in cows.

Small family farms accounted for 90 percent of all U.S. farms and 24 percent of the value of agricultural production in 2015.



Note: Farms are categorized by their annual gross cash farm income (GCFI): under \$350,000 (small), between \$350,000 and \$999,999 (midsize), and at least \$1 million (large-scale). Nonfamily farms are those where neither the principal operator nor individuals related to the operator own a majority of the business.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2015 Agricultural Resource Management Survey.