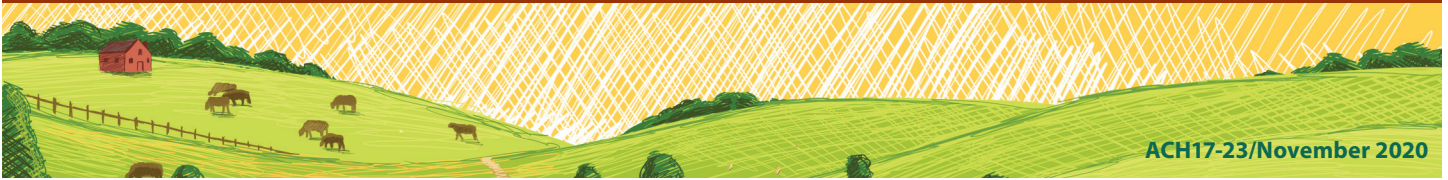


New and Beginning Producers

More than a quarter of U.S. producers have farmed for 10 years or less



ACH17-23/November 2020

In 2017, the United States had 908,274 producers who identified as beginning farmers. A beginning farmer is anyone who has farmed for 10 years or less. They accounted for 27% of the country's 3.4 million producers. States with the largest share of beginning farmers are mostly on the East and West coasts. The average age of a beginning farmer is 46.3, much younger than the average age of all farmers (57.5). In fact, 26% of beginning farmers are under 35, while farmers under 35 represent only 8% of all U.S. farmers.

908,274
producers



193 million
acres



\$88 billion
agriculture sales



Number and Location

The 2017 Census of Agriculture collected demographic data differently from previous censuses to better capture the contributions of all persons involved in agricultural production. In response to detailed questions about farm decision making, more farms reported multiple individuals involved in farm operations.

As a result of the new approach to counting producers, the total number of U.S. producers increased 7% between 2012 and 2017. The number of producers on their current farm for less than 10 years increased by 17% since the last census, though all of the increase occurred among producers with less than five years on their current farm.

States along the East and West coasts have a high share of farms with beginning producers compared to farms in the Midwest. In Alaska, 46% of producers are new and beginning farmers. Overall, 597,337 farms (29% of U.S. farms) have a beginning producer.

Just as Texas is the state with the most farms and the most producers, Texas leads in the number of beginning farmers with 118,999, which is 13% of all beginning producers in the United States.

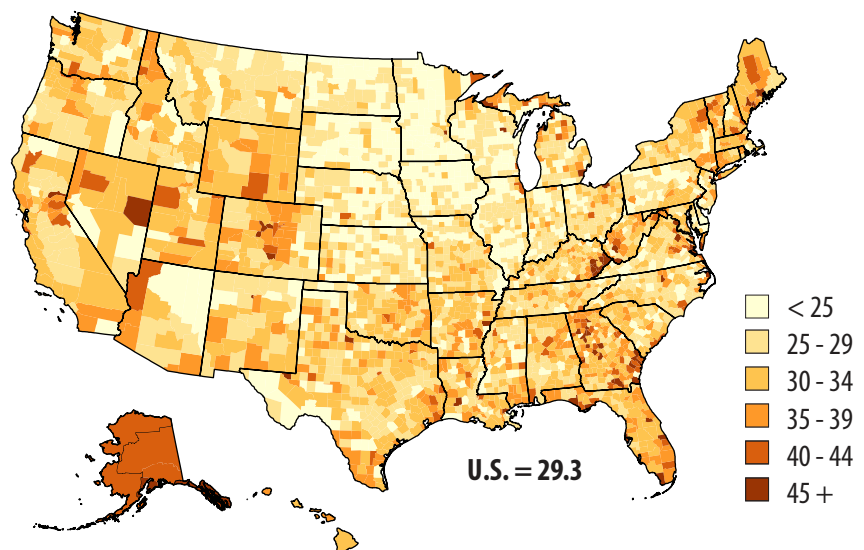
Number of Producers, by Years on Current Farm, All U.S.

	2012	2017	% Change
< 5 years	319,039	469,377	17
5 - 9 years	501,875	495,022	-1
10 years or more	2,359,160	2,435,435	3
All Producers	3,180,074	3,399,834	7

Top States, Beginning Producer-Operated Farms, 2017 (as % of total state farms)

Alaska	46
Georgia	33
Maine	33
Hawaii	32
Florida	31
Rhode Island	31
West Virginia	31
New Hampshire	31
Colorado	31

Farms with New and Beginning Producers as Percent of Total Farms, by County, 2017



SNAPSHOT Beginning Producers, 2017

Number = 908,274*

	Beginning	All U.S.
	(percent)	
Sex		
Male	59	64
Female	41	36
Age		
<35	26	8
35 - 64	62	58
65+	12	34
Lived on their farm	66	74
Worked off farm		
No days	23	39
1 to 199 days	24	21
200+ days	53	40
Primary occupation		
Farming	28	42
Other	72	58
With military service	8	11
Hispanic	4	3
American Indian	1.7	1.7
Asian	1.0	0.6
Black	1.4	1.3
Native Hawaiian	0.1	0.1
White	94.9	95.5
More than one race reported	0.9	0.8
Average age (years)	46.3	57.5

*Data collected for up to four producers per farm.

About the Census

The Census of Agriculture, conducted once every five years, is a complete count of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. Results from the 2017 and earlier censuses are available at national, state, and county levels.

See the searchable database Quick Stats, the new Census Data Query Tool, downloadable PDF reports, maps, and a variety of topic-specific products including profiles by race, ethnicity, and sex.

www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus

Producer Characteristics

Beginning producers are more likely to be female than producers overall; 41% of beginning producers are female compared to 36% of all U.S. producers.

Almost three-quarters (72%) of beginning farmers report a primary occupation other than farming (compared to 58% of all U.S. producers), and the majority (53%) work off the farm 200 days more.

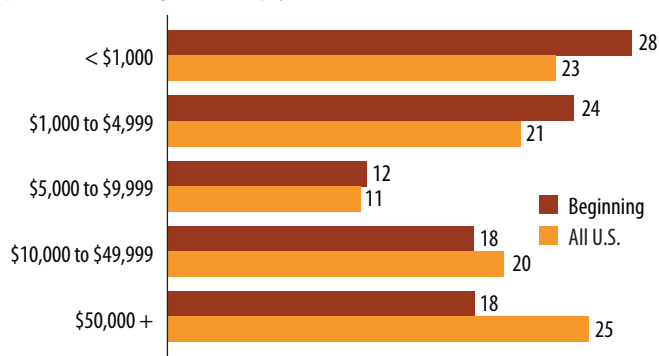
26

The percent of beginning farmers who are under 35, compared to 8% of all U.S. farmers.

Farm Characteristics

Farms with at least one beginning producer sold \$88 billion in agricultural production in 2017, with 45% (\$40 billion) in crop sales and 55% (\$48 billion) in the sales of livestock, poultry, and livestock and poultry products. These farms accounted for 23% of total U.S. agriculture sales. They received \$1.7 billion in government payments in 2017.

Farms with a Beginning Producer and All U.S. Farms by Economic Class, 2017
(percent) (sales and government payments combined)



Eighteen percent of farms with a beginning producer had sales and government payments of more than \$50,000 per year compared to 25% of all U.S. farms. Farms with a beginning producer were more likely to produce less than \$10,000 in sales and government payments (64%) compared to all U.S. farms (55%).

Farms and Land

Farms with beginning producers accounted for 193 million acres of land, 21% of the U.S. total. The majority of farms with beginning producers (52%) were less than 50 acres in size. The average size of farms with a beginning producer is 324 acres, compared to 441 acres for all U.S. farms.

Farm Size in Acres	With	
	Beginning Producer	All U.S.
	(percent of total)	
1 to 9	19	13
10 to 49	33	29
50 to 179	26	28
180 to 499	12	15
500 +	10	15

Seventy percent of farms with a beginning producer were operated by farmers who own all the land they operate, while 11% were operated by farmers who rent all their land. The other 19% of farms with beginning producers had both owned and rented land.

78 The percent of farms with beginning producers that have internet access.

Farm Specialization^a

Farms with a beginning producer are mostly similar to all U.S. farms in terms of specialization. Farms with a beginning producer are less likely to specialize in oilseed and grain production (12%) compared to all U.S. farms (16%), and more likely to specialize in specialty crops (12% compared to 9% nationally).

	% of Farms
Oilseed and grain	12
Specialty crops	12
Vegetables	3
Fruits, tree nuts and berries	6
Greenhouse, nursery, floriculture	3
Other crops	20
Cattle and dairy	34
Hogs and pigs	2
Poultry and eggs	3
Sheep and goat	6
Other animal	11

^aRefers to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). More than half of a farm's sales come from the commodity.