

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Agriculture has always been a vital part of the lives of Illinois citizens and the economy of the state. Illinois is gifted with some of the richest agricultural resources in the world. The fertile soil, favorable climate, availability of excellent transportation via water, highway, rail and air, good marketing opportunities and a productive work force are some of the many resources that allow Illinois to be recognized as a world supplier of food and fiber. The variations in soil types, climate and topography in the state make it possible for Illinois farmers to produce a wide variety of agricultural commodities. Approximately 1,500 different soil types can be found in Illinois.

“VALUE ADDED” AGRICULTURE

Food and agricultural product manufacturing and processing contribute significantly to Illinois' economy. Illinois ranks among the leading states in the number of food and agricultural processing companies in the state, including meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, vegetable processing and many others. Approximately 1,400 food companies are located in Illinois. Furthermore, Illinois ranks number one among all states in the production of ethanol. According to the Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois companies produce approximately 678 million gallons of ethanol annually from approximately 274.2 million bushels of corn.

AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY

The diversity in soil types allows farmers to grow many well known crops and lesser known specialty crops including alfalfa, amaranth, apples, bell peppers, blueberries, broccoli, buckwheat, canola, Christmas trees, clover, cucumbers, field corn, ginseng, grain sorghum, herbs, horseradish, mushrooms, nursery products, oats, peaches, popcorn, potatoes, potted plants, rye, seed corn, snap beans, sod, soybeans, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter wheat and others. Livestock is produced using a wide variety of methods ranging from one ostrich in a pen to thousands of head of hogs in total production confinement. Other agricultural animals raised include beef cattle, broilers, buffalo, catfish, crayfish, dairy cattle, dairy goats, deer, emus, horses, hybrid striped bass, layers, mink, minnows, rabbits, sheep, tilapia, turkeys and others.

FARMS AND LAND VALUES

In 1999, there were 79,000 farms in Illinois that contained 27.7 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 1999 was 351 acres. The average per acre nominal value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2000, was \$2,220 per acre, which compared to \$2,250 per acre on January 1, 1999.

COMMODITY PRODUCTION

Illinois ranked second among all states in the production of corn and soybeans in 1999. Production of corn for grain during 1999 totaled 1.49 billion bushels, one percent more than produced in 1998. The corn yield averaged 140 bushels per acre, one bushel per acre less than produced in 1998. Soybean production in 1999 totaled 443.1 million bushels, five percent lower than in 1998 but still the second highest production level on record. The soybean yield in 1999 was 42.0 bushels per acre, two bushels below 1998.

In 1999, Illinois pork producers produced 1.87 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois fourth among all states. Pork production decreased two percent from the previous year. Cattle and calf production during 1999 totaled 616.7 million pounds, three percent below the production of 1998. Illinois ranked 19th in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

CASH RECEIPTS

In 1999, total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois totaled 6.8 billion dollars, which was 16 percent below 1998. Illinois ranked 8th among all states in total cash receipts in 1999. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 1999 totaled 5.2 billion dollars, a nine percent drop from 1998 and placed Illinois third among all states in total crop cash receipts in 1999. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 1999 totaled 1.5 billion dollars, which was three percent below 1998 and placed Illinois 25th among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts in 1999.

In 1999, corn accounted for 37.7 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 31.2 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 8.2 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to 1998, cash receipts for both corn and soybeans decreased 20 percent in 1999.

In 1999, hogs accounted for 9.5 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 7.2 percent and dairy products accounted for 4.4 percent of the total cash receipts. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.4 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 1999. Compared to 1998, cash receipts decreased five percent for hogs and seven percent for dairy products, but increased three percent for cattle, in 1999.

AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

During the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, Illinois' export shares totaled 2.75 billion dollars, which ranked Illinois fifth among all states in total agricultural exports. During the same year, Illinois ranked second in the export of feed grains and products, second in soybeans and products, ninth in wheat and products and sixth in live animals and meat.