

# AG WEEK

Celebrating American Agriculture

March 22 - 28, 2020

NEW ROCKFORD TRANSCRIPT

MARCH 23, 2020

## North Dakota Leads

2018 Crop Production Rankings



- Black Beans
- Cranberry Beans
- Lentils
- Sunflower (Oil and Non-Oil)



- Pinto Beans
- Navy Beans
- Canola
- Flaxseed
- Honey
- Oats
- Dry Edible Peas
- Spring Wheat
- Durum Wheat



- Barley
- Sugarbeets

#5

- Bison
- Potatoes

## North Dakota Agricultural Overview

Farm Operations	2019	2018	Change
Average Acres / Operation	1,506	1,308	+15%
Number of Operations	26,100	29,800	-12.5%
Total Acres Operated	39,300,000	39,100,000	+0.05%
Livestock Inventory (as recorded on Jan. 1, 2019)	2019	2018	Change
Cattle, Cows, Beef - Inventory	995,000	985,000	+1%
Cattle, Cows, Milk - Inventory	15,000	15,000	NONE
Cattle, Incl Calves - Inventory	1,900,000	1,830,000	+3.8%
Cattle, On Feed - Inventory	42,000	59,000	-28.8%
Sheep, Incl Lambs - Inventory	75,000	72,000	+1.04%
Hogs - Inventory (As of Dec. 1, 2018)	142,000	145,000	-2.1%
Land and Production Values	2018	2017	Change
real estate average value (per acre)	\$1,710	\$1,740	-1.7%
Cropland average value (per acre)	\$1,870	\$1,890	-1.1%
Value of Production	\$7,048,843,000	\$6,836,729,000	+3%

Source: United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA- NASS)

## Food Brings Everyone to the Table

The national Ag Day written essay winner for 2020 is Eli Mittermeyer from Lorraine, Ill. He will receive a \$1,000 prize and travel to Washington, D.C., for recognition during the National Press Club Event on March 24, 2020. His essay is published below.

by Eli Mittermeyer  
Lorraine, Ill.

"Pass the mashed potatoes, please." When that heaping dish of fluffy goodness comes your way, you might think to thank the person passing it to you, or the person who prepared them. However, rarely does one consider all the people that brought that food your way.

The food we enjoy at our table exists because of the dedication of America's farmers and ranchers. Our farmers embrace constantly evolving challenges and minimize environmental impacts while maximizing food production. They must embrace new technology while respecting old traditions and their business requires not only a significant financial investment, it requires an investment of

blood, sweat and tears while battling frustrating working conditions, weather hardships, economic challenges, and more. Farmers do all this to provide us with bountiful and affordable food, so when we sit down to eat, the farmer who produced the food joins us, but that farmer joins more than just our family, as each U.S. farm feeds

166 people annually. The farmers and ranchers who produce our food must work with countless agricultural providers and suppliers to provide solutions and technology that producers need to meet the challenges of feeding a growing global population. They also contribute to the significant impact agriculture has on our U.S. GDP, and the combination of agricultural, food, and related industries con-

tributed over \$1 trillion to our GDP in 2017.

These providers and suppliers also employ vast quantities of talented individuals such as scientists, engineers, and innumerable manufacturers to utilize the farmer's product. Their areas of expertise vary greatly, from drone technology to chemistry, hydrology, and beyond. Their talents help minimize agriculture's environmental impacts, and address the ever present challenges of feeding a global population. Due to this, the agriculture industry and its employees also join our farmers and producers at our table as our invisible guests.

We may not have intended to invite our legislators and government officials to our dinner table, but they also have a seat because of

their impacts on our producers and our food supply. They are responsible for determining federal and state rules and regulations that affect everything from the environment to transportation. They develop our critically important trade policies with other countries, and establish our crop insurance rules and farm subsidy programs. These guests at the table can dramatically impact U.S. agriculture and its producers.

Food certainly brings everyone to the table, from the grateful diners, to 22.8 million employees that depend on agriculture for a paycheck. Their efforts ensure that we are able to have a stable food supply, and as such we should be more than grateful for whatever dish we are served at dinner.

## Ag sector responds to COVID-19

On March 17, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced new contacts to encourage communication with USDA to help feed kids and ensure the United States food supply chain remains strong in response to the COVID-19 outbreak:

"Food is essential all year round, but in the face of a pandemic it is critical the shelves remain stocked and supplies remain plentiful. America's farmers and ranchers, and those on the front lines in the food service industry are doing their part," said Secretary Perdue.

"President Trump is encouraging a whole of America approach to the challenges we currently face. At USDA we know when we work together to solve the problems facing us, we can overcome this time of uncertainty and fear. If you have ideas or solutions for USDA, I urge you to reach out - we want to hear from the experts in the field."

For solutions to feeding children impacted by COVID-19, email FeedingKids@usda.gov. For solutions impacting America's food supply chain and other logistical complications, email FoodSupplyChain@usda.gov.

Feeding Kids Perdue announced a collaboration with the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty, McLane Global, PepsiCo, and others to deliver nearly 1,000,000 meals per week to students in a limited number of rural schools closed

due to COVID-19. These boxes will contain five days worth of shelf-stable, nutritious, individually packaged foods that meet USDA's summer food requirements. The use of this innovative delivery system will ensure rural children receive nutritious food while limiting exposure to COVID-19.

Last week, Secretary Perdue announced proactive flexibilities to allow meal service during school closures and to minimize potential exposure to the coronavirus. During an unexpected school closure, schools can leverage their participation in one of USDA's meal programs to provide meals to students. Under normal circumstances, those meals must be served in a group setting. However, in a public health emergency, the law allows USDA the authority to waive the group setting meal requirement, which is vital during a social distancing situation.

Food Supply Chain USDA has been in communication with food and grocery stakeholders and executives and has hosted stakeholder calls with President Trump at the White House to discuss the impact COVID-19 has on America's food supply chain.

While it is important to have shelf-stable foods on hand, residents are advised that there is no need to hoard items. The nation's supply chains remain strong, so please stay calm and act responsibly.

## USDA helping with ag labor needs

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working to assist those in need of seasonal or temporary agriculture labor as routine visa services have been suspended at the consulates in Mexico, South Africa, and Jamaica due to the coronavirus situation.

"North Dakota agriculture relies on seasonal and temporary ag labor to help fill the gaps when domestic workers are in short supply. According to the 2017 USDA Census of Agriculture, North Dakota utilized nearly 1,800 of these work-

ers," Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. "We appreciate that USDA continues to work with the State Department, Department of Labor, and the Department of Homeland Security to work through these difficulties."

Monitoring and updates will be available on www.farmers.gov/manage/h2a. Those with concerns regarding the ability of seasonal or temporary agriculture labor to obtain an H2A visa should contact the USDA via email at aglabor@usda.gov.

## Agriculture Facts

Each American farmer feeds more than 165 people, a dramatic increase from 25 people in the 1960s. Quite simply, American agriculture is doing more—and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the U.S.;

In 2018, \$139.6 billion worth of American agricultural products were exported around the world. The United States sells more food and fiber to world markets than we import, creating a positive agricultural trade balance.

Women make up 36% of the total number of U.S. farm operators; 56% of all farms have at least one female decision-maker.

The pounds of feed (grain, forage, etc.) a dairy cow needs to eat to produce 100 pounds of milk has decreased by more than 40% on average in the last 40 years

Of the 10% of disposable income Americans spend on food each year, 46% is for food eaten at home and 54% is for food eaten away from home.

87% of U.S. ag products sold are produced on family farms or ranches.

Careful stewardship by America's food producers has spurred a 34% decline in erosion of cropland by wind and water since 1982.

Agriculture, food, and related industries contributed \$1.053 trillion to U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017, a 5.4-percent share. The output of America's farms contributed \$132.8 billion of this sum—about 1% of GDP. The overall contribution of the agriculture sector to GDP is larger than this because sectors related to agriculture—forestry, fishing, and related activities; food, beverages, and tobacco products; textiles, apparel, and leather products; food and beverage stores; and food service, eating and drinking places—rely on agricultural inputs in order to contribute added value to the economy.

Facts courtesy of Farm Bureau

## The Farmer's Share Quiz

Did you know that farmers and ranchers receive only 14.6\* cents of every dollar that consumers spend on food at home and away from home? According to USDA, off-farm costs, including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing, account for more than 80 cents of every food dollar spent in the United States.

Bacon



Retail: \$6.03  
Farmer:

Top Sirloin Steak



Retail: \$10.49  
Farmer:

Bread



Retail: \$3.79  
Farmer:

Fresh Carrots



Retail: \$4.59  
Farmer:

Beer



Retail: \$10.99  
Farmer:

Cereal



Retail: \$2.99  
Farmer:

Tomatoes



Retail: \$3.39  
Farmer:

Eggs



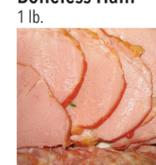
Retail: \$2.29  
Farmer:

Flour



Retail: \$4.39  
Farmer:

Boneless Ham



Retail: \$4.99  
Farmer:

Lettuce



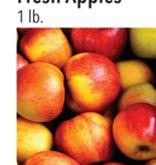
Retail: \$1.99  
Farmer:

Milk



Retail: \$3.89  
Farmer:

Fresh Apples



Retail: \$2.29  
Farmer:

Fresh Potatoes



Retail: \$4.59  
Farmer:

Soda



Retail: \$1.49  
Farmer:

Readers, take your best guess at how much a farmer takes home in revenue for each of the items shown at left. Choose from the available amounts below, and enter the letter in the box for each item.

- A. \$1.12
- B. \$0.34
- C. \$0.39
- D. \$0.04
- E. \$1.90
- F. \$0.11
- G. \$0.93
- H. \$0.05
- I. \$1.78
- J. \$0.49
- K. \$0.64
- L. \$0.70
- M. \$1.50
- N. \$0.05
- O. \$0.64

Fill out the quiz form and return to New Rockford Transcript, 817 Central Avenue, New Rockford, N.D. 58356. Deadline for submissions is Friday, March 27. We will draw for three prizes of \$25 in Chamber bucks from entries received. Prizes will be mailed out to the winners, so please include your full address on form.

January 31, 2020

The above infographic was prepared by National Farmers Union 20 F Street NW, Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20001 www.nfu.org

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