



Fast Facts About Agriculture & Food

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2 million farms dot America's rural landscape, and 98% are operated by families – individuals, family partnerships or family corporations ([America's Diverse Family Farms, 2020 Edition](#)).

About 11% of U.S. farmers are serving or have served in the military.

86% of U.S. agricultural products are produced on family farms or ranches.

After accounting for input costs, farmers and ranchers receive only **8 cents out of every dollar** spent on food at home and away from home. The rest goes for costs beyond the farm gate: wages and materials for production, processing, marketing, transportation and distribution.

25% of all farmers are beginning farmers (in business less than 10 years); their average age is 46.

Americans enjoy a food supply that is **abundant, affordable and among the world's safest**, thanks in large part to the efficiency and productivity of America's farm and ranch families.

One acre of land can grow a variety of crops, including 50,000 pounds of strawberries or 2,784 pounds (46.4 bushels) of wheat.

Compared to 2012, the number of farm operators of **Spanish, Hispanic or Latino** origin is higher, up 13% to 112,451. There also are more **Black** farm operators (45,508, up 2%) today compared to 2012.

One day's production for a high-producing dairy cow yields **4.8 pounds of butter, 8.7 gallons of ice cream or 10.5 pounds of cheese**.

On any given day, one in eight Americans will eat **pizza**.

Farm and ranch families comprise **less than 2%** of the U.S. population.

Total U.S. corn yield (tons per acre) has increased more than **360%** since 1950.

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.

Many Americans **celebrate holidays with food**, spending a total of nearly \$14 billion each year.

One U.S. farm feeds 166 people annually in the U.S. and abroad. The global population is expected to increase by 2.2 billion by 2050, which means the world's farmers will have to grow about 70% more food than what is now produced.

Cattle and calves, corn, and soybeans are the **top three U.S. farm products**.



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.

About **8% of U.S. farms market foods locally** through direct-to-consumer or intermediated sales. 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.

Farm programs typically cost each American just pennies per meal and account for less than **one-half of 1%** of the total U.S. budget.

More than half of America's farmers intentionally provide **habitat for wildlife**. Deer, moose, birds and other species have shown significant population increases for decades.

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

Americans throw away **about 25%** of the food they purchase for at-home consumption.

A whopping **40%** of all food grown and produced in the U.S. is never eaten.

About 25% of U.S. farm products by value are exported each year.

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

Information on this page may be shared via social media, etc., and was published in the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's [Food and Farm Facts book \(2021 edition\)](#). Visit [AgFoundation.org](#) for additional information and resources.

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