

INSIDE GRUNDY COUNTY
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The results of the 2007 Census of Agriculture were released last month. National agriculture week seems like a good time to share the results of the 2007 census as it relates to agriculture in Grundy County. The data was collected by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The following data is only a sampling of the data that was collected. For a more complete view of Grundy County agriculture, go to NASS's website:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Iowa/index.asp. The importance of agriculture to Grundy County and its communities should not be underestimated. In addition to the production of a safe and stable food supply, farmers purchase many of their inputs from local businesses which help support friends and neighbors.

Keep in mind as you read through this information that the census data provides a picture of where things were at a point in time. According to the 2007 census, the number of reported farms has grown to 800 which is an increase of 76 farms over the 2002 census. NASS defines a farm as an operation that produces or would normally produce and sell \$1,000 or more agricultural products per year. The average farm size in Grundy County is 395 acres which is a decrease of 53 acres from 2002 (that compares to a statewide average of 331 acres). The median farm size is 160 acres which means that one half of the total 800 farms are larger than 160 acres and the other half is smaller than 160 acres. Three hundred fifteen thousand nine hundred sixty eight acres of land make up the farms in the county. This is down from the previous census.

The average market value of production per farm was \$296,432 in 2007, which is up \$102,588 from the 2002 census. Total market value of production for the county is \$237,146,000 with crop sales accounting for \$160,788,000 and livestock sales accounting for \$76,358,000 of the total value. There were 30,442,923 bushels of corn produced on 170,290 acres, 6,448,710 bushels of soybeans grown on 117,679 acres and 3,973 acres use to produce forage, corn silage and oats. Livestock sales included 476,733 hogs and pigs, 23,934 cattle and calves, 1,589 sheep and lambs and 4,430 broilers and other meat-type chickens.

Four hundred forty nine of the 800 farmers consider farming their primary occupation. Three hundred five farmers also work 200 days or more off of the farm. Principal operators are made up of 735 males and 65 females. The average age of the principal operator continues to increase; in 2002 the average age was 53.6 years old and in 2007 it is 55. On a side note, NASS staff from Iowa's office reported that farmers in Grundy County led the state in completing the census and doing so on time. If you would like more information, please contact the Grundy Office of ISU Extension at 319-824-6979.

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