

# Agricultural Data for Decision Makers



## Buena Vista County

### Number of Farms

There were 867 farms counted in Buena Vista County in 1997. From 1992 to 1997, the number of farms in Buena Vista County decreased by 11 percent. Over the 28 years from 1969 to 1997, farm numbers in this county declined by 41 percent, faster than the state's decline of 35 percent.

#### 1. Number of farms.

Year	Buena Vista County	State
1997	867	90,792
1992	972	96,534
1987	1,097	105,180
1982	1,185	115,413
1978	1,274	121,339
1974	1,324	126,104
1969	1,465	140,354

### Average Farm Size

Farms in Buena Vista County averaged 411 acres in 1997, 68 acres more than the state's average.

#### 2. Average farm size (acres).

Year	Buena Vista County	State
1997	411	343
1992	352	325
1987	327	301
1982	305	283
1978	287	274
1974	270	262
1969	245	239

### Farm Land Use

Buena Vista County had 356,751 total acres in farmland in 1997, 4 percent more than in 1992.

#### 3. Land in farms (acres), Buena Vista County.

Year	Total	Crop-land	Wood-land	Other*
1997	356,751	326,418	3,940	26,393
1992	341,923	314,590	3,062	24,271
1987	358,798	330,950	3,570	24,278
1982	361,120	326,123	5,267	29,730

\* Includes land in house lots, ponds, etc., and non-crop and non-woodland pasture.

Of the acres harvested in Buena Vista County in 1997, 98 percent were either corn or soybean acres. This was higher than the 93 percent statewide average.

#### 4. Corn and soybean acres as percentages of total acres harvested.

Year	Buena Vista County		State	
	Corn	Soy-beans	Corn	Soy-beans
1997	50	48	50	43
1992	52	46	55	36
1987	47	49	50	39
1982	53	42	53	33
1978	54	40	54	32

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# Livestock Profile

## Hogs and Pigs

The number of farms selling hogs and pigs in Buena Vista County decreased 28 percent from 1992 to 1997. Over that same period the number of hogs and pigs sold in the county increased by 32 percent. Statewide, the number of farms with hog and pig sales decreased 46 percent while the number of hogs and pigs sold increased 2 percent.

### 5. Farms selling hogs and pigs and number of hogs and pigs sold, Buena Vista County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	292	603,519
1992	408	455,914
1987	468	388,304
1982	566	383,355
1978	685	318,778
1974	727	261,664
1969	952	250,957

## Fattened Cattle

The number of farms in Buena Vista County selling fattened cattle decreased 21 percent from 1992 to 1997, while the number of fattened cattle sold decreased 16 percent. Statewide, farms selling decreased by 22 percent and cattle sales dropped by 16 percent over those five years.

### 6. Farms selling fattened cattle and number of fattened cattle sold, Buena Vista County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	88	21,810
1992	112	25,936
1987	171	30,384
1982	273	38,353
1978	326	41,504

(Note: Fattened cattle are defined as cattle fattened on grain or concentrates for 30 days or more and sold for slaughter.)

\* Data suppressed to assure confidentiality.

## Dairy Cows

The number of farms in Buena Vista County with dairy cows decreased 67 percent from 1992 to 1997 and the number of dairy cows reported decreased 32 percent. Statewide, the number of farms with dairy cows decreased 28 percent and the number of dairy cows dropped 14 percent.

### 7. Farms with dairy cows and number of dairy cows reported, Buena Vista County.

Year	Farms with Cows	Number of Cows
1997	4	321
1992	12	471
1987	15	498
1982	14	566

## Poultry

A small number of farms in Buena Vista County sold chickens in 1997. Thirteen farms reported turkey sales.

### 8. Farms selling poultry and number of poultry sold, Buena Vista County.

Year	Layers		Broilers		Turkeys	
	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold
1997	5	*	7	665	13	1,633,552
1992	6	*	5	1,457	15	1,950,681
1987	8	385,830	15	2,385	17	1,674,659
1982	28	261,688	18	5,225	11	980,800

## Sheep and Lambs

The number of farms in Buena Vista County selling sheep and lambs decreased by 37 percent and there were 31 percent fewer head sold in 1997 than in 1992. Statewide, the number of farms with sheep and lamb sales decreased 36 percent and the number of head sold dropped 46 percent.

### 9. Farms selling sheep and lambs and number of sheep and lambs sold, Buena Vista County.

Year	Farms Selling	Number Sold
1997	42	5,411
1992	67	4,134
1987	82	5,389
1982	76	7,938

# Farm Operator Profile

## Age

### 10. Percentages of farm operators by age group.

Year	Buena Vista County						State					
	34 or under	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or over	Average age	34 or under	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 or over	Average age
1997	9.1	26.0	23.8	18.6	22.6	51.7	9.9	23.0	23.7	21.1	22.3	52.4
1992	16.9	27.4	16.5	24.0	15.3	49.0	15.9	23.0	20.5	21.6	19.0	50.3
1987	21.0	21.3	17.8	25.8	14.1	48.6	19.3	20.2	20.7	24.0	15.7	49.3
1982	25.4	15.4	22.3	26.5	10.4	47.4	22.5	19.5	22.6	23.9	11.5	47.6
1978	24.5	14.6	26.5	24.8	9.6	46.8	21.1	19.7	25.0	23.9	10.4	47.5

Farm operators in Buena Vista County in 1997 included 9.1 percent under the age of 35 and 22.6 percent 65 years of age or older. The average age of farm operators in Buena Vista County was 51.7 in 1997, which was younger than the statewide average.

## Principal Occupation

Of the farm operators in Buena Vista County in 1997, 60.2 percent claimed farming as their principal occupation, lower than the 62.9 percent state average.

### 11. Percentages of farm operators claiming farming as their principal occupation.

Year	Buena Vista County	State
1997	60.2	62.9
1992	69.3	71.7
1987	72.8	73.5
1982	71.8	80.1
1978	74.9	80.8

## Days Worked Off Farm

The percentage of farm operators working 200 or more days off the farm in 1997 was smaller in Buena Vista County than in the state overall.

### 12. Percentages of farm operators working 200 or more days off the farm.

Year	Buena Vista County	State
1997	23.3	33.3
1992	19.5	28.3
1987	20.0	26.5
1982	16.0	24.2
1978	14.2	22.2

## Tenure and Type of Organization

Full-owner farms are operations where the operator owns all the land he or she operates. Part-owners are those who rent some of the land they operate. Tenants rent all of the land they operate. Compared to the state, Buena Vista County had a lower percentage of farms operated by full-owners.

### 13. Percentages of farms by tenure.

Year	Buena Vista County			State		
	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant
1997	31.1	47.9	21.0	47.3	36.3	16.4
1992	32.0	42.5	25.5	45.1	36.0	18.9
1987	32.8	38.9	28.3	45.9	33.5	20.7
1982	31.5	41.7	26.8	45.9	33.3	20.8
1978	36.7	36.7	31.2	45.9	32.2	21.9

Individual/family operated farms are the most common type of farm organization throughout the state. The percentage of individual/family operated farms in Buena Vista County was lower than the state average in 1997, while the percentage of partnerships was higher.

### 14. Percentages of farms by type of organization.

Year	Buena Vista County			State		
	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other
1997	81.4	10.1	8.4	83.6	9.1	7.4
1992	81.6	11.4	7.0	84.0	10.4	5.6
1987	82.9	11.4	5.7	84.8	10.5	4.7
1982	83.2	11.3	5.7	84.6	11.4	4.0
1978	84.3	12.6	3.1	85.6	11.8	2.6

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## Financial Profile

The sale of hogs and pigs generated the greatest amount of agricultural revenue in Buena Vista County in 1997, followed by corn.

### 15. Market value (\$1,000) of agricultural products sold, Buena Vista County.

Year	Total sales	Hogs and pigs	Cattle and calves	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Other
1997	210,089	72,080	19,702	*	46,315	43,802	28,190
1992	157,282	42,868	24,913	656	34,932	29,966	23,947
1987	132,273	42,058	23,787	573	24,271	25,720	15,864

In Buena Vista County, sale of cattle and calves constituted a smaller percentage of total sales than in the state overall; hogs and pigs made up a greater percentage of total sales. The sale of hogs and pigs, corn, and soybeans accounted for 77 percent of the dollars from total sales of agricultural products in Buena Vista County in 1997.

### 16. Percent of total market value by sales of selected agricultural products.

Year	Buena Vista County						State					
	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other
1997	34.3	9.4	*	22.0	20.8	13.4	25.4	15.5	3.4	27.0	23.1	5.6
1992	27.3	15.8	0.4	22.2	19.1	15.2	24.8	22.1	4.2	26.6	17.6	4.7
1987	31.8	18.0	0.4	18.3	19.4	12.0	27.9	23.8	4.4	22.0	17.6	4.3

\* Data suppressed to assure confidentiality. Amounts for this category included in 'Other' totals.

Farms in Buena Vista County averaged a net cash return of \$66,391 in 1997, \$33,686 more than the state average. Of the farms in Buena Vista County, 84 percent experienced a net cash gain that year, compared with 66 percent statewide.

### 17. Average net cash return per farm.

Year	Buena Vista County			State		
	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss
1997	\$66,391	\$81,749	\$13,251	\$32,705	\$54,248	\$9,348
1992	40,730	49,808	7,177	22,718	37,419	9,381
1987	27,888	37,883	20,755	20,412	31,660	7,521

(Note: Net cash return is derived by subtracting total operating expenditures from the gross market value of agricultural products sold. Net cash return is that of the farm unit rather than the net farm income of the operator since sales and expenses of the partners, landlords, and contractors are included.)