

Agricultural Data for Decision Makers

Decatur County



Number of Farms

There were 730 farms counted in Decatur County in 1997. From 1992 to 1997, the number of farms in Decatur County increased by 13 percent. Over the 28 years from 1969 to 1997, farm numbers in this county declined by 26 percent, slower than the state's decline of 35 percent.

1. Number of farms.

Year	Decatur County	State
1997	730	90,792
1992	648	96,534
1987	715	105,180
1982	769	115,413
1978	791	121,339
1974	855	126,104
1969	981	140,354

Average Farm Size

Farms in Decatur County averaged 359 acres in 1997, 16 acres more than the state's average.

2. Average farm size (acres).

Year	Decatur County	State
1997	359	343
1992	404	325
1987	390	301
1982	391	283
1978	385	274
1974	353	262
1969	296	239

Farm Land Use

Decatur County had 261,927 total acres in farmland in 1997, about the same as in 1992.

3. Land in farms (acres), Decatur County.

Year	Total	Crop-land	Wood-land	Other*
1997	261,927	170,796	27,180	63,951
1992	261,494	173,115	20,150	68,229
1987	278,714	177,836	27,342	73,536
1982	300,684	197,832	21,409	81,443

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

Of the acres harvested in Decatur County in 1997, 60 percent were either corn or soybean acres. This was lower than the 93 percent statewide average.

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

Year	Decatur County		State	
	Corn	Soy-beans	Corn	Soy-beans
1997	28	32	50	43
1992	33	26	55	36
1987	35	32	50	39
1982	36	30	53	33
1978	37	30	54	32

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Livestock Profile

Hogs and Pigs

The number of farms selling hogs and pigs in Decatur County decreased 69 percent from 1992 to 1997. Over that same period the number of hogs and pigs sold in the county decreased by 18 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, Decatur County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	39	58,672
1992	124	71,881
1987	157	89,435
1982	226	77,878
1978	307	73,130
1974	325	56,363
1969	485	77,534

Fattened Cattle

The number of farms in Decatur County selling fattened cattle decreased 18 percent from 1992 to 1997, while the number of fattened cattle sold decreased 78 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, Decatur County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	40	3,315
1992	49	15,088
1987	73	5,988
1982	86	6,038
1978	113	6,033

(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 Decatur County with dairy cows decreased 48 percent from 1992 to 1997 and the number of dairy cows reported decreased 38 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, Decatur County.

Year	Farms with Cows	Number of Cows
1997	12	232
1992	23	371
1987	32	729
1982	49	663

Poultry

A small number of farms in Decatur County sold chickens in 1997. No farms reported turkey sales.

8. Farms selling poultry and number of poultry sold, Decatur County.

Year	Layers		Broilers		Turkeys	
	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold
1997	3	*	3	250	0	0
1992	1	*	3	740	0	0
1987	2	*	3	*	0	*
1982	6	431	2	*	0	0

Sheep and Lambs

The number of farms in Decatur County selling sheep and lambs decreased by 24 percent and there were 241 percent more 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, Decatur County.

Year	Farms Selling	Number Sold
1997	34	6,297
1992	45	1,845
1987	44	1,937
1982	47	1,348

Farm Operator Profile

Age

10. Percentages of farm operators by age group.

Year	Decatur 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	7.4	17.4	22.3	22.2	30.7	55.9	9.9	23.0	23.7	21.1	22.3	52.4
1992	7.9	21.8	21.6	23.8	25.0	54.2	15.9	23.0	20.5	21.6	19.0	50.3
1987	11.7	18.9	21.1	28.1	20.1	52.7	19.3	20.2	20.7	24.0	15.7	49.3
1982	19.8	18.9	24.2	20.7	16.5	49.1	22.5	19.5	22.6	23.9	11.5	47.6
1978	16.3	18.8	26.4	23.3	15.2	49.7	21.1	19.7	25.0	23.9	10.4	47.5

Farm operators in Decatur County in 1997 included 7.4 percent under the age of 35 and 30.7 percent 65 years of age or older. The average age of farm operators in Decatur County was 55.9 in 1997, which was older than the statewide average.

Principal Occupation

Of the farm operators in Decatur County in 1997, 72.9 percent claimed farming as their principal occupation, higher than the 62.9 percent state average.

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

Year	Decatur County	State
1997	72.9	62.9
1992	78.9	71.7
1987	83.5	73.5
1982	85.1	80.1
1978	84.6	80.8

Days Worked Off Farm

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

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

Year	Decatur County	State
1997	42.5	33.3
1992	36.5	28.3
1987	35.4	26.5
1982	29.7	24.2
1978	25.1	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, Decatur County had a higher percentage of farms operated by full-owners.

13. Percentages of farms by tenure.

Year	Decatur County			State		
	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant
1997	64.2	27.3	8.5	47.3	36.3	16.4
1992	60.0	32.1	7.9	45.1	36.0	18.9
1987	61.0	26.9	12.2	45.9	33.5	20.7
1982	56.7	28.6	14.7	45.9	33.3	20.8
1978	31.2	31.2	13.1	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 Decatur County was higher than the state average in 1997, while the percentage of partnerships was higher also.

14. Percentages of farms by type of organization.

Year	Decatur County			State		
	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other
1997	87.1	9.5	3.4	83.6	9.1	7.4
1992	86.6	9.7	3.7	84.0	10.4	5.6
1987	87.7	9.7	2.7	84.8	10.5	4.7
1982	86.2	10.8	2.7	84.6	11.4	4.0
1978	86.5	11.3	2.3	85.6	11.8	2.6

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Financial Profile

The sale of cattle and calves generated the greatest amount of agricultural revenue in Decatur County in 1997, followed by soybeans.

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

Year	Total sales	Hogs and pigs	Cattle and calves	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Other
1997	54,349	7,172	31,687	459	5,410	7,263	2,358
1992	41,090	6,640	24,669	515	4,306	3,667	1,293
1987	35,571	8,403	14,994	776	5,002	5,604	792

In Decatur County, sale of cattle and calves constituted a greater percentage of total sales than in the state overall; hogs and pigs made up a smaller percentage of total sales. The sale of cattle and calves, soybeans, and hogs and pigs accounted for 85 percent of the dollars from total sales of agricultural products in Decatur County in 1997.

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

Year	Decatur County						State					
	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other
1997	13.2	58.3	0.8	10.0	13.4	4.3	25.4	15.5	3.4	27.0	23.1	5.6
1992	16.2	60.0	1.3	10.5	8.9	3.1	24.8	22.1	4.2	26.6	17.6	4.7
1987	23.6	42.2	2.2	14.1	15.8	2.2	27.9	23.8	4.4	22.0	17.6	4.3

Farms in Decatur County averaged a net cash return of \$18,761 in 1997, \$13,944 less than the state average. Of the farms in Decatur County, 46 percent experienced a net cash gain that year, compared with 66 percent statewide.

17. Average net cash return per farm.

Year	Decatur County			State		
	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss
1997	\$18,761	\$48,507	\$7,039	\$32,705	\$54,248	\$9,348
1992	10,874	21,707	6,758	22,718	37,419	9,381
1987	9,849	20,421	5,555	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.)