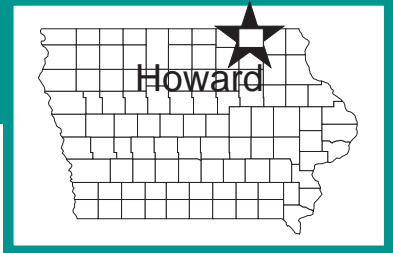


Agricultural Data for Decision Makers



Howard County

Number of Farms

There were 862 farms counted in Howard County in 1997. From 1992 to 1997, the number of farms in Howard County decreased by 2 percent. Over the 28 years from 1969 to 1997, farm numbers in this county declined by 32 percent, slower than the state's decline of 35 percent.

1. Number of farms.

Year	Howard County	State
1997	862	90,792
1992	881	96,534
1987	938	105,180
1982	1,055	115,413
1978	1,099	121,339
1974	1,090	126,104
1969	1,270	140,354

Average Farm Size

Farms in Howard County averaged 313 acres in 1997, 30 acres less than the state's average.

2. Average farm size (acres).

Year	Howard County	State
1997	313	343
1992	296	325
1987	287	301
1982	264	283
1978	251	274
1974	248	262
1969	226	239

Farm Land Use

Howard County had 269,750 total acres in farmland in 1997, 3 percent more than in 1992.

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

Year	Total	Crop-land	Wood-land	Other*
1997	269,750	241,042	6,229	22,479
1992	260,781	233,274	6,353	21,154
1987	269,285	241,273	7,543	20,469
1982	278,861	244,599	8,285	25,977

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

Of the acres harvested in Howard County in 1997, 92 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	Howard County		State	
	Corn	Soy-beans	Corn	Soy-beans
1997	49	43	50	43
1992	56	34	55	36
1987	49	35	50	39
1982	50	32	53	33
1978	48	31	54	32

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Livestock Profile

Hogs and Pigs

The number of farms selling hogs and pigs in Howard County decreased 46 percent from 1992 to 1997. Over that same period the number of hogs and pigs sold in the county decreased by 9 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, Howard County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	195	178,278
1992	358	195,012
1987	366	163,639
1982	461	150,731
1978	587	143,921
1974	616	121,696
1969	833	141,906

Fattened Cattle

The number of farms in Howard County selling fattened cattle increased 1 percent from 1992 to 1997, while the number of fattened cattle sold decreased 8 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, Howard County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	162	10,175
1992	160	11,038
1987	205	11,842
1982	222	13,830
1978	257	16,803

(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 Howard County with dairy cows decreased 16 percent from 1992 to 1997 and the number of dairy cows reported decreased 11 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, Howard County.

Year	Farms with Cows	Number of Cows
1997	105	4,561
1992	125	5,148
1987	168	6,098
1982	252	8,146

Poultry

A small number of farms in Howard County sold chickens in 1997. Two farms reported turkey sales.

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

Year	Layers		Broilers		Turkeys	
	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold
1997	0	0	5	325	2	*
1992	1	*	5	900	1	*
1987	10	30,096	6	2,450	2	*
1982	38	112,563	7	357	3	*

Sheep and Lambs

The number of farms in Howard County selling sheep and lambs decreased by 42 percent and there were 48 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, Howard County.

Year	Farms Selling	Number Sold
1997	25	1,188
1992	43	2,305
1987	49	4,010
1982	54	1,924

Farm Operator Profile

Age

10. Percentages of farm operators by age group.

Year	Howard 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	11.8	25.3	20.3	20.9	21.7	51.8	9.9	23.0	23.7	21.1	22.3	52.4
1992	21.8	19.2	18.3	20.5	20.2	49.6	15.9	23.0	20.5	21.6	19.0	50.3
1987	20.8	17.7	21.0	25.3	15.2	49.3	19.3	20.2	20.7	24.0	15.7	49.3
1982	21.5	19.1	22.9	24.9	11.6	47.9	22.5	19.5	22.6	23.9	11.5	47.6
1978	20.5	19.3	26.7	24.1	9.5	47.5	21.1	19.7	25.0	23.9	10.4	47.5

Farm operators in Howard County in 1997 included 11.8 percent under the age of 35 and 21.7 percent 65 years of age or older. The average age of farm operators in Howard County was 51.8 in 1997, which was younger than the statewide average.

Principal Occupation

Of the farm operators in Howard County in 1997, 71.5 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	Howard County	State
1997	71.5	62.9
1992	77.8	71.7
1987	77.9	73.5
1982	80.7	80.1
1978	83.7	80.8

Days Worked Off Farm

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

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

Year	Howard County	State
1997	29.7	33.3
1992	26.2	28.3
1987	21.8	26.5
1982	17.1	24.2
1978	17.5	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, Howard County had a higher percentage of farms operated by full-owners.

13. Percentages of farms by tenure.

Year	Howard County			State		
	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant
1997	52.8	34.1	13.1	47.3	36.3	16.4
1992	54.3	31.1	14.6	45.1	36.0	18.9
1987	53.4	32.0	14.6	45.9	33.5	20.7
1982	55.9	29.3	14.8	45.9	33.3	20.8
1978	27.9	27.9	16.7	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 Howard County was higher than the state average in 1997, while the percentage of partnerships was lower.

14. Percentages of farms by type of organization.

Year	Howard County			State		
	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other
1997	89.1	7.3	3.6	83.6	9.1	7.4
1992	88.3	9.3	2.4	84.0	10.4	5.6
1987	85.6	11.4	3.0	84.8	10.5	4.7
1982	85.9	11.5	3.0	84.6	11.4	4.0
1978	86.4	12.0	1.5	85.6	11.8	2.6

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Information in this county profile was derived from data acquired from

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stanley R. Johnson, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.

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Financial Profile

The sale of corn generated the greatest amount of agricultural revenue in Howard County in 1997, followed by soybeans.

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

Year	Total sales	Hogs and pigs	Cattle and calves	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Other
1997	95,130	20,049	11,800	8,005	27,048	25,741	2,487
1992	73,822	18,206	12,956	8,071	19,507	12,100	2,982
1987	66,773	17,427	11,296	7,883	15,869	11,675	2,623

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

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

Year	Howard County						State					
	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other
1997	21.1	12.4	8.4	28.4	27.1	2.6	25.4	15.5	3.4	27.0	23.1	5.6
1992	24.7	17.6	10.9	26.4	16.4	4.0	24.8	22.1	4.2	26.6	17.6	4.7
1987	26.1	16.9	11.8	23.8	17.5	3.9	27.9	23.8	4.4	22.0	17.6	4.3

Farms in Howard County averaged a net cash return of \$26,725 in 1997, \$5,980 less than the state average. Of the farms in Howard County, 63 percent experienced a net cash gain that year, compared with 66 percent statewide.

17. Average net cash return per farm.

Year	Howard County			State		
	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss
1997	\$26,725	\$49,205	\$11,046	\$32,705	\$54,248	\$9,348
1992	11,958	29,932	11,569	22,718	37,419	9,381
1987	14,427	24,556	9,745	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.)