

Agricultural Data for Decision Makers



Polk County

Number of Farms

There were 800 farms counted in Polk County in 1997. From 1992 to 1997, the number of farms in Polk County decreased by 4 percent. Over the 28 years from 1969 to 1997, farm numbers in this county declined by 42 percent, faster than the state's decline of 35 percent.

1. Number of farms.

Year	Polk County	State
1997	800	90,792
1992	832	96,534
1987	1,001	105,180
1982	1,110	115,413
1978	1,131	121,339
1974	1,166	126,104
1969	1,374	140,354

Average Farm Size

Farms in Polk County averaged 282 acres in 1997, 61 acres less than the state's average.

2. Average farm size (acres).

Year	Polk County	State
1997	282	343
1992	276	325
1987	238	301
1982	223	283
1978	228	274
1974	234	262
1969	199	239

Farm Land Use

Polk County had 225,623 total acres in farmland in 1997, 2 percent less than in 1992.

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

Year	Total	Crop-land	Wood-land	Other*
1997	225,623	200,801	8,993	15,829
1992	229,818	207,394	6,455	15,969
1987	238,256	213,501	6,465	18,290
1982	247,261	213,481	8,145	25,635

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

Of the acres harvested in Polk County in 1997, 97 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	Polk County		State	
	Corn	Soy-beans	Corn	Soy-beans
1997	49	48	50	43
1992	52	44	55	36
1987	48	47	50	39
1982	52	42	53	33
1978	51	41	54	32

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Livestock Profile

Hogs and Pigs

The number of farms selling hogs and pigs in Polk County decreased 44 percent from 1992 to 1997. Over that same period the number of hogs and pigs sold in the county decreased by 40 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, Polk County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	72	43,497
1992	129	72,032
1987	169	73,131
1982	242	85,284
1978	292	75,335
1974	310	76,392
1969	458	82,852

Fattened Cattle

The number of farms in Polk County selling fattened cattle decreased 31 percent from 1992 to 1997, while the number of fattened cattle sold decreased 14 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, Polk County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	66	4,046
1992	95	4,718
1987	124	6,362
1982	158	7,697
1978	206	10,633

(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 Polk County with dairy cows decreased 75 percent from 1992 to 1997 and the number of dairy cows reported decreased 47 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, Polk County.

Year	Farms with Cows	Number of Cows
1997	3	246
1992	12	464
1987	14	406
1982	23	711

Poultry

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

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

Year	Farms	Layers	Broilers	Turkeys
		No. sold	No. sold	No. sold
1997	2	*	5	6,605
1992	7	*	6	4,951
1987	9	*	10	20,198
1982	11	*	8	5,105

Sheep and Lambs

The number of farms in Polk County selling sheep and lambs decreased by 27 percent and there were 22 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, Polk County.

Year	Farms Selling	Number Sold
1997	45	1,931
1992	62	2,483
1987	72	2,860
1982	86	3,997

Farm Operator Profile

Age

10. Percentages of farm operators by age group.

Year	Polk 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	6.5	20.8	26.9	21.5	24.4	54.0	9.9	23.0	23.7	21.1	22.3	52.4
1992	11.7	19.6	23.9	25.5	19.4	52.2	15.9	23.0	20.5	21.6	19.0	50.3
1987	13.3	18.4	22.0	26.0	20.4	52.1	19.3	20.2	20.7	24.0	15.7	49.3
1982	16.5	19.0	25.1	24.1	15.3	49.8	22.5	19.5	22.6	23.9	11.5	47.6
1978	17.3	17.4	25.8	26.2	13.3	49.7	21.1	19.7	25.0	23.9	10.4	47.5

Farm operators in Polk County in 1997 included 6.5 percent under the age of 35 and 24.4 percent 65 years of age or older. The average age of farm operators in Polk County was 54.0 in 1997, which was older than the statewide average.

Principal Occupation

Of the farm operators in Polk County in 1997, 67.4 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	Polk County	State
1997	67.4	62.9
1992	72.3	71.7
1987	69.4	73.5
1982	71.0	80.1
1978	74.6	80.8

Days Worked Off Farm

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

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

Year	Polk County	State
1997	44.6	33.3
1992	40.1	28.3
1987	41.2	26.5
1982	39.6	24.2
1978	36.4	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, Polk County had a higher percentage of farms operated by full-owners.

13. Percentages of farms by tenure.

Year	Polk County			State		
	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant
1997	60.3	28.0	11.8	47.3	36.3	16.4
1992	55.2	31.4	13.5	45.1	36.0	18.9
1987	59.8	26.4	13.8	45.9	33.5	20.7
1982	52.7	29.6	17.7	45.9	33.3	20.8
1978	34.1	34.1	19.3	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 Polk County was lower than the state average in 1997, while the percentage of partnerships was lower also.

14. Percentages of farms by type of organization.

Year	Polk County			State		
	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other
1997	80.9	8.3	10.9	83.6	9.1	7.4
1992	81.9	10.5	7.7	84.0	10.4	5.6
1987	80.5	11.2	8.3	84.8	10.5	4.7
1982	82.5	10.5	8.3	84.6	11.4	4.0
1978	85.1	10.2	4.8	85.6	11.8	2.6

Extension to Communities

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Financial Profile

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

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

Year	Total sales	Hogs and pigs	Cattle and calves	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Other
1997	71,221	4,571	4,509	260	31,178	25,332	5,371
1992	61,720	6,731	6,240	580	25,345	17,612	5,212
1987	55,492	7,991	5,902	440	19,598	16,886	4,675

In Polk 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 unspecified other commodities accounted for 87 percent of the dollars from total sales of agricultural products in Polk County in 1997.

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

Year	Polk County						State					
	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other
1997	6.4	6.3	0.4	43.8	35.6	7.5	25.4	15.5	3.4	27.0	23.1	5.6
1992	10.9	10.1	0.9	41.1	28.5	8.4	24.8	22.1	4.2	26.6	17.6	4.7
1987	14.4	10.6	0.8	35.3	30.4	8.4	27.9	23.8	4.4	22.0	17.6	4.3

Farms in Polk County averaged a net cash return of \$30,854 in 1997, \$1,851 less than the state average. Of the farms in Polk County, 62 percent experienced a net cash gain that year, compared with 66 percent statewide.

17. Average net cash return per farm.

Year	Polk County			State		
	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss
1997	\$30,854	\$52,929	\$5,307	\$32,705	\$54,248	\$9,348
1992	23,328	36,896	6,520	22,718	37,419	9,381
1987	15,571	28,173	4,850	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.)