

# Agricultural Data for Decision Makers



## Van Buren County

### Number of Farms

There were 807 farms counted in Van Buren County in 1997. From 1992 to 1997, the number of farms in Van Buren County increased by 7 percent. Over the 28 years from 1969 to 1997, farm numbers in this county declined by 27 percent, slower than the state's decline of 35 percent.

#### 1. Number of farms.

Year	Van Buren County	State
1997	807	90,792
1992	752	96,534
1987	783	105,180
1982	883	115,413
1978	967	121,339
1974	1,006	126,104
1969	1,113	140,354

### Average Farm Size

Farms in Van Buren County averaged 319 acres in 1997, 24 acres less than the state's average.

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

Year	Van Buren County	State
1997	319	343
1992	321	325
1987	313	301
1982	307	283
1978	289	274
1974	277	262
1969	253	239

### Farm Land Use

Van Buren County had 257,227 total acres in farmland in 1997, 6 percent more than in 1992.

#### 3. Land in farms (acres), Van Buren County.

Year	Total	Crop-land	Wood-land	Other*
1997	257,227	171,564	42,363	43,300
1992	241,422	169,302	35,970	36,150
1987	244,939	165,726	38,263	40,950
1982	270,672	182,304	43,781	44,587

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

Of the acres harvested in Van Buren County in 1997, 78 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	Van Buren County		State	
	Corn	Soy-beans	Corn	Soy-beans
1997	39	39	50	43
1992	41	34	55	36
1987	38	38	50	39
1982	45	34	53	33
1978	42	34	54	32

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# Livestock Profile

## Hogs and Pigs

The number of farms selling hogs and pigs in Van Buren County decreased 51 percent from 1992 to 1997. Over that same period the number of hogs and pigs sold in the county decreased by 34 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, Van Buren County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	84	90,203
1992	172	137,386
1987	206	132,498
1982	342	134,395
1978	461	151,522
1974	452	98,490
1969	573	98,539

## Fattened Cattle

The number of farms in Van Buren County selling fattened cattle decreased 28 percent from 1992 to 1997, while the number of fattened cattle sold decreased 44 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, Van Buren County.

Year	Farms selling	Number sold
1997	52	1,420
1992	72	2,538
1987	104	4,055
1982	115	6,047
1978	155	6,441

(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 Van Buren County with dairy cows decreased 29 percent from 1992 to 1997 and the number of dairy cows reported increased 28 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, Van Buren County.

Year	Farms with Cows	Number of Cows
1997	30	941
1992	42	737
1987	40	494
1982	68	755

## Poultry

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

### 8. Farms selling poultry and number of poultry sold, Van Buren County.

Year	Layers		Broilers		Turkeys	
	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold	Farms	No. sold
1997	2	*	4	248	0	0
1992	2	*	1	*	0	0
1987	5	*	2	*	0	0
1982	11	2,932	0	0	0	0

## Sheep and Lambs

The number of farms in Van Buren County selling sheep and lambs decreased by 38 percent and there were 38 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, Van Buren County.

Year	Farms Selling	Number Sold
1997	60	2,454
1992	97	3,956
1987	125	4,939
1982	151	5,663

# Farm Operator Profile

## Age

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

Year	Van Buren 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	6.8	19.1	21.4	26.4	26.3	55.3	9.9	23.0	23.7	21.1	22.3	52.4
1992	12.2	19.8	21.5	21.1	25.3	52.8	15.9	23.0	20.5	21.6	19.0	50.3
1987	14.9	19.4	21.1	22.1	22.5	51.6	19.3	20.2	20.7	24.0	15.7	49.3
1982	22.2	21.1	17.6	22.3	16.9	48.7	22.5	19.5	22.6	23.9	11.5	47.6
1978	24.0	20.0	19.4	21.1	15.5	47.7	21.1	19.7	25.0	23.9	10.4	47.5

Farm operators in Van Buren County in 1997 included 6.8 percent under the age of 35 and 26.3 percent 65 years of age or older. The average age of farm operators in Van Buren County was 55.3 in 1997, which was older than the statewide average.

## Principal Occupation

Of the farm operators in Van Buren County in 1997, 47.4 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	Van Buren County	State
1997	47.4	62.9
1992	50.7	71.7
1987	53.9	73.5
1982	56.6	80.1
1978	54.4	80.8

## Days Worked Off Farm

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

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

Year	Van Buren County	State
1997	45.3	33.3
1992	37.7	28.3
1987	32.0	26.5
1982	27.9	24.2
1978	29.6	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, Van Buren County had a higher percentage of farms operated by full-owners.

### 13. Percentages of farms by tenure.

Year	Van Buren County			State		
	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant	Full-Owner	Part-Owner	Tenant
1997	66.3	28.0	5.7	47.3	36.3	16.4
1992	64.5	27.9	7.6	45.1	36.0	18.9
1987	61.3	29.0	9.7	45.9	33.5	20.7
1982	58.6	31.3	10.2	45.9	33.3	20.8
1978	28.2	28.2	12.6	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 Van Buren 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	Van Buren County			State		
	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other	Individual/Family	Part-ner	Other
1997	83.9	8.4	7.7	83.6	9.1	7.4
1992	83.0	11.0	6.0	84.0	10.4	5.6
1987	86.7	9.3	4.0	84.8	10.5	4.7
1982	85.5	11.2	4.0	84.6	11.4	4.0
1978	87.4	10.7	2.0	85.6	11.8	2.6

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## Financial Profile

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

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

Year	Total sales	Hogs and pigs	Cattle and calves	Dairy products	Corn	Soybeans	Other
1997	43,027	9,338	6,880	1,504	11,387	12,230	1,688
1992	36,654	10,247	7,679	921	8,789	7,527	1,491
1987	32,952	11,075	7,133	519	6,283	6,713	1,229

In Van Buren 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 soybeans, corn, and hogs and pigs accounted for 77 percent of the dollars from total sales of agricultural products in Van Buren County in 1997.

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

Year	Van Buren County						State					
	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other	Hogs, pigs	Cattle, calves	Dairy	Corn	Soy-beans	Other
1997	21.7	16.0	3.5	26.5	28.4	3.9	25.4	15.5	3.4	27.0	23.1	5.6
1992	28.0	20.9	2.5	24.0	20.5	4.1	24.8	22.1	4.2	26.6	17.6	4.7
1987	33.6	21.6	1.6	19.1	20.4	3.7	27.9	23.8	4.4	22.0	17.6	4.3

Farms in Van Buren County averaged a net cash return of \$8,898 in 1997, \$23,807 less than the state average. Of the farms in Van Buren County, 46 percent experienced a net cash gain that year, compared with 66 percent statewide.

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

Year	Van Buren County			State		
	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss	Net Cash Return	Net Gain	Net Loss
1997	\$8,898	\$28,379	\$7,672	\$32,705	\$54,248	\$9,348
1992	7,316	19,926	6,449	22,718	37,419	9,381
1987	7,381	17,063	6,629	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.)