

March 2017

Farms



Snapshot of Our Agriculture

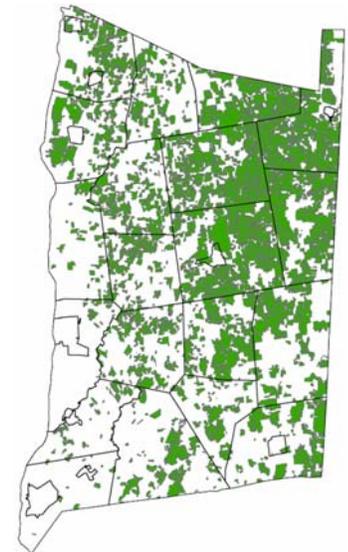
In 2016, the 8-year review of Agricultural Districts was completed and approved by New York State.

The number of acres in Agricultural Districts has grown from 164,380 acres to 196,164 acres; a 19% growth over the last 8 years.

All 4 districts showed significant growth in acreage, comprising 38% of Dutchess County's total land base.

In the last 15 years, the value of the agricultural products sold has increased 58%. Livestock sales have grown by \$13 million and crops sales have grown by \$5 million during the same timeframe.

It is important to note that more than 40% of our farmland is not owned by farmers, but is leased (free or low cost) to our farmers, making it possible to sustain our strong agricultural foundation.



2016
Agricultural District
Parcels

DUTCHESS COUNTY

State of Agriculture in Dutchess County 2017

Top Commodities and Highlights

Dutchess County's top commodities by acres are hay, beef cattle, horses, and corn.

Top commodities by sales value are horses, grains, hay, nursery/greenhouse, and vegetables/fruit.

Top inventory numbers are meat chickens, cattle, laying hens, horses, and goats.

Dutchess County has among the highest rankings in New York State:

- **1st** in inventory number and sales value in horses, **12th** in the US
- **1st** in inventory number of goats
- **4th** in sales value of our sheep and goats, and related products
- **4th** in inventory of broiler and meat-type chickens
- **12th** in sales value of our Christmas trees
- **15th** in sales value of nursery and greenhouse products
- **17th** in sales value of fruits and berries.



Economics of Agriculture

Agriculture is an important industry in New York State and Dutchess County. Our farms provide fresh food (and food security); provide jobs for members of the community – on the farm, through value added processing, sales, and directly and indirectly related infrastructures. Farms enhance our agri-tourism industry; support other local businesses through purchases of goods and services; sell to restaurants, supermarkets, small markets, distribution centers like Hudson Valley Harvest and other farms; and contribute to our quality of life here in Dutchess County.

“Infrastructures related to agriculture are of critical importance to our farms and to our economy.”

In general, our farmers have become more productive using less acres. Yet there is continued pressure for increasing productivity on fewer acres, utilizing less natural resources at reduced costs. Price and risk management remain critical issues for NY

agriculture.

Small farms generate significant dollars that are spent on investments that fuel the local economy. Larger farms, while fewer in number, generate higher gross sales and make larger capital investments.

There are approximately 2,200 full-time jobs on 678 farms in Dutchess County. In addition, there are more than double that (at least 4,400) in jobs relating to our agricultural infrastructures (not including grocery stores or food distribution chains). Infrastructures related to agriculture are of critical importance to our farms and our economy.

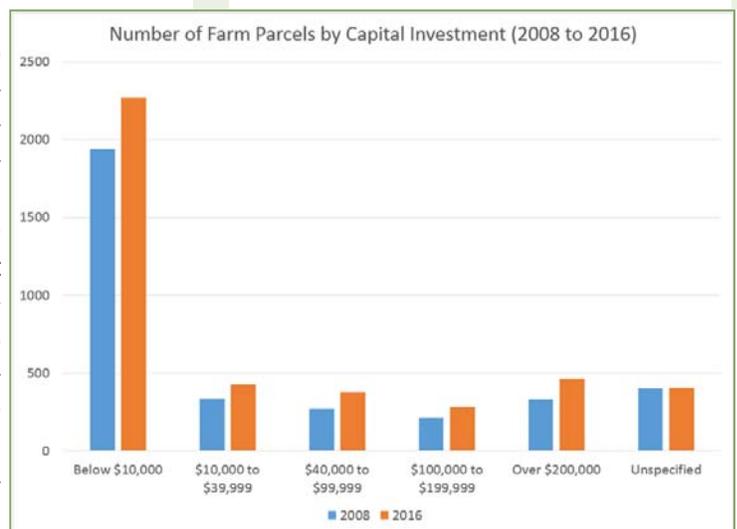
For example: the infrastructures related to an equine operation can include veterinary, transport, hay, grain, bedding, equipment, tack shops, manure disposal, blacksmith (farrier), fencing, seed and fertilizer. These satellite ventures surrounding the horse industry have a tremendous impact on our local economy. We call this the multiplier effect (an increase in spending leads to a greater increase in an economic output). When the veterinarian comes to the farm, chances are he/she will buy fuel and food locally, and the one farm can generate income back to your community.

It is important for municipalities, town boards, town assessors and town planners to realize the importance of agricultural land within their communities and the impacts their decisions make on local farms.

Agriculture and agricultural lands in parts of Dutchess County costs \$0.17 for every \$1.00 paid in taxes for community services; compared to a house which requires \$1.23 in services for every \$1.00 paid in taxes for community services.

Planning for agriculture and farmland in your community makes good economic sense.

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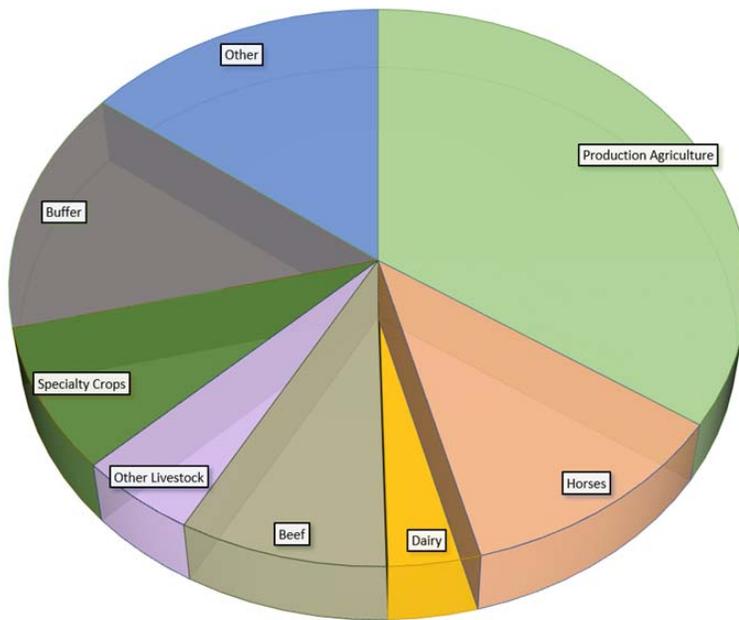
Diversity of Our Agriculture

The NYS Agricultural Districts Law has been amended over the years to reflect the diversity of agriculture in the state.

Dutchess County benefits from those changes, which allow for even more operations to take advantage of agricultural assessment tax benefits. Most recently, beekeeping, agri-tourism efforts and equine riding academies have been added.

The vistas of Dutchess County's farmland highlight our traditional farm-scapes with silos, corn-fields and hay lands. Now showcased in all corners of the county from the urban cities, suburban communities and rural areas are these diverse, intensely managed and marketed small farms. Spurred

NUMBER OF PARCELS BY FARM ENTERPRISE CATEGORY (2016)



ple; the craft beverage industry, with initiatives from the state, has our farms growing hops, barley, and other fruits and grains to fuel farm breweries, distilleries and cideries in the Mid-Hudson Valley.

This diversity compels refined understanding of farm operations and situations from local officials.

We cannot overlook the importance of our small farms or their tremendous impact. These farmers may not be

making their entire living on these smaller farms or properties, but they need to be included in the planning process.

by consumer interest in local foods, our farmers have become adept at navigating the changing atmosphere and have created new markets and products, offering an interesting twist to local agriculture. For exam-

Objectives

It is clear that more work needs to be accomplished in order for Dutchess County agriculture to continue to evolve and succeed.

Action steps should include:

- Improve understanding between:

Local governments and farmers

Farmers and consumers

Residents and farmers

- Encourage more farm friendly regulations within municipalities.
- Provide local Planning and Town Agricultural Committees with the tools to address the needs of our smallest farms.
- Create infrastructure development opportunities that benefit local farm needs and provide new jobs in the county.
- Offer municipal official trainings.

- Investigate opportunities for new and young farmers.
- Position ourselves to find sources of start-up capital for acquisition of farming infrastructures.
- Assist school programs in offering basic agriculture in their curriculums.

These are not exhaustive steps, but more of an outline to continue to connect our communities with our farms for the betterment of Dutchess County.

Dutchess County Agricultural Navigator

The mission of the Dutchess County Agricultural Advisory is to foster better understanding of the importance of local agriculture by local officials and economic specialists.

The Agricultural Navigator acts as a conduit for farmers, municipal officials and economic development specialists to provide impartial information and advice when implementation of local regulations are proposed that may have an impact on agriculture, farmland and agricultural businesses.

The role of the Dutchess County Agricultural Navigator is one of coordinating, collaborating and communicating with county and municipal officials, the farming community, agricultural organizations and other agencies on:

- Agricultural issues and solutions;
- Economic viability and sustainability of farming;
- Opportunities and feasibility of new infrastructures related to agriculture.

The Agricultural Navigator also assists in the implementation of the Dutchess County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan under the guidance of the Dutchess County Agricultural Advisory Committee.

The County of Dutchess awarded funding for the Agricultural Navigator Initiative to Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County.



DUTCHESS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL NAVIGATOR

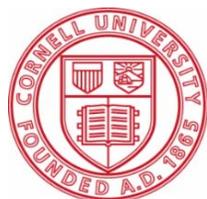
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*Dutchess County Agriculture...
It's A Growing Thing! SM*



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Dutchess County

Th!nk
DUTCHESS
ALLIANCE FOR BUSINESS

Source References:

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