

# Crossroads Resource Center

7415 Humboldt Ave. S. / Minneapolis, Minnesota 55423 / 612.869.8664  
kmeter@crcworks.org www.crcworks.org

## **Tools for Community Self-determination**

### **Arid Lowlands and Lower Rio Grande Local Farm & Food Economy**

*Highlights of a data compilation*  
by Ken Meter, Crossroads Resource Center (Minneapolis)  
for  
**New Mexico Bioneers**  
July 27, 2009

*The bioregion described here encompasses Bernalillo, Chaves, Dona Ana, Eddy, Hidalgo, Luna, Otero, Sierra, Socorro, & Valencia Counties in New Mexico.*

**Note:** Bioregional boundaries do not follow county lines. However, data used in this summary are reported only by county. This regional overview covers the counties listed in their entirety, which is only an approximation of the defined bioregion.

#### **Arid Lowlands and Lower Rio Grande: (Bureau of Economic Analysis)**

1,135,220 residents receive \$35 billion of income annually (2007). Real personal income has increased three and a half times since 1969, in part due to rising population. Although population has doubled since 1969, there has been only limited public planning to assure a secure and stable food supply.

#### **Issues affecting low-income residents of the Lower Rio Grande region:**

377,752 residents (37%) earn less than 185% of federal poverty guidelines. At this level of income, children qualify for free or reduced-price lunch at school. These lower-income residents earn a combined \$3.6 billion per year, spending \$704 million buying food. Their food purchases are supplemented by SNAP benefits (formerly known as food stamps) and by WIC coupons (these two benefits combined generally amount to about 10-15% of low-income food expenditures). Low-income residents alone lost net assets worth \$232 million in the year 2007. *Data from Federal Census of 2000, & Bureau of Labor Statistics.*

#### **Food-related health conditions in New Mexico:**

One-fifth (20%) of New Mexico residents have no health insurance — the second highest rate in the U.S. Only half of state employers offer health coverage.<sup>1</sup> This lack of insurance carries significant

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, State summary for New Mexico, <http://covertheuninsured.org/>, accessed May 24, 2009.

public costs, since both county governments and medical facilities pay for treating customers who are not covered. Costs of this treatment are estimated to be \$6 billion per year.<sup>2</sup>

Food has become a leading cause of death in the U.S, rivaling tobacco. A high-calorie diet, combined with a lack of exercise, accounts for one-fifth of the annual deaths in the U.S.<sup>3</sup> Six of the fifteen leading causes of death are related to poor diet and low physical activity.<sup>4</sup>

60% of New Mexico residents are overweight or obese, with one-third (34%) overweight and more than one-quarter (26%) obese. Nearly four of every five state residents (78%) eat fewer fruits and vegetables that nutritionists recommend (five servings per day), and 22% report they have no physical activity. 7.8% of state residents have been diagnosed with diabetes. *Source: Centers for Disease Control.*

### **The region's ranches and farms (U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2007)**

*Agriculture Census data for 2007 were released February 4, 2009. Note that the Census of Agriculture uses the term "farm" to include both ranches and farms.*

*Since 1979, Chaves and Dona Ana Counties have experienced significant growth in farm income, which means their results dominate the financial discussion of the region.*

#### *Land:*

- 6,087 ranches and farms. This is a 7% increase in ranches and farms over 5,689 in 2002.
- The region has 29% of New Mexico's ranches and farms.
- 3,843 (63%) farms are less than 50 acres.
- 743 (12%) of the region's farms are 1,000 acres or more.
- The most prevalent farm size is 1-9 acres, with a total of 2,355 farms (39% of farms).
- Average farm size is 1,721 acres, 83% of New Mexico's average.
- The region has 10.5 million acres of land in ranches and farms.
- This amounts to 24% of the state's farmland.
- The region's farms have 257,501 acres of harvested cropland.
- 4,325 (43%) farms have a total of 287,453 acres of irrigated land.
- Average value of land and buildings per farm is \$721,457. This is 104% of the state average of \$696,081.

*Sales (Note that there may be discrepancies between Ag Census data and Bureau of Economic Analysis data, below):*

- \$1 billion of crops and livestock sold (2007), 47% of New Mexico's farm product sales.
- This is a 30% increase in sales over 2002 sales of \$785 million.

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<sup>2</sup> New Mexico Human Services Department (2007). "Summary of New Mexico's Universal Health Coverage Reform Efforts." SCI/Academy Health Summer Workshop for State Officials, August 2. Viewed May 24, 2009, at [www.statecoverage.org/files/2007\\_SCI\\_Summer\\_Meeting\\_Esquivel.ppt](http://www.statecoverage.org/files/2007_SCI_Summer_Meeting_Esquivel.ppt).

<sup>3</sup> McGinnis, J.M. & W.H. Foege (1993). "Actual causes of death in the United States." *JAMA* 270(18):2207-12; and Mokdad, A.H, J.S. Marks, D.F. Stroup, & J.I. Gerberding (2000). "Actual causes of death in the United States." *JAMA* 291(10):1238-45 [with published corrections in *JAMA* (2005), 293(3), 293-294.]

<sup>4</sup> Heron M., D.L. Hoyert, J. Xu, C. Scott, & B. Tejada (2008). *Deaths: preliminary data for 2006*. National Vital Statistics Report 56:16. [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr56/nvsr56\\_16.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr56/nvsr56_16.pdf).

- Total farm production expenses were \$851 million, 27% more than \$668 million in 2002.
- The largest expense item for the region’s farmers was feed costs, at \$335 million. Labor costs were second, totaling \$118 million. Depreciation ranked third, at \$74 million. Supplies, repair and maintenance cost \$60 million. Farmers spent \$41 million purchasing livestock, and \$35 million paying interest on farm debt.
- \$324 million of crops were sold (32% of region’s sales), 59% of New Mexico’s crop sales; a 31% increase over \$248 million of crop sales in 2002.
- \$697 million of livestock and products were sold by 2,340 farms (68% of the region’s sales and 43% of New Mexico’s livestock sales); this is \$160 million (30%) more sales than in 2002, by 266 more farms (13%).
- 3,934 (65%) of the region’s farms sold less than \$10,000 of products in 2007. Their aggregate sales of \$9.4 million amounted to 1% of the region’s farm product sales.
- 649 farms (11%) sold more than \$100,000 of products, an aggregate total of \$964 million, 94% of region farm product sales.
- 731 farms received \$9 million of federal subsidies in 2007. *[Note that Agriculture Census data differ from Bureau of Economic Analysis data; see below.]*
- 59% (3,579) of the region’s farms reported net losses in 2007, after subsidies are taken into account. This is less than the New Mexico average of 65%.

**Principal Products** (*\*Sales data for many of these products is suppressed by USDA to protect confidentiality*):

	<b>\$ millions</b>
Milk & Dairy	546*
Fruits & Nuts	99*
Forage	75*
Vegetables	58*
Cattle	39*
Nursery Crops	38*
Corn	19*

*Grains, Dry Edible Beans, Oil Crops, and others.* **Note:** most all of these are lower than actual totals since data from several counties have been suppressed to protect confidentiality.

- 251 of the region’s farms sold \$19 million of grains, oil crops and edible beans.
- 14 of the region’s farms raised over 524,735 bushels of corn in 2007, selling at least \$18.8 million.
- 38 of the region’s farmers produced over 95,981 bushels of wheat, a majority of it winter wheat, on more than 1,816 acres.
- 34 farms raised at least 238,754 bushels of grain sorghum on more than 2,376 acres, worth at least \$1.6 million.
- 20 farms produced at least 5,788 bushels of dry edible beans on more than 491 acres.

*Cattle & Dairy:*

- 1,951 ranches and farms hold an inventory of 505,430 cattle and calves.
- 239,712 cattle worth more than \$39 million were sold from 1,567 ranches and farms in 2007, with *sales from Hidalgo, Luna, and Sierra counties not reported to protect confidentiality.*
- 114 farms held an inventory of 171,044 dairy cattle.

- Milk and dairy sales totaled more than \$546 million, with sales in Hidalgo, Luna and Sierra counties not reported to protect confidentiality.
- 2,027 farms produced 799,617 dry tons of forage crops (hay, etc.) on 138,001 acres of cropland. This is half of the state’s production. Of these, 1,624 farms sold over \$75 million of hay and other forage.
- In addition, 153 farms produced over 837,519 tons of corn silage on more than 32,969 acres, not including suppressed data.
- 34 of the region’s farms raised 44,266 tons of sorghum for silage or greenchop on 2,122 acres.

*Other livestock & animal products:*

- 110 farms sold 1,408 hogs and pigs for a total of over \$147,000.
- 139 farms held an inventory of 766 hogs and pigs.
- 440 farms sold a total of \$3.3 million of horses.
- 454 farms raise laying hens, and held an inventory of 9,284.
- The region has 12 broiler chicken producers.
- 378 farms sold poultry and products in 2007. Poultry sales for many counties were not released by USDA to protect confidentiality.
- 379 farms held an inventory of 27,649 sheep, lambs, and goats; selling more than \$939,000 worth.

*Nursery, Landscape and Ornamental Crops & Cotton:*

- 99 farms sold more than \$38 million of ornamental and nursery crops.
- 159 farms harvested over 25,035 acres of cotton, producing more than 62,580 bales (not including suppressed data).
- Most all of the state’s pima cotton is produced in this region by 44 farms, primarily located in Dona Ana County.

*Vegetables & Melons (some farmers state that Ag Census data does not fully represent vegetable production):*

- Vegetable and potato sales totaled more than \$58 million in 2007. The exact total was not reported by USDA, to protect confidentiality. Main vegetable producing counties were Dona Ana and Luna Counties.
- 322 farms produced vegetables on 19,638 acres of land; there were 267 vegetable farms in 2002.
- This was over half of the state’s vegetable acreage.
- 27 farms raised potatoes.
- Two farms produced sweet potatoes, most all of the commercial production in New Mexico.

**Detailed list of vegetables harvested in 2007, as recorded by the Agriculture Census:**

*Note: (D) means data suppressed by USDA to protect confidentiality; (Z) means less than half of an acre.*

**Bernalillo County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Harvested acres</b>
Asparagus	-	-
Beans, Snap	22	(D)
Beets	3	(Z)
Cabbage, Chinese	4	(D)

Cabbage, Head	10	(D)	
Cabbage, Mustard	4	(Z)	
Cantaloupes	4		1
Carrots	10		2
Cucumbers & Pickles	18		3
Eggplant	-	-	
Garlic	10		10
Herbs, Fresh Cut	5		13
Kale	4	(D)	
Lettuce, all	1	(D)	
Lettuce, Leaf	-	-	
Lettuce, Romaine	1	(D)	
Okra	2	(D)	
Onions, Dry	8		2
Onions, Green	-	-	
Peas, Chinese	4	(D)	
Peas, Green	-	-	
Peas, Southern	-	-	
Peppers, Bell	2	(D)	
Peppers, Chile	5		72
Potatoes	17		3
Pumpkins	-	-	
Spinach	8		3
Squash, all	3		1
Squash, Summer	3		1
Sweet Corn	14		3
Tomatoes in open	35	(D)	
Turnip Greens	-	-	
Turnips	-	-	
Vegetables, other	5	(D)	
Watermelons	-	-	

### Chaves County

	Farms	Harvested acres
Onions, Dry	2	(D)
Onions, Green	2	(D)
Peppers, Chile	5	(D)
Potatoes	-	-
Squash, all	1	(D)
Squash, Summer	1	(D)
Tomatoes in open	2	(D)
Watermelons	2	(D)

### Dona Ana County

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Harvested acres</b>
Asparagus	2	(D)
Beans, Snap	12	3
Beets	3	(Z)
Broccoli	-	-
Cabbage, Head	7	336
Cantaloupes	12	13
Carrots	-	-
Cauliflower	-	-
Cucumbers & Pickles	11	2
Eggplant	2	(D)
Garlic	4	3
Herbs, Fresh Cut	-	-
Honeydew Melons	4	1
Lettuce, all	13	567
Lettuce, Head	10	(D)
Lettuce, Leaf	3	(D)
Lettuce, Romaine	2	(D)
Okra	6	1
Onions, Dry	50	5,175
Peas, Chinese	1	(D)
Peas, Green	2	(D)
Peas, Southern	7	3
Peppers, Bell	3	1
Peppers, Chile	69	3,607
Potatoes	3	1
Pumpkins	2	(D)
Radishes	1	(D)
Spinach	3	(D)
Squash, all	9	15
Squash, Summer	9	(D)
Squash, Winter	4	(D)
Sweet Corn	11	41
Tomatoes in open	18	16
Turnips	3	(Z)
Vegetables, other	10	(D)
Watermelons	16	165

### Eddy County

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Harvested acres</b>
Cantaloupes	3	12
Cucumbers & Pickles	2	(D)
Honeydew Melons	-	-
Okra	2	(D)

Onions, Dry	1	(D)	
Peppers, Bell	2	(D)	
Peppers, Chile	16		648
Pumpkins	5	(D)	
Squash, all	9		13
Squash, Summer	9		13
Sweet Corn	4		1
Tomatoes in open	4		1
Vegetables, other	3	(Z)	
Watermelons	3		9

### Hidalgo County

	Farms	Harvested acres	
Beans, Snap	4		1
Cantaloupes	2	(D)	
Cucumbers & Pickles	6		1
Herbs, Fresh Cut	4	(D)	
Lettuce, all	4		3
Lettuce, Leaf	4		3
Okra	4		1
Onions, Dry	-	-	
Peppers, Chile	12		641
Pumpkins	-	-	
Spinach	4		3
Squash, all	4		3
Squash, Summer	4		3
Sweet Corn	2	(D)	
Tomatoes in open	6		1
Vegetables, other	1	(D)	
Watermelons	2	(D)	

### Luna County

	Farms	Harvested acres	
Asparagus	-	-	
Cabbage, Head	-	-	
Cantaloupes	3		2
Carrots	-	-	
Cucumbers & Pickles	3		2
Honeydew Melons	1	(D)	
Lettuce, all	1	(D)	
Lettuce, Head	1	(D)	
Onions, Dry	12		1,672
Onions, Green	-	-	
Peppers, Bell	-	-	

Peppers, Chile	20	3,193
Potatoes	-	-
Pumpkins	8	309
Spinach	-	-
Squash, all	1	(D)
Squash, Summer	1	(D)
Sweet Corn	3	3
Tomatoes in open	3	2
Watermelons	18	1,164

### Otero County

	Farms	Harvested acres
Beans, Green Lima	1	(D)
Beans, Snap	9	1
Beets	-	-
Cantaloupes	6	1
Celery	4	1
Cucumbers & Pickles	7	1
Lettuce, all	1	(D)
Lettuce, Leaf	1	(D)
Okra	-	-
Peas, Southern	4	1
Peppers, Bell	-	-
Peppers, Chile	1	(D)
Pumpkins	4	(Z)
Squash, all	9	3
Squash, Summer	9	3
Squash, Winter	3	(Z)
Sweet Corn	9	2
Tomatoes in open	13	4
Vegetables, other	3	2
Watermelons	4	1

### Sierra County

	Farms	Harvested acres
Beans, Snap	4	(D)
Beets	4	1
Cantaloupes	7	3
Carrots	2	(D)
Cucumbers & Pickles	7	3
Garlic	2	(D)
Herbs, Fresh Cut	2	(D)
Kale	2	(D)
Lettuce, all	-	-



Lettuce, Leaf	-	-	
Okra	2	(D)	
Onions, Dry	4		187
Peppers, Bell	-	-	
Peppers, Chile	13		854
Potatoes	2	(D)	
Squash, all	3	(D)	
Squash, Summer	1	(D)	
Squash, Winter	2	(D)	
Sweet Corn	2	(D)	
Tomatoes in open	6		1
Turnips	-	-	
Vegetables, other	5		8
Watermelons	5		3

### Socorro County

	Farms	Harvested acres	
Beans, Green Lima	-	-	
Beans, Snap	6		1
Beets	-	-	
Cantaloupes	10		36
Carrots	-	-	
Cucumbers & Pickles	5		1
Eggplant	3	(Z)	
Garlic	2	(D)	
Herbs, Fresh Cut	-	-	
Kale	-	-	
Lettuce, all	3	(Z)	
Lettuce, Leaf	3	(Z)	
Onions, Dry	2	(D)	
Peas, Chinese	-	-	
Peas, Green	-	-	
Peas, Southern	3		1
Peppers, Bell	3		1
Peppers, Chile	10	(D)	
Potatoes	5		1
Spinach	-	-	
Squash, all	7		1
Squash, Summer	5	(D)	
Squash, Winter	2	(D)	
Sweet Corn	5		1
Sweet Potatoes	2	(D)	
Tomatoes in open	6		5
Vegetables, other	-	-	
Watermelons	8		12

**Valencia County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Harvested acres</b>	
Asparagus	-	-	
Beans, Snap	1	(D)	
Cantaloupes	7		5
Cucumbers & Pickles	2	(D)	
Herbs, Fresh Cut	1	(D)	
Onions, Dry	-	-	
Peppers, Bell	-	-	
Peppers, Chile	11	(D)	
Pumpkins	4	(Z)	
Radishes	-	-	
Squash, all	1	(D)	
Squash, Summer	1	(D)	
Sweet Corn	4		3
Tomatoes in open	11		5
Vegetables, other	2	(D)	
Watermelons	3		2

*Fruits and nuts (some farmers state that Ag Census data does not fully represent fruit production):*

- The region held 1,959 fruit and nut farms with 40,718 acres of orchards.
- This totaled 93% of New Mexico’s orchard acreage and 70% of the state’s fruit and nut farms.
- These farms sold more than \$99 million of fruit and nuts, 94% of New Mexico’s fruit and nut sales.

**Detailed list of fruit acreage in 2007, as recorded by the Agriculture Census:**

*Note: (D) means data suppressed by USDA to protect confidentiality; (Z) means less than half of an acre.*

**Bernalillo County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>	
Almonds	4	(D)	
Apples	64		71
Apricots	7	(D)	
Cherries, Sweet	17		10
Cherries, Tart	3	(Z)	
Figs	2	(D)	
Grapes	29	(D)	
Nectarines	2	(D)	
Other noncitrus	11		10
Peaches, all	45		20
Pears, all	26		6
Pecans	7		41
Plums & Prunes	28		6
Walnuts, English	4	(D)	

**Chaves County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	4	20
Grapes	2	(D)
Peaches, all	1	(D)
Pears, all	1	(D)
Pecans	116	(D)
Pistachios	2	(D)

**Dona Ana County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	14	7
Apricots	7	2
Grapes	24	100
Other noncitrus	9	6
Peaches, all	10	4
Pears, all	9	14
Pecans	1,188	27,289
Pistachios	13	(D)
Plums & Prunes	2	(D)
Walnuts, English	2	(D)

**Eddy County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	3	(D)
Grapes	3	3
Peaches, all	4	(D)
Pecans	109	3,656
Plums & Prunes	2	(D)

**Hidalgo County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Grapes	5	(D)
Pecans	13	91
Pistachios	3	(D)

**Luna County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Grapes	4	(D)
Pears, all	2	(D)
Pecans	40	(D)
Pistachios	1	(D)

**Otero County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	71	345
Apricots	11	8
Cherries, Sweet	25	49
Cherries, Tart	5	(D)
Grapes	22	154
Peaches, all	25	41
Pears, all	19	11
Pecans	123	1,737
Pistachios	44	(D)
Plums & Prunes	15	8
Walnuts, English	2	(D)

**Sierra County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Almonds	10	(D)
Apples	25	65
Apricots	9	7
Cherries, Sweet	5	4
Cherries, Tart	2	(D)
Figs	2	(D)
Grapes	7	7
Other noncitrus	2	(D)
Peaches, all	10	8
Pears, all	5	6
Pecans	39	617
Pistachios	6	(D)
Plums & Prunes	8	5
Pomegranates	2	(D)
Walnuts, English	3	(D)

**Socorro County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	12	13
Apricots	2	(D)
Grapes	8	13
Peaches, all	4	(D)
Pecans	7	4
Plums & Prunes	2	(D)

**Valencia County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Apples	24	26
Apricots	4	(D)
Cherries, Sweet	1	(D)
Cherries, Tart	8	1
Grapes	11	50
Nectarines	6	(D)
Other noncitrus	4	(D)
Peaches, all	10	2
Pears, all	13	2
Pecans	6	(D)
Plums & Prunes	4	(D)
Walnuts, English	2	(D)

**Detailed list of berry acreage in 2007, as recorded by the Agriculture Census** (if a given county in the region is not listed as producing berries, the count is not named below).

Note: (D) means data suppressed by USDA to protect confidentiality; (Z) means less than half of an acre.

**Bernalillo County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Blackberries	14	3
Other berries	3	(D)
Raspberries	4	(D)

**Dona Ana County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Blackberries	2	(D)
Strawberries	2	(D)

**Otero County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Strawberries	1	(D)

**Socorro County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Raspberries	1	(D)

**Valencia County**

	<b>Farms</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Raspberries	1	(D)

*Direct & organic sales:*

- 464 ranches and farms sold \$5.5 million of food directly to consumers (Hidalgo County suppressed). Direct sales account for at least 0.5% of the region's farm sales, more than the national average of 0.4%.
- The region's farmers make up 30% of ranches and farms selling direct, and account for at least 49% of New Mexico's direct sales (\$11.11 million of direct sales in New Mexico in 2007, and \$6.6 million in 2002).
- The New Mexico Organic Commodities Commission identifies 44 certified organic farms in the region, with 2,167 acres of certified farmland. This is 26% of New Mexico's certified organic farms, and 2% of the state's certified acreage. Most are in Bernalillo (14) and Dona Ana (21) Counties.
- According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture, 101 of the region's farms sold organic foods (\$1.7 million sales) from 1,470 acres (Chaves, Sierra, and Valencia county data was suppressed).
- This is 38% of New Mexico farms (state total 321) selling organic, and 16% of state sales (\$71 million).
- Local lists of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms identify 7 CSA farms in the region, four of which are in Bernalillo County, and one each in Dona Ana, Luna, and Socorro counties.
- According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture, 47 (34% of New Mexico's) farms market through community supported agriculture (CSA).
- 252 (29% of New Mexico's) farms produce added-value products on the farm.

*Conservation practices:*

- 824 (26% of New Mexico's) farms use rotational management or intensive grazing.
- 801 (37% of New Mexico's) farms use conservation practices.
- 157 (28% of New Mexico's) farms generate some electricity on the farm.
- 2,107 (68% of New Mexico's) region farms draw irrigation water from the Bureau of Reclamation

**State of New Mexico Highlights (Agriculture Census 2007)**

- New Mexico has 20,930 farms, 38% more than the 15,170 farms in 2002.
- Nevertheless, the number of acres in farms decreased 4%, to 43 million acres in 2007.
- 8,904 farm operators are Latino.
- 6,611 farm operators are Native American.
- The state has 24,214 White farm operators.
- There are 43 Asian-American, 66 African-American, and 26 Pacific Islander farm operators.
- New Mexico farmers sold \$2.2 billion of crops and livestock in 2007, up 28% from \$1.7 billion in sales five years before.
- This includes \$1.6 billion of livestock, and \$553 million in crops.
- The Agriculture Census lists production expenses as \$1.9 billion for all state farms.
- Government payments to farmers decreased 14%, to \$43 million in 2007 from \$50 million in 2002.
- The most prevalent farm size is 1-9 acres, with 6,400 farms.
- The next most prevalent size is 10-49 acres, with 4,300 farms.
- 3,600 farms are more than 1,000 acres.
- New Mexico ranks 9<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. for dairy sales, with \$1 billion. This is also the most important farm commodity sold in the state, in terms of sales.
- Second most important product in New Mexico is cattle, with \$576 million in sales.
- The state's farms held an inventory of 1.5 million cattle, down from 1.7 million in 1997.
- The most important single crop raised is forage, with \$139 million sold from 366,000 acres.
- 302,000 acres are devoted to wheat production.
- New Mexico farms sell \$105 million of fruits and nuts, and \$89 million of vegetables.

**New Mexico's top 25 farm products in 2007 (Economic Research Service)**

*See chart on next page*

1	Dairy products	1,353.8
2	Cattle and calves	951.8
3	Hay	195.4
4	Pecans	96.2
5	Onions	63.4
6	Greenhouse/nursery	62.4
7	Wheat	38.5
8	Cotton	35.0
9	Peppers, chile	32.9
10	Corn	23.9
11	Potatoes	14.3
12	Sorghum grain	9.9
13	Peanuts	7.0
14	Dry beans	6.1
15	Sheep and lambs	5.4
16	Wool	1.3
17	Apples	1.0
18	Honey	0.5
19	Hogs	0.2
20	Mohair	0.2

*Note: chicken eggs and farm chickens were also listed among New Mexico's top 25 products, but sales figures for these products were not released by ERS.*

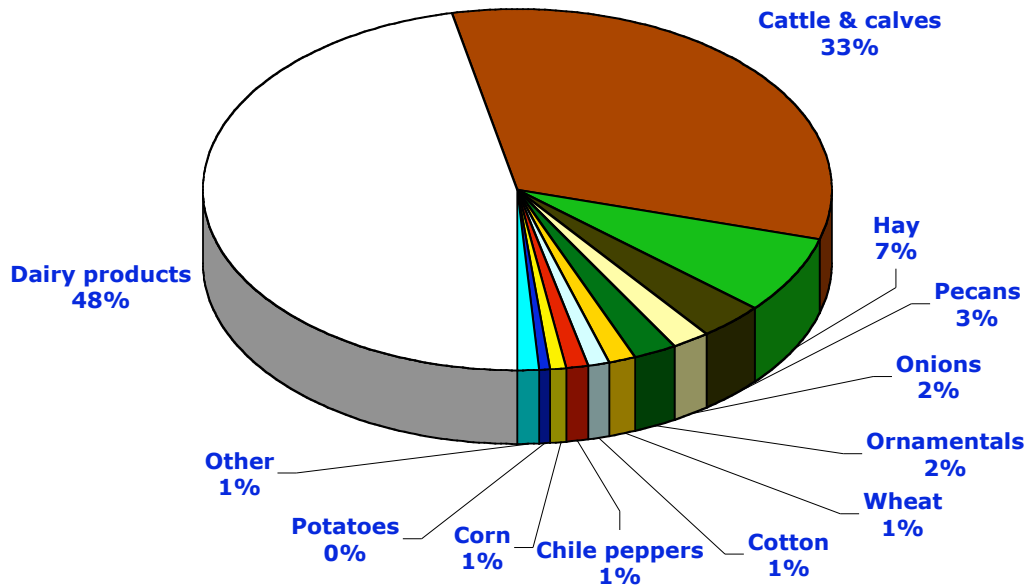
Note also that at \$11 million, direct sales from farmers to consumers amount to more than the value of the 12<sup>th</sup> ranking product, sorghum grain.



**New Mexico's top 25 farm products in 2007 (Economic Research Service)**

*See table on previous page*

**Top 25 commodities sold by New Mexico farms, 2007**



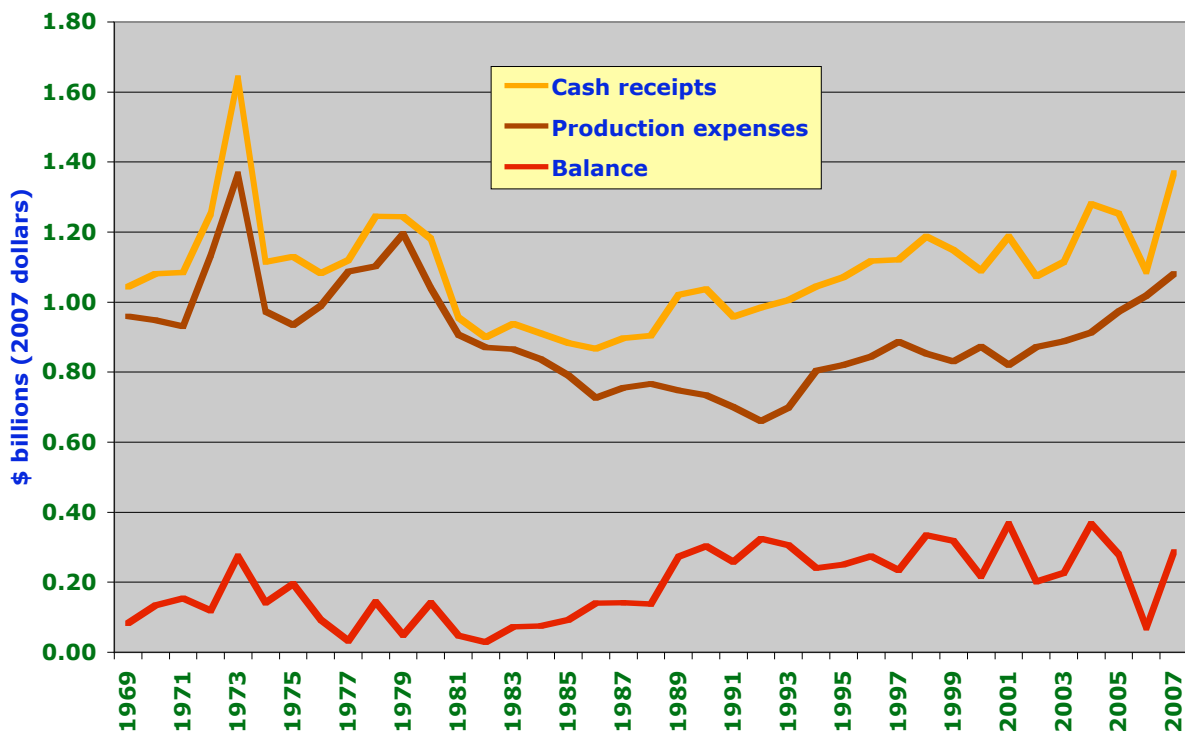
*Source: USDA Economic Research*

**Balance of Cash Receipts and Production Costs (Bureau of Economic Analysis):**

*Note: Bureau of Economic Analysis farm income data differ from Agriculture Census data.*

Chaves and Dona Ana Counties have experienced growth in farm income since 1979, while income for farmers in other counties has fallen off.

**Farm Production Balance in Arid lowlands and Lower Rio Grande, New Mexico, 1969-2007**



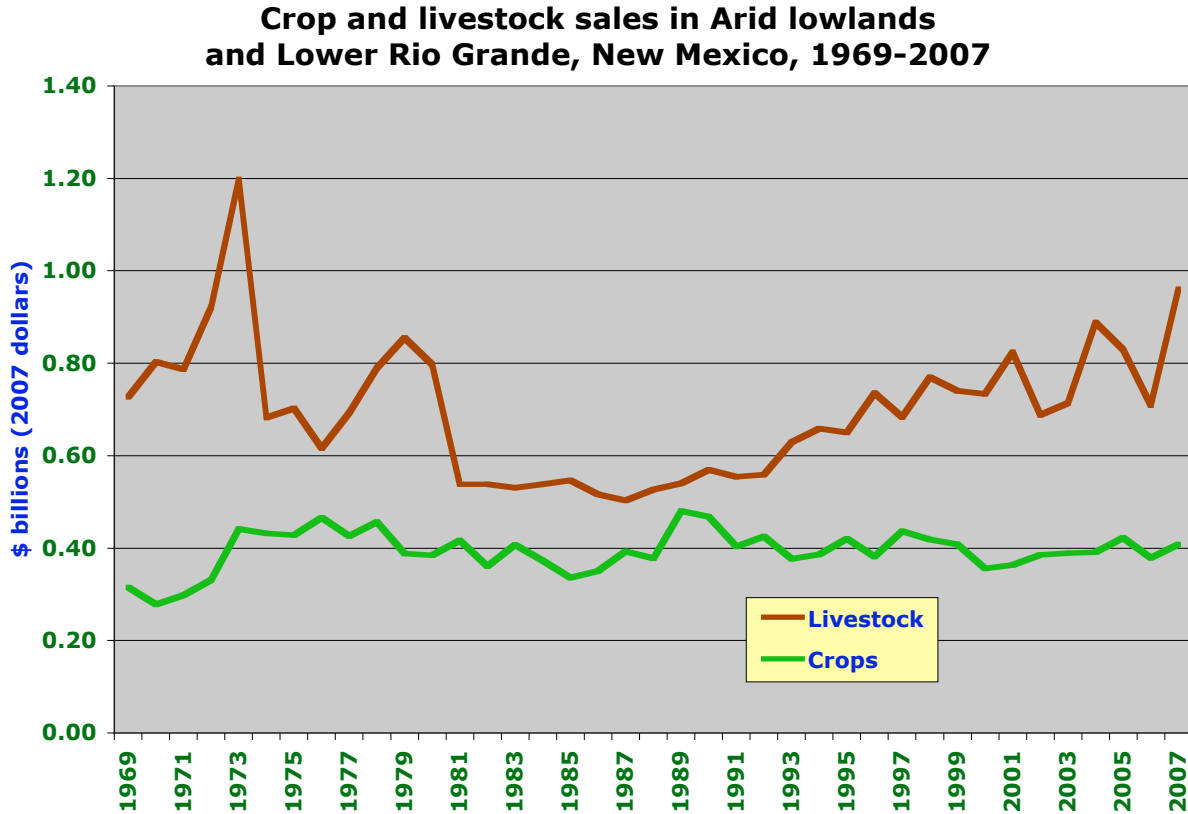
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Lower Rio Grande region farmers sell \$1.1 billion of commodities per year (1969-2007 average), spending \$902 million to raise them, for an average gain of \$190 million each year. These data are dominated by cattle sales in Chaves and Dona Ana Counties.

59% of the region's farms and ranches reported a net loss in 2007 (Agriculture Census), even after subsidies are taken into account.

Lower Rio Grande region farmers and ranchers earned \$204 million more by selling commodities in 1969 than they earned in 2007 (in 2007 dollars). Sales of livestock and related products have risen since 1981, but still fall well below the peak sales of \$1.2 billion in 1973. Crop income has stayed fairly constant since 1973. The most steadily increasing cost of production is feed costs, which total \$330 million per year.

Farmers and ranchers earn another \$28 million per year of farm-related income — primarily rental income for land (39-year average for 1969-2007). Federal farm support payments averaged \$20 million per year from 2001-2006.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

**Lower Rio Grande region consumers (2007):**

Lower Rio Grande region consumers spend \$2.9 billion buying food each year, including \$1.6 billion for home use. Most of this food is produced outside the region. \$5.5 million of food products (0.5% of farm cash receipts, and 0.2% of local consumer needs) are sold by 464 farms directly to consumers, but not always to Lower Rio Grande region consumers, since this includes internet sales.

Estimated change in net assets for all region households was a combined loss of \$1.5 billion in 2007 alone (BLS). This places additional pressure on Lower Rio Grande region residents as they pay for food.

**Farm and food economy summary:**

Farms gain \$190 million each year producing food commodities, spending \$450 million buying inputs from external suppliers, for a total outflow of \$260 million from the region’s economy.

Meanwhile, consumers spend more than \$2.7 billion buying food from outside. Thus, total loss to the region is nearly \$3 billion of potential wealth *each year*. This loss amounts to three times the value of all commodities raised in the region.

**Lower Rio Grande region: markets for food eaten at home (2007):**

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 358
Fruits & vegetables	299
Cereals and bakery products	207
Dairy products	182
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	602

If Lower Rio Grande region consumers purchased only 15% of the food they need for home use directly from region farmers, this would produce \$248 million of new farm income in Lower Rio Grande region — an amount equivalent to 25% of the 2007 farm sales in the region.

**State of New Mexico: markets for food eaten at home (2007)**

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*

New Mexicans purchase \$5 billion of food per year, \$2.8 billion of this to eat at home. Home purchases break down in the following way:

	<i>millions</i>
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	\$ 620
Fruits & vegetables	518
Cereals and bakery products	358
Dairy products	315
“Other,” incl. sweets, fats, & oils	1,043

**Key data sources:**

**Bureau of Economic Analysis data on farm production balance**

<http://www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/reis/>

**Food consumption estimates from Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey**

<http://www.bls.gov/cex/home.htm>

**U.S. Census of Agriculture**

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/census/>

**USDA/Economic Research Service food consumption data:**

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/foodconsumption/>

**USDA/ Economic Research Service farm income data:**

<http://ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/finfidmu.htm>

**Centers for Disease Control: Behavior Risk Factors Surveillance System**

BRFSS <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss-smart/>

**National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)**

Big Cities Health Inventory <http://www.naccho.org/>

**For more information:**

To see results from *Finding Food in Farm Country* studies in other counties of the U.S.:

<http://www.crcworks.org/locales.html>

To read the original *Finding Food in Farm Country* study from Southeast Minnesota (written by Ken Meter and Jon Rosales for the Community Design Center and the Southeast Minnesota Experiment in Rural Cooperation): <http://www.crcworks.org/ff.pdf>

To view a PowerPoint presented in March, 2008, by Ken Meter at Rep. Collin Peterson's (D-MN) Minnesota agricultural forum, called the "Home Grown Economy":

<http://www.crcworks.org/crcppts/petersonKM08.pdf>

To get a brief list of essential food facts, many of which are cited in the presentation above,

<http://www.crcworks.org/foodmarkets.pdf>

To link to further analysis of farm and food economies in the U.S.:

<http://www.crcworks.org/econ.html>

Contact Ken Meter at Crossroads Resource Center

<[kmeter@crcworks.org](mailto:kmeter@crcworks.org)>

(612) 869-8664