

Lewiston Daily Sun
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Census:

More Farms on Less Land

Maine farms gained in numbers and decreased in size between 1978 and 1982, according to the Commerce Department's Census Bureau.

In 1982 there were 7,003 farms; compared to 6,775 in 1978.

Farmlands totaled 1.5 million acres, an average of 210 acres in 1982. This compares to 221 in 1978.

The average value of land and buildings per farm was \$149,951, with a per-acre value of \$705.

Land from which crops were harvested was reported at 457,164 acres, with 5,939 acres irrigated.

The total cattle and calves inventory of 141,281 head on 3,653 farms in 1982 was up from 129,250 in 1978. The 52,400 sold were down from 61,349 four years earlier.

Sales of livestock, poultry and their products were \$256.7 million, 64 percent of total agricultural sales.

Dairy products amounting to \$95.4 million were sold from 1,266 farms. The number of milk cows was up from 56,633 in the previous census to 57,208 in 1982.

An inventory of 8,586 hogs and pigs, including 1,796 for breeding purposes, was reported on 804 farms. A total of 12,067 hogs and pigs were reported sold, of which 6,623 were feeder pigs.

Sales of poultry and their products were \$135.6 million. Some 1,016 farms reported an inventory of 7.2 million chickens three months old or older; 976 farms reported 5.8 million hens and pullets; and 145 farms, 20.1 million broilers sold. In addition, 110 farms sold 3,712 turkeys.

Some 624 farms reported 17,313 head of sheep and lambs, with 13,838 shorn yielding 94,519 pounds of wool; 10,344 head were sold.

The sale of crops amounted to \$143 million.

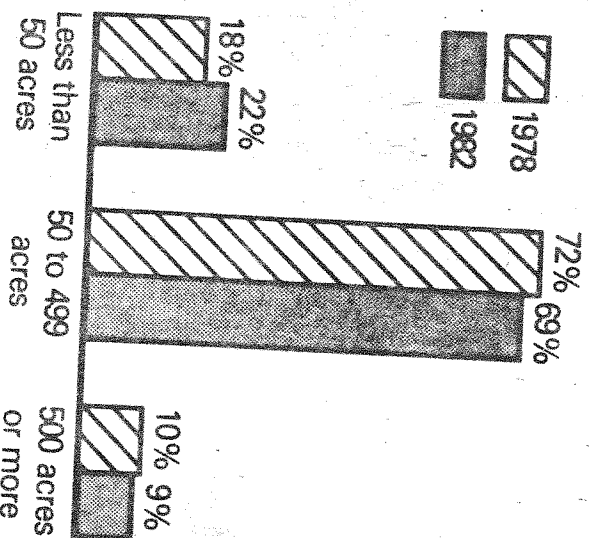
By harvested acreage, the leading crops were Irish potatoes, with 24.6 million hundredweight from 99,249 acres; oats, with 2.5 million bushels from 41,051 acres; and corn for silage or green chop, with 486,638 tons from 32,540 acres.

Other crops were alfalfa, 24,210 acres; corn for grain, 8,020 acres; and green peas, 7,835 acres.

The average age of farm operators was 49.8 years; 969 were under 35; 2,592 were older.

Of the total farms in Maine, 912 had gross sales of \$100,000 or more; 4,128 reported sales of less than \$10,000.

MAINE Farms by Size



1978 — 6,775 Farms
 1982 — 7,003 Farms

Fifty-two percent of the operators reported farming as their principal occupation; 46 percent of all operators worked 100 days or more off the farm.

Women operated 535 farms or eight percent of the state total.

Ninety percent of the farms were operated by individuals or families as sole proprietorships; 384 by partnerships; and 272 by corporations, of which 89 percent were family held.

Ninety-six percent of the farmers owned all or part of the farms they operated; 4,777 were fully owned; 1,932 partly owned; and 294 were operated by tenants.

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