

A Decade of Change in Texas Agriculture Production of Crops and Livestock

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While drought reduced the number of beef cows produced in the Texas by 5 percent over the past 5 years, the number of large dairies has doubled, and swine production has increased by 21 percent, according to an analysis of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2007 Census of Agriculture.

Although livestock numbers are down—cattle and calves decreased almost 2 percent, goats are down 4.5 percent, and sheep and lambs dropped by 8.2 percent—livestock has maintained a 69 percent share of gross farm sales in Texas.

The mix of crops produced has also changed. And the weather allowed for excellent production of most crops in 2007 compared to 2002. Total production of wheat is up 79 percent, cotton is up 61 percent, and sunflower seed production has more than doubled. But Texas farmers are producing less of three major crops—oats, down 31 percent; rice, dropping 35 percent; and soybeans, down 36.5 percent. The number of organic farms increased by 48 percent, from 447 organic farms in 2002 to 660 in 2007.

Other notable changes in Texas:

- Gross income from agricultural products increased from \$14 billion in 2002 to \$21 billion in 2007, an increase of 50 percent.
- Most beef cattle in Texas are raised on large farms. Although farms with up to 49 head represented

roughly 80 percent of all farms with beef cows, they accounted for only 30 percent of all beef cows in the state.

- The number of harvested acres of all crops rose between 2002 and 2007, increasing from 17.8 million to 19.2 million acres.
- The number of dairies with 1,000 or more cows more than doubled—increasing from 48 to 102—between 1997 and 2007.
- The total number of dairy cows increased from 78,000 in 1997 to 200,000 in 2007.

Sales and production of crops and livestock

In 2007, Texas farms generated \$21.7 billion in gross income, which is the market value of agricultural products sold plus government payments. This total is a 48.6 percent increase from the \$14.7 billion reported in 2002.

Using the gross sales (excludes government payments) of farms in Texas allows us to show the share of gross sales by commodity. Of Texas's gross agricultural sales in 2007:

- 50 percent came from the sale of cattle and calves.
- 11 percent was from grains and oilseeds.
- 10 percent came from poultry and eggs.
- 9 percent was from cotton and cottonseed.
- 6 percent was from milk and other dairy products.
- 14 percent was from other commodities.

As seen in Figures 1 and 2, sales of all commodities increased from 2002 to 2007, with grains and oilseeds, cotton and cottonseed, and cattle and calves having the biggest increases.

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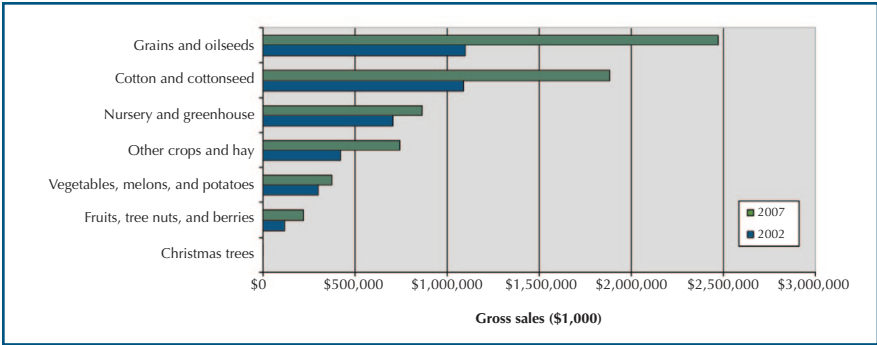


Figure 1. Value of crop sales by crop category in Texas, 2002 and 2007.

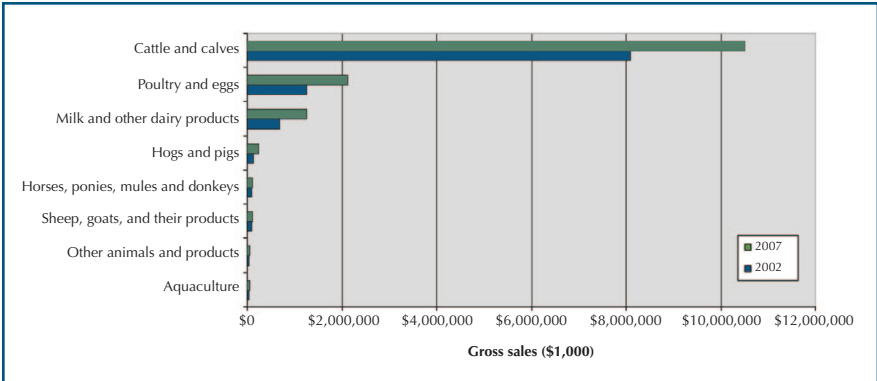


Figure 2. Value of livestock sales by livestock category in Texas, 2002 and 2007.

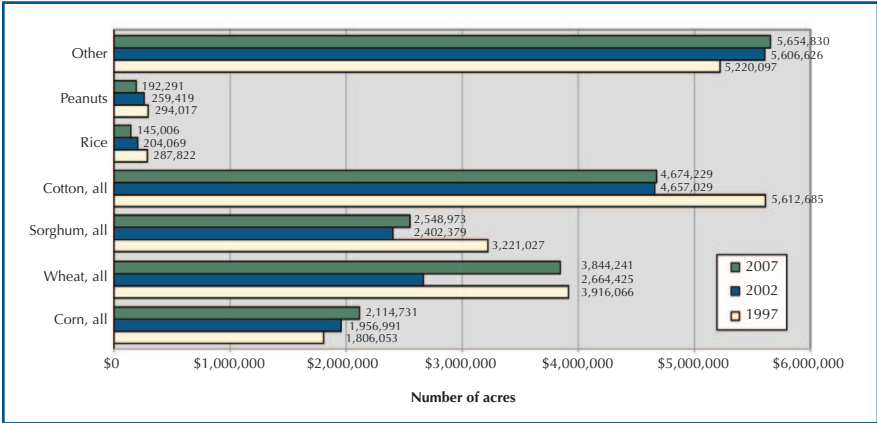


Figure 3. Harvested acres of crops in Texas (1997, 2002, and 2007). Note: Other includes oats, barley, soybeans, dry edible beans, forage-land used for all hay, haylage, grass silage, greenchop, sunflower seeds, sugarbeets for sugar, sugarcane for sugar, vegetables harvested for sale, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and land in orchards.

How gross income from the census compares to other data sources

Another source of information for comparison is a Texas AgriLife Extension Service report, *Texas: Estimated Value of Agricultural Production and Related Items, 2005–2008*. This report includes estimates for the value of production. Although the estimates do not include government payments, the 2002 to 2007 percentage change (50.7 percent) is comparable to that of the census data.

Another report, the *Food and Fiber System and Production Agriculture’s Contribution to the Texas Economy*, was also produced by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service. However, its information is not comparable because it focuses mostly on the contribution to the Texas gross domestic product, not gross income. Also, the report includes information on the value of production (a 4-year average) only for a few selected commodities, not agriculture as a whole.

Crop production

Between 2002 and 2007, the number of harvested acres of all crops in Texas rose from 17.8 million to 19.2 million—an increase of almost 8 percent. Note: These acres are harvested acres, not planted acres, and weather is the biggest factor in determining the extent to which a crop is harvested.

Crops that increased in harvested acres in 2007 (relative to 2002) include corn (8 percent increase), sorghum (6 percent increase), and wheat (44 percent increase), as shown in Figure 3. However, harvested acreage was lower in 2007 for peanuts, rice, oats, barley, soybeans, hay, and vegetables.

Table 1 shows the total production of selected crops for the past three census periods. Compared to 2002, total production increased in 2007 for six of the 10 crops listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Production of selected crops, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

Commodity	Unit	2007	2002	1997	'02 to '07 % change
Corn, for grain	Bushels	286,386,341	197,109,321	224,990,592	+45.3%
Wheat, for grain	Bushels	134,643,897	75,131,556	109,796,707	+79.2%
Oats	Bushels	3,663,002	5,334,886	5,792,388	-31.3%
Sorghum, for grain	Bushels	153,531,033	114,127,221	180,865,739	+34.5%
Soybeans	Bushels	3,439,765	5,415,147	10,507,744	-36.5%
Cotton, all	Bales	8,147,970	5,060,144	5,197,938	+61.0%
Hay	Tons	14,477,068	11,407,323	-NA-	+26.9%
Rice	Cwt.	9,472,871	14,590,204	15,728,874	-35.1%
Sunflower seeds	Pounds	45,693,688	20,808,808	-NA-	+119.6%
Peanuts	Pounds	699,723,146	807,510,593	784,266,043	-13.3%

Table 2. Livestock inventory numbers, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

Classification	2007	2002	1997	'02 to '07 % change
Cattle and calves	13,709,543	13,978,987	14,504,444	-1.9%
Beef cows	5,259,843	5,545,824	5,333,740	-5.2%
Milk cows	404,399	309,058	370,283	+30.8%
Hogs and pigs	1,155,790	953,290	615,705	+21.2%
Broilers	616,299,999	538,737,966	389,945,303	+14.4%
Sheep and lambs	945,164	1,029,813	1,531,614	-8.2%
Horses and ponies on farms	438,827	372,341	241,981	+17.9%
Mules, burros, and donkeys	60,790	22,744	18,638	+167.3%
Goats	1,139,962	1,194,289	1,280,431	-4.5%

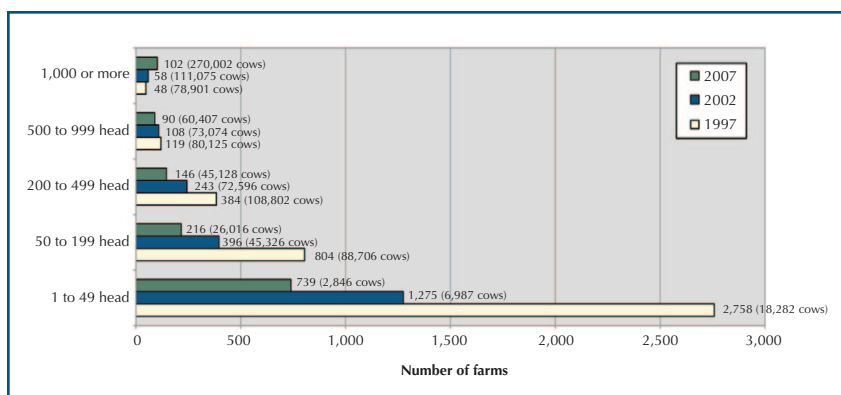


Figure 4. Milk cow herd size by number of farms, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

Livestock production

Table 2 lists inventory numbers for several species of livestock for 1997, 2002, and 2007. Some of the livestock sectors had significant challenges in the past 5 to 10 years, with extended droughts being a common theme throughout the period. Other influencing factors included cattle price trends, federal price support programs, and environmental concerns.

More consolidation in the dairy industry

The dairy industry in Texas has seen significant changes over the last 5 years. Since 2002, Texas has seen more consolidation in the

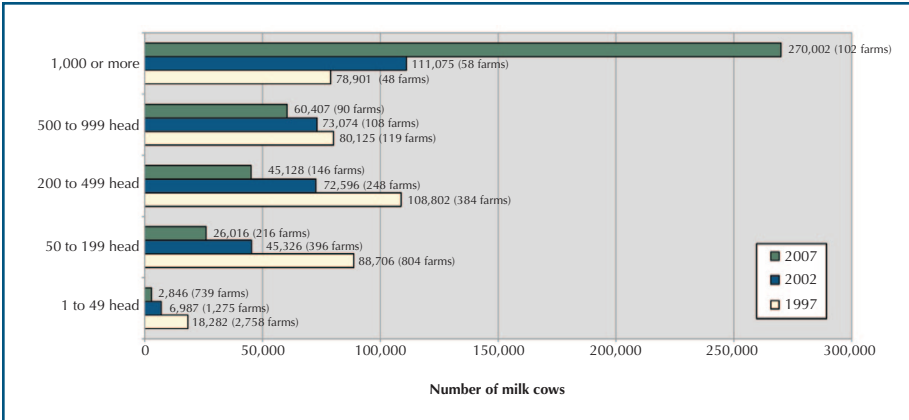


Figure 5. Milk cow herd size by number of cows, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

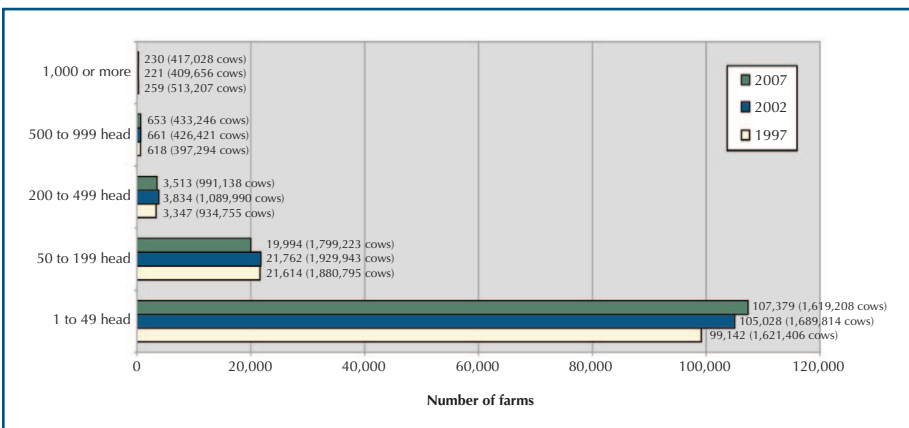


Figure 6. Number of farms and cows by beef cow herd sizes, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

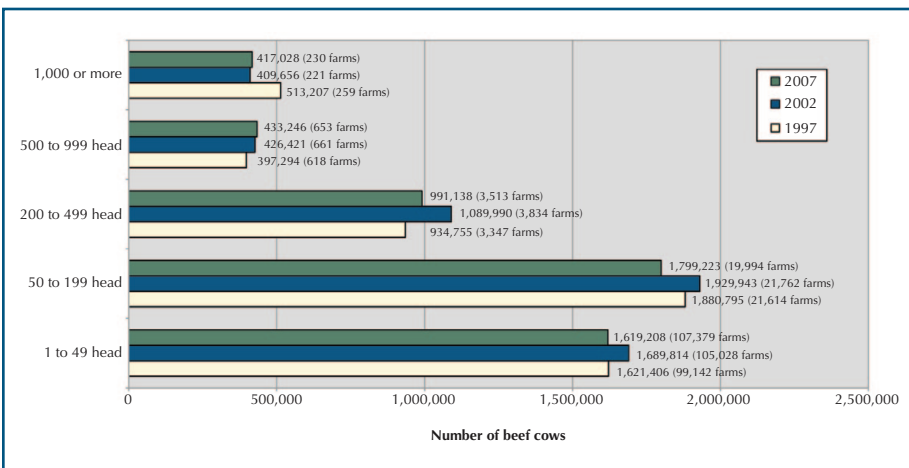


Figure 7. Number of beef cows and farms by beef cow herd sizes, Texas, 1997, 2002, and 2007.

dairy industry, with fewer small dairies and an increasing number of large dairies. Most milk is now produced by dairies with 1,000 or more cows.

This trend is evident in Figures 4 and 5, which show that the number of dairy farms with 1,000 or more milk cows rose from 48 in 2002 to 102 in 2007—an increase of 112 percent. The total number of cows managed by these larger dairies rose from 111,075 in 2002 to 270,002 in 2007—an increase of 143 percent.

On the other end of the spectrum, dairy farms with less than 500 cows show a steady decline in both the number of farms and the total number of milk cows over the last 10 years.

Beef cattle production

Cattle and calves, which includes cows and heifers that have calved, beef cows, other cattle, and cattle in feedlots, declined from 13.9 million head in 2002 to 13.7 million head in 2007 (2 percent), while the number of beef cows declined from 5.54 million head to 5.25 million (5 percent) head over the same period. Most of these reductions in 2007 inventories can be attributed to drought-related inventory reductions in 2006.

Between 2002 and 2007, the number of farms with beef cows and the total number of beef cows did not change significantly. The number of farms with beef cows declined from 5.5 million in 2002 to 5.2 million in 2007. In 2007, farms with less than 50 head represented roughly 80 percent of the farms but accounted for 30 percent of the total number of beef cows in the state, as shown in Figures 6 and 7. This was also the case in 1997 and 2002. In 2007, the average herd size of all the farms in Texas was 40 head.

Rise in organic crop production

One of the most significant changes in the 2007 Census of Agriculture was in the extent of organic crop production. The number of organic farms increased from 447 in 2002 to 660 in 2007, an increase of 48 percent (Fig. 8).

The number of acres in organic production also increased from 33,000 in 2002 to almost 170,000 acres in 2007. As shown in Figure 9, most of the increase in organic crop acres is produced by farms with gross sales of \$100,000 or more.

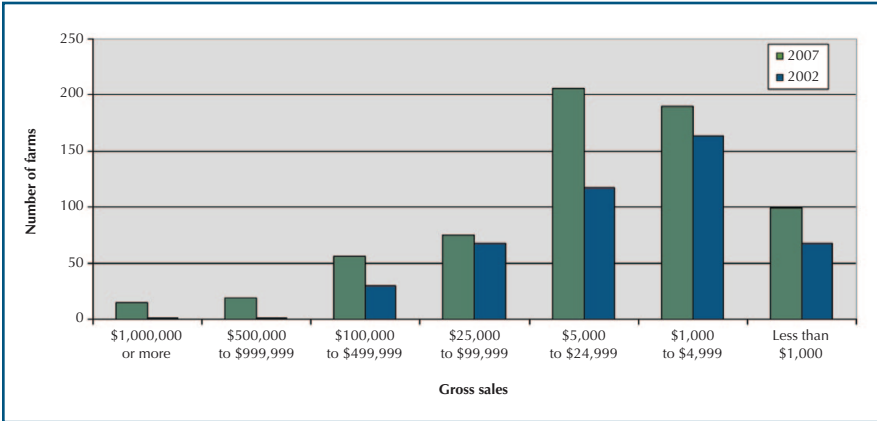


Figure 8. Number of organic farms by gross sales size category, Texas, 2002 and 2007.

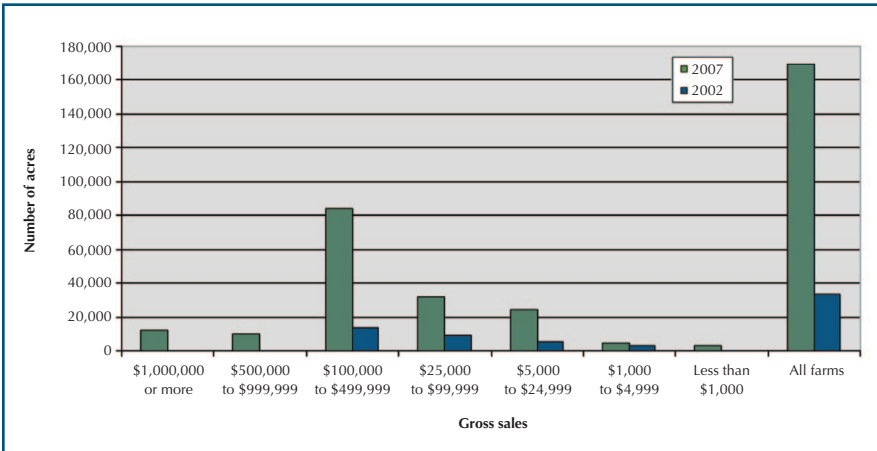


Figure 9. Total number of organic crop acres by gross sales size category, Texas, 2002 and 2007.

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