



## 2007 Agricultural Census Tidbit: Organic Production in Florida Is Small but Growing<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

The 2007 agricultural census data were reported for states and counties throughout the United States in February 2009. National, state, and local policy makers look forward to the census report for several reasons: they use the information to show the importance and size of the industry in their state and counties, and to show the importance of the industry in the state and local economy; and they use the information to make policy decisions. One of the limitations of the agricultural census is that the report, for the most part, is just data with limited or no discussion. This publication is one in a series of five that reorganizes some of the data collected in the census and offers some comments on trends and gaps in the data. The other publications in the 2007 Agricultural Census Tidbit series can be accessed online at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

Most of the popular press has carried information recently related to organic farm production. The theme of these articles generally focuses around food safety, a fresher supply of food products, and the rapidly increasing production of organic products. Frequent reports proclaiming U.S.

organic farm production has increased over 100 percent in the last 20 years are not uncommon. Articles also often appear in the popular press about community supported agriculture (CSA) or locally grown produce (LGP), but neither of these is necessarily organically produced food. Many are left with the impression after reading these articles that large percentages of U.S. production are dedicated to organic acreage.

The USDA definitions for organic crop and livestock production are complex. Those interested in the precise definition of *organic* should read *Organic Production and Handling Standards*, Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA/AMS).

### Census of Agriculture

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years and is an attempt by the U.S. government to collect data on the entire U.S. farm population in every state. Of course, not all agricultural producers provide information requested and there is always the possibility for error in the data reported. A farm is defined as a place in which \$1,000 of agricultural

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products were produced or sold, or typically would have been sold during the census year, including any government payments.

The 2007 census information will provide the baseline for organic acreage in the United States for the future. The census does not attempt to verify data, and all information on the census is self-reported by those who completed the census. In addition to acreage in organic production, the census also collected organic farm sales, organic acreage harvested, and acres being converted to organic production.

## Organic Production

Table 1 illustrates organic production in the United States. Nationally, there were approximately 2.6 million acres of farmland listed in organic production and approximately half of these acres were harvested. In total, the census reported just over 29,400 organic farm operations in the United States. California reports the largest amount of land in organic production, with over 368,000 acres, almost double the next closest state (Montana). Florida ranks 31st among states in organic farm acres, with slightly more than 9,300 acres and 280 organic operations.

Table 2 illustrates the percentage of farm acreage in organic production in 2007. Nationally, only about three-tenths (0.3) of one percent of the land in farms is used in organic production. In Florida, producers reported one-tenth (0.1) of one percent of the land in farms in organic production. Only eight states report one percent or more of their farmland acreage in organic production (California, Wisconsin, Idaho, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont). Five of these states are located in the upper northeastern section of the United States.

Another method to view the overall size and scope of organic production in the United States is to view the value of organic farm sales as a percentage of total farm sales. These percentages are reported and ranked in Table 3. In the United States, there were just over \$1.7 billion in organic farm sales, or about six-tenths (0.6) of total farm sales. There are 14 states generating one percent or more of total farm sales from organic production. Florida generates two-tenths (0.2) of total sales from organic

production, which ranks the state 29th. The percentage of sales from organic production relative to the farmland in organic production is larger. This leads credibility to the concept that organically produced commodities generate a *premium* in terms of price relative to other farm-produced commodities.

Farm producers reported in the 2007 census that an additional 608,000 acres of farmland were being converted to organic production. This would represent an increase in organic production acreage in the United States of approximately 24 percent. Florida producers reported that an additional 3,968 acres were being converted to organic use, which would represent an increase in organic acreage in the state of approximately 43 percent.

## Summary

Organic agricultural production and sales is a growing segment of U.S. and Florida agriculture. However, while the growth has been large in percentage terms, organic production and sales in the United States and Florida represent less than one percent of agricultural land use or sales. Census data indicate that the percentage of land used in organic production will continue to increase. However, if land used for organic production in Florida doubled every five years, the percentage of the state's agricultural land used in farm production would still remain less than two percent in 2027.

## References

USDA/AMS. 2009. *National Organic Program*. United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Washington, D.C. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nosb>

USDA/AMS. 2009. *Organic Production and Handling Standards*. United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service, Washington, D.C. <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3004445&acct=nopgeinfo>

**Table 1.** Organic acreage and operations, 2007.

Rank	State	Organic Acres	Organic Acres Harvested	Organic Acreage Harvested	Organic Operations
		(Number)	(Number)	(%)	(Number)
	United States	2,577,418	1,287,951	50.0	20,437
1	California	368,934	150,809	40.9	3,515
2	Montana	195,204	58,868	30.2	229
3	Texas	169,638	37,621	22.2	660
4	Wisconsin	147,120	101,903	69.3	1,443
5	New York	131,796	91,465	69.4	1,137
6	Idaho	111,781	75,472	67.5	299
7	South Dakota	105,299	33,221	31.5	107
8	Colorado	102,936	49,305	47.9	425
9	North Dakota	102,204	54,997	53.8	129
10	Minnesota	96,342	74,299	77.1	718
11	Oregon	92,405	45,834	49.6	933
12	Wyoming	87,237	21,740	24.9	73
13	Utah	86,084	45,564	52.9	154
14	Nebraska	82,407	43,407	52.7	190
15	Iowa	72,394	58,458	80.7	566
16	New Mexico	71,607	6,204	8.7	321
17	Vermont	67,315	39,032	58.0	619
18	Washington	64,830	43,153	66.6	1,207
19	Ohio	55,086	42,088	76.4	687
20	Michigan	50,208	40,830	81.3	632
21	Pennsylvania	45,181	28,846	63.8	775
22	Maine	38,767	20,206	52.1	582
23	Kansas	37,845	22,098	58.4	161
24	Oklahoma	22,888	8,887	38.8	158
25	Missouri	21,738	10,827	49.8	273

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Rank	State	Organic Acres	Organic Acres Harvested	Organic Acreage Harvested	Organic Operations
		(Number)	(Number)	(%)	(Number)
26	Illinois	18,514	15,476	83.6	280
27	Arizona	16,907	12,237	72.4	129
28	Indiana	14,143	9,273	65.6	287
29	Virginia	13,502	6,907	51.2	311
30	Hawaii	9,934	1,944	19.6	594
31	Florida	9,301	5,974	64.2	280
32	Kentucky	9,280	3,688	39.7	193
33	North Carolina	7,711	3,021	39.2	418
34	Massachusetts	7,326	3,427	46.8	319
35	Maryland	6,678	4,161	62.3	161
36	Nevada	6,237	2,838	45.5	41
37	New Hampshire	6,177	3,357	54.3	173
38	Arkansas	5,865	3,367	57.4	83
39	New Jersey	3,449	1,925	55.8	211
40	Mississippi	2,256	462	20.5	83
41	West Virginia	2,158	783	36.3	84
42	Tennessee	2,020	747	37.0	159
43	Georgia	2,015	1,004	49.8	157
44	Louisiana	1,822	642	35.2	43
45	Alabama	1,766	540	30.6	63
46	Connecticut	1,485	661	44.5	186
47	South Carolina	993	230	23.2	89
48	Alaska	320	N/D	N/A	35
49	Rhode Island	216	153	70.8	51
50	Delaware		N/D	N/A	14

N/A = Not Available  
N/D = Not Disclosed

**Table 2.** Percentage of farm acreage in organic production, 2007.

State	Organic Acres	Land in Farm Acres	% Organic
United States	2,577,418	922,095,840	0.3
Alabama	1,766	9,033,537	0.0
Alaska	320	881,585	0.0
Arizona	16,907	26,117,899	0.1
Arkansas	5,865	13,872,862	0.0
California	368,934	25,364,695	1.5
Colorado	102,936	31,604,911	0.3
Connecticut	1,485	405,616	0.4
Delaware	97	510,253	0.0
Florida	9,301	9,231,570	0.1
Georgia	2,015	10,150,539	0.0
Hawaii	9,934	1,121,329	0.9
Idaho	111,781	11,497,383	1.0
Illinois	18,514	26,775,100	0.1
Indiana	14,143	14,773,184	0.1
Iowa	72,394	30,747,550	0.2
Kansas	37,845	46,345,827	0.1
Kentucky	9,280	13,993,121	0.1
Louisiana	1,822	8,109,975	0.0
Maine	38,767	1,347,566	2.9
Maryland	6,678	2,051,756	0.3
Massachusetts	7,326	517,879	1.4
Michigan	50,208	10,031,807	0.5
Minnesota	96,342	26,917,962	0.4
Mississippi	2,256	11,456,241	0.0
Missouri	21,738	29,026,573	0.1
Montana	195,204	61,388,462	0.3

**Table 2.** Percentage of farm acreage in organic production, 2007.

State	Organic Acres	Land in Farm Acres	% Organic
Nebraska	82,407	45,480,358	0.2
Nevada	6,237	5,865,392	0.1
New Hampshire	6,177	471,911	1.3
New Jersey	3,449	733,450	0.5
New Mexico	71,607	43,238,049	0.2
New York	131,796	7,174,743	1.8
North Carolina	7,711	8,474,671	0.1
North Dakota	102,204	39,674,586	0.3
Ohio	55,086	13,956,563	0.4
Oklahoma	22,888	35,087,269	0.1
Oregon	92,405	16,399,647	0.6
Pennsylvania	45,181	7,809,244	0.6
Rhode Island	216	67,819	0.3
South Carolina	993	4,889,339	0.0
South Dakota	105,299	43,666,403	0.2
Tennessee	2,020	10,969,798	0.0
Texas	169,638	130,398,753	0.1
Utah	86,084	11,094,700	0.8
Vermont	67,315	1,233,313	5.5
Virginia	13,502	8,103,925	0.2
Washington	64,830	14,972,789	0.4
West Virginia	2,158	3,697,606	0.1
Wisconsin	147,120	15,190,804	1.0
Wyoming	87,237	30,169,526	0.3

**Table 3.** Organic farm sales as a percentage of total farm sales, ranked by state, 2007.

Rank	State	2007 Organic Sales	2007 Total Farm Sales	% Organic
	United States	1,709,111	297,220,491	0.6
1	New Hampshire	16,283	199,051	8.2
2	Vermont	38,372	673,713	5.7
3	Maine	23,315	617,190	3.8
4	Massachusetts	17,515	489,820	3.6
5	Washington	159,772	6,792,856	2.4
6	Oregon	88,379	4,386,143	2.0
7	California	656,821	33,885,064	1.9
8	Rhode Island	1,159	65,908	1.8
9	Hawaii	8,451	513,626	1.6
10	Arizona	48,363	3,234,552	1.5
11	New York	54,164	4,418,634	1.2
12	Alaska	687	57,019	1.2
13	Connecticut	6,351	551,553	1.2
14	Pennsylvania	58,293	5,808,803	1.0
15	Wisconsin	80,630	8,967,358	0.9
16	Idaho	48,102	5,688,765	0.8
17	Colorado	50,590	6,061,134	0.8
18	Michigan	31,921	5,753,219	0.6
19	New Mexico	11,262	2,175,080	0.5
20	Utah	7,316	1,415,678	0.5
21	Virginia	14,615	2,906,188	0.5
22	Wyoming	5,293	1,157,535	0.5
23	New Jersey	4,250	986,885	0.4
24	Ohio	25,676	7,070,212	0.4
25	Montana	8,776	2,803,062	0.3
26	Minnesota	39,976	13,180,466	0.3

**Table 3.** Organic farm sales as a percentage of total farm sales, ranked by state, 2007.

Rank	State	2007 Organic Sales	2007 Total Farm Sales	% Organic
27	Maryland	5,402	1,835,090	0.3
28	Texas	51,741	21,001,074	0.2
29	Florida	17,145	7,785,228	0.2
30	Iowa	33,736	20,418,096	0.2
31	North Dakota	8,736	6,084,218	0.1
32	Nebraska	18,583	15,506,035	0.1
33	Indiana	8,687	8,271,291	0.1
34	South Dakota	6,650	6,570,450	0.1
35	North Carolina	7,295	10,313,628	0.1
36	Illinois	8,332	13,329,107	0.1
37	Oklahoma	3,543	5,806,061	0.1
38	Kansas	7,496	14,413,182	0.1
39	Missouri	3,821	7,512,926	0.1
40	Kentucky	2,360	4,824,561	0.0
41	West Virginia	260	591,665	0.0
42	Tennessee	1,126	2,617,394	0.0
43	Arkansas	2,334	7,508,806	0.0
44	Georgia	2,042	7,112,866	0.0
45	Alabama	632	4,415,550	0.0
46	Mississippi	539	4,876,781	0.0
47	Delaware	N/D	1,083,035	
48	Louisiana	N/D	2,617,981	
49	Nevada	N/D	513,269	
50	South Carolina	N/D	2,352,681	
N/D = Not Disclosed				