

# Importance of Agriculture in South Dakota

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Agriculture has long been South Dakota's leading industry, and livestock production is an important part of that industry. Agriculture has a \$17.8 billion impact on the state's economy, nearly double that of the next leading industry. Livestock production made up \$5.7 billion of that total.

South Dakota's farm and ranch families are the number one reason our state has remained a leader in agricultural and livestock production. Their commitment to producing a safe and healthy product while protecting the land and water in their community has helped make South Dakota the ideal place to live, work and raise a family.

Agriculture is not only our leading industry, but a respected tradition in South Dakota. Many generations have made their living from the land; let's not prevent future generations from having that same opportunity. When we work together, we can keep our family farms and ranches growing.

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Ag United was developed through a collaboration of farm organizations that support livestock production and development and includes the South Dakota Cattlemen's Association, South Dakota Corn Growers Association, South Dakota Farm Bureau, South Dakota Pork Producers Council and the South Dakota Soybean Association.



# Livestock's Impact in South Dakota

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW?**

- ◆ South Dakota farmers & ranchers raised 1.74 million feeder cattle in 2004 and only 400,000 were finished in-state.
- ◆ Farmer-owned SD Soybean Processors produce 620,000 tons of soybean meal and 11 SD ethanol plants produce 1.3 million tons of distiller's grains annually.
- ◆ One milk cow will eat 3 tons of hay and 1,460 lbs. of distiller's grains over the course of a year.
- ◆ It takes 150 lbs. of soybean meal to feed a growing hog from wean-to-finish.

## South Dakota Statistics

## National Rank

Number of Farms	31,736		27
Avg. Farm Size	1,380	acres	8
Avg. Net Income per Farm	\$28,448		12

## South Dakota Livestock

All Cattle & Calves Inventory, 2005	3,750,000	head	6
Cattle & Calves Sold	2,707,872	head	8
Market Value, Cattle & Calves Sold	\$1,693,838,000		7
Milk Cows Inventory, 2005	80,000	head	26
Market Value, Milk & Dairy Products Sold	\$156,498,000		29
Hogs & Pigs Inventory	1,375,506	head	11
Hogs & Pigs Sold	3,773,503	head	11
Market Value, Hogs & Pigs Sold*	\$254,108,000		12

**Market Value of all Livestock Sold & their Products** **\$2,258,715,000**

**Market Value of all Crops Sold** **\$1,575,910,000**

**Total Market Value of all Agricultural Products Sold** **\$3,834,625,000**

*Information taken from the 2002 Census of Agriculture. 2005 inventory information obtained from the SD Ag. Statistics Service.  
\*Value does not reflect 11 SD counties where data is withheld to avoid disclosing individual farm information.*



This publication brought to you by:  
Ag United for South Dakota  
and South Dakota soybean farmers.



# The Value of Livestock Production in Harding County

## Statistics Rank\*

Population, 2004 Estimate	1,244	65
Number of Farms	223	60
Avg. Farm Size	7,507 acres	1
Land in Farms	1,674,061 acres	
Avg. Age of Principle Operator	54.1	
Avg. Net Income per Farm	\$39,266	12

## Livestock

All Cattle & Calves Inventory, 2005	62,000 head	21
Cattle & Calves Sold	52,379 head	18
Market Value, Cattle & Calves Sold	\$26,358,000	27
<b>Local Economic Impact</b> (multiplier: 1.96**)	<b>\$51,661,680</b>	
Sheep & Lambs Inventory	40,132 head	2
Sheep & Lambs Sold	30,474 head	2
Market Value, Sheep, Goats & their Products	\$2,340,000	3

## Crops

The leading crop in Harding County is wheat. 872,000 bushels of wheat were harvested on 29,700 acres in 2004.

*Information taken from the 2002 Census of Agriculture. 2005 inventory information obtained from the SD Ag. Statistics Service.*

\* A statewide ranking out of 66 counties in South Dakota.

\*\* A multiplier is a tool used to measure the additional economic activity generated by direct livestock sales in a given community. Multiplier values obtained from the Economics Dept. at South Dakota State University

All livestock operations of 1,000 Animal Units (AU) or more must meet or exceed all state regulations, established by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. In addition, each county may establish regulations through their local zoning plan.

*1,000 AU = 1,000 beef cattle, 700 dairy cows or 2,500 feeder-to-finish hogs.*

## Livestock Production a Viable Option for South Dakota Farm Families

The average annual living expenses for a family of four in South Dakota are nearly \$40,000, but the average annual net income from farm and ranch activities in South Dakota is only \$28,448. In order for South Dakota's farm and ranch families to make a living farming full-time, we must allow and encourage these families to grow their businesses.

Many families are also welcoming home high-school and college graduates who want to return to the farm. With farm land prices at record highs, livestock production is a more feasible way to incorporate returning children and their young families into the family farm.

South Dakota has an abundance of land, feed resources, and dedicated farm families to continue to be a national leader in livestock production. Let's not promote poverty by fighting against South Dakota's farm and ranch families who want to expand the life they love. Rather, let's promote prosperity by appreciating and supporting them as they produce food for the world while investing in South Dakota's future.

### Human & Animal Population Density – County Comparison

	Lancaster County, PA	Sioux County, IA	Minnehaha County, SD	Harding County, SD
Area in sq. miles	949	768	809	2,671
Population, 2004	470,658	32,180	157,366	1,244
Population per sq. mi.	496	42	194	.5
All Cattle	255,700	221,653	59,883	62,000
Milk Cows	107,600	20,152	4,486	--
Hogs & Pigs	386,800	869,086	50,959	--

**Please note:** Lancaster County in Pennsylvania has almost **500** people per square mile while Harding County has only **.5**. However, Lancaster County also has a tremendous livestock population; they have **4** times more cattle than Harding County. In Sioux County, Iowa the population is larger than 63 of the 66 counties in South Dakota, yet they have over half as many hogs as the entire state of South Dakota.

*Information taken from 2002 Census of Agriculture.*