

KENTUCKY AGRICULTURE FACTS -2025-



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AGRICULTURE IN KENTUCKY

Agriculture sustained the first settlers of Kentucky in the 1770s, and the business of raising crops and livestock continues to be the backbone of rural Kentucky today. Kentucky is home to a wide variety of agriculture production, from horses and beef cattle, to tobacco and corn. Agriculture in Kentucky, nicknamed the Bluegrass State, is constantly changing to keep up with consumer demand and the ever-growing world population.

Due to the tobacco buy-out in 2004, many producers have diversified their operations to include new ventures, such as poultry, horticulture, etc.

Kentucky is home to 69,425 farms, making it the 7th ranking state in the number of farms. The average farm size in Kentucky is 179 acres, compared to the national average of 463 acres. Of Kentucky's 25.4 million acres, 48% is farmland.

Kentucky agriculture is dominated by small family farms. Over 63% of its farms (exactly 43,585) have annual sales of less than \$10,000. Cash receipts for all Kentucky farms totaled over \$8.1 billion in 2022.

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Kentucky State Profile

TOP COMMODITIES

| RANK | COMMODITIES | VALUE OF RECEIPTS, 2022 | PERCENTAGE |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1ST | CORN | \$1,433,865,000 | 17.5% |
| 2ND | BROILERS | \$1,427,150,000 | 17.4% |
| 3RD | SOYBEANS | \$1,316,419,000 | 16.1% |
| 4TH | ALL OTHER ANIMALS AND PRODUCTS | \$1,224,025,000 | 14.9% |
| 5TH | CATTLE AND CALVES | \$1,100,732,000 | 13.4% |
| 6TH | HAY | \$326,664,000 | 4.0% |
| 7TH | CHICKEN EGGS | \$255,682,000 | 3.1% |
| 8TH | DAIRY PRODUCTS, MILK | 242,880,000 | 3.0% |
| 9TH | TOBACCO | \$240,550,000 | 2.9% |
| 10TH | WHEAT | 218,014,000 | 2.7% |
| 11TH | HOGS | \$181,425,000 | 2.2% |
| | ALL COMMODITIES | \$8,195,117,000 | 100% |

Source: USDA Kentucky Cash Receipts.

All other animals and products include horses, stud fees, mules, sheep and lambs, goats, turkeys, rabbits, bison and all other livestock.

AGRICULTURAL LAND USE

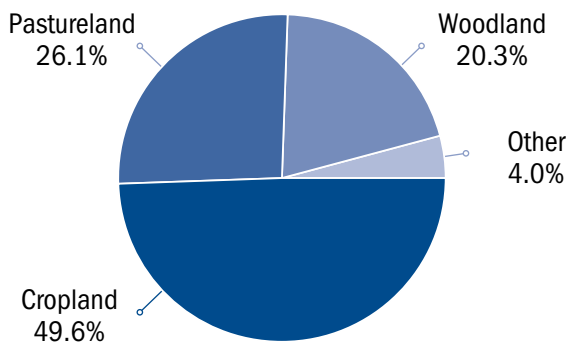
Top 5 Cropland Counties

| | | | |
|----|-----------|---------|-------|
| 1. | Christian | 261,610 | Acres |
| 2. | Daviess | 226,806 | Acres |
| 3. | Graves | 199,265 | Acres |
| 4. | Logan | 194,163 | Acres |
| 5. | Union | 190,949 | Acres |

Top 5 Pastureland Counties

| | | | |
|----|----------|---------|-------|
| 1. | Madison | 106,890 | Acres |
| 2. | Bourbon | 93,571 | Acres |
| 3. | Barren | 78,336 | Acres |
| 4. | Clark | 77,813 | Acres |
| 5. | Harrison | 76,861 | Acres |

Land Use on Kentucky Farms, 2022



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

POULTRY

- As of 2022, poultry is Kentucky's 2nd ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$1.4 billion.
- Kentucky is home to over 254 million broilers.
- Kentucky ranks 13th in the nation in broiler inventory.

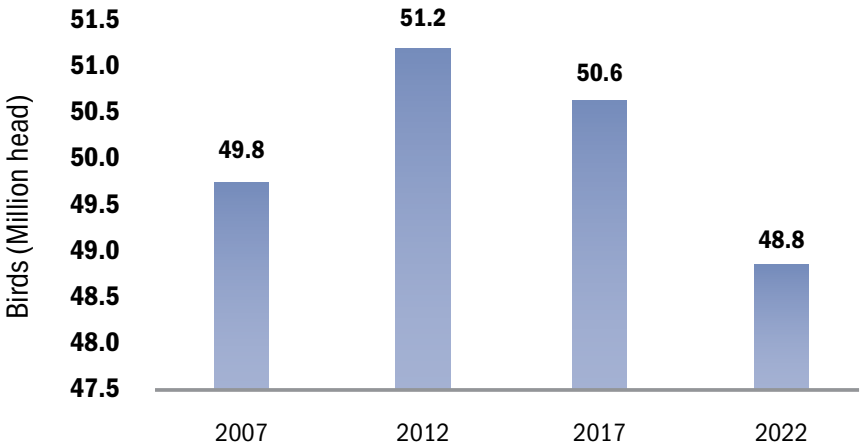
Top Poultry Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|---------|------------|----------|
| 1. | Graves | 10,264,676 | Broilers |
| 2. | McLean | 4,824,670 | Broilers |
| 3. | Webster | 4,439,600 | Broilers |
| 4. | Hickman | 3,655,523 | Broilers |
| 5. | Ohio | 3,083,055 | Broilers |



- In 2022, Kentucky produced nearly 1.7 billion pounds of chicken.
- The 5 table egg layer companies have over 4 million egg layers producing over 18 million eggs per week, totaling about 1.4 billion eggs a year.
- There are currently 850 poultry farms and 3,200 poultry houses throughout 50 counties in Kentucky.

KY Poultry Inventory Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
 USDA Poultry Production and Value Report 2022
 Kentucky Poultry Federation

BEEF CATTLE

- As of January 1, 2024, Kentucky outranks every state east of the Mississippi River in beef cattle inventory, with 907,000 head.
- Kentucky ranks 8th in the nation in beef cattle inventory.
- Kentucky houses 100,000 replacement females.

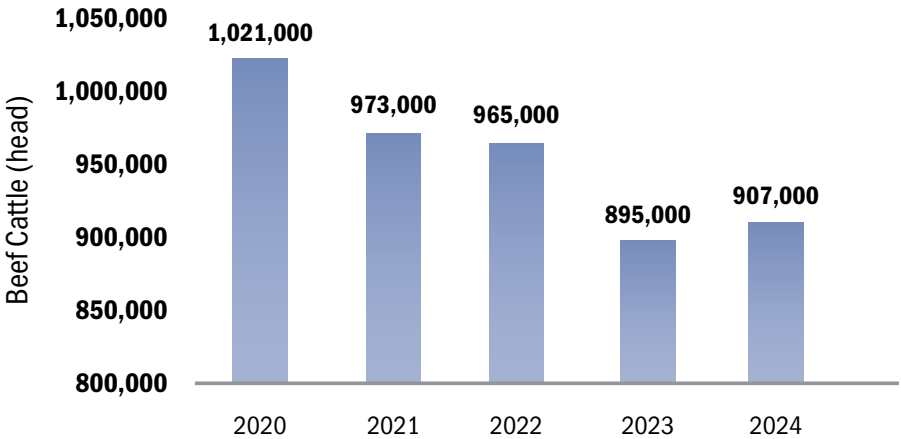
Top Beef Cattle Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|---------|--------|------|
| 1. | Barren | 34,000 | Head |
| 2. | Pulaski | 27,500 | Head |
| 3. | Monroe | 23,000 | Head |
| 4. | Grayson | 21,500 | Head |
| 5. | Marion | 21,500 | Head |



- As of 2022, cattle and calves are Kentucky's 5th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$1.1 billion.
- Cattle and calves accounted for 13.4% of Kentucky's total agricultural cash receipts.

KY Beef Cattle Inventory Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Cattle and Calf Report 2024

DAIRY CATTLE

- As of January 1st, 2024, there were 43,000 milk cows and 25,000 replacement females in Kentucky.
- Kentucky produced around 915 million pounds of milk in 2023.
- As of 2022, milk and dairy products are Kentucky's 8th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$242 million.

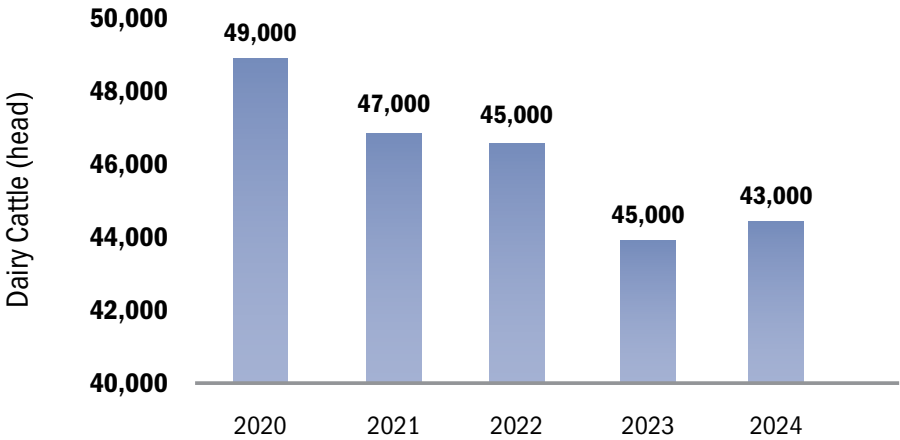
Top Dairy Cattle Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|------|
| 1. | Barren | 6,200 | Head |
| 2. | Adair | 3,800 | Head |
| 3. | Logan | 3,600 | Head |
| 4. | Lincoln | 2,500 | Head |
| 5. | Christian | 2,400 | Head |



- On average, one dairy cow in Kentucky produces over 20,000 pounds of milk a year.
- Kentucky ranks 27th in the nation in dairy cattle inventory.
- As of 2022, Kentucky has 350 licensed dairy farms.

KY Dairy Cattle Inventory Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Cattle and Calf Report 2024
Kentucky Dairy Development Council

EQUINE

- Kentucky ranks #1 nationally in horse sales.
- Kentucky is home to over 209,500 equine animals.
- Equine sales in 2022 rose to almost \$2.1 billion, however, expenses have increased to \$1.6 billion.
- As of 2022, 900,000 acres in Kentucky are devoted to equine use.

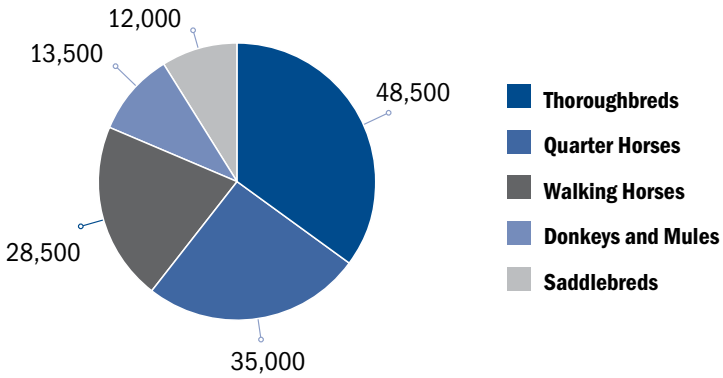
Top Equine Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|----------|--------|------|
| 1. | Fayette | 15,646 | Head |
| 2. | Bourbon | 11,170 | Head |
| 3. | Woodford | 7,890 | Head |
| 4. | Scott | 3,972 | Head |
| 5. | Shelby | 3,328 | Head |

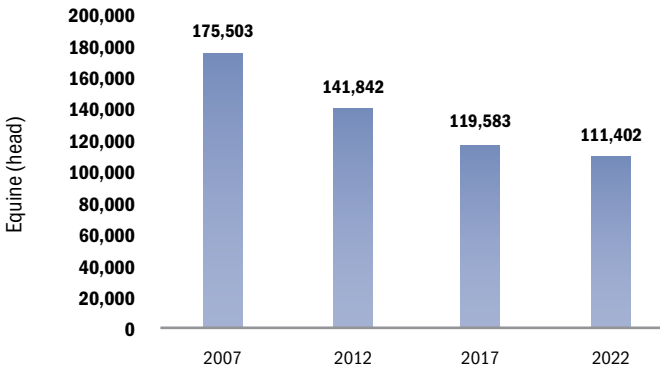


- There are approximately 31,000 equine operations in Kentucky.

Top 5 Equine Breeds in Kentucky



KY Horses and Ponies Inventory Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
University of Kentucky 2022 Kentucky Equine Survey

HOGS AND PIGS

- Kentucky ranks 17th in the nation in hog inventory.
- As of 2022, hogs are Kentucky's 11th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$181 million.
- As of December 1, 2023, there was a total of 470,000 hogs in Kentucky, 50,000 were used for breeding purposes and 420,000 were market animals.

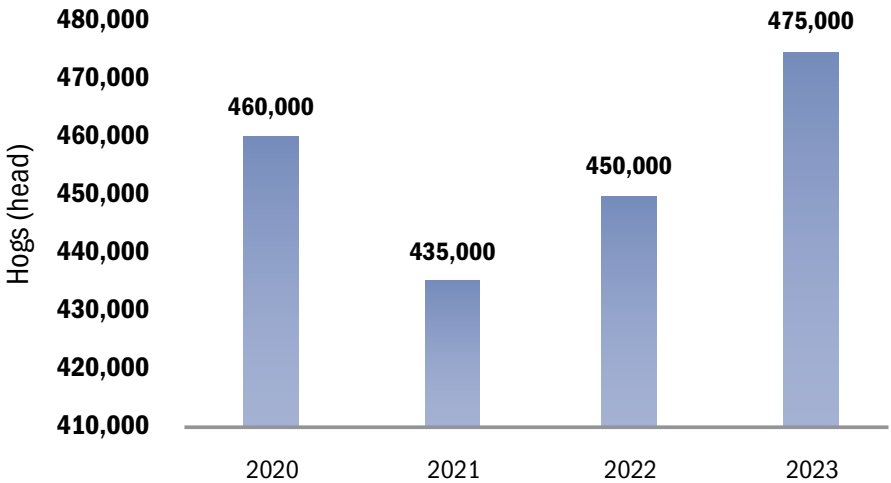
Top Hog Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|------------|--------|------|
| 1. | Muhlenberg | 50,011 | Head |
| 2. | Graves | 29,824 | Head |
| 3. | Todd | 24,564 | Head |
| 4. | Warren | 24,324 | Head |
| 5. | Hardin | 24,176 | Head |



- In 2023, there were 103,000 sows that farrowed.
- The average pigs per litter in the state of Kentucky is 10.47.
- Kentucky's pig crop was over 1 million head.

KY Hog Inventory Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA Hogs and Pigs Report 2023

SHEEP

- Kentucky is currently home to 75,000 head of sheep and lambs.
- Kentucky ranks 23rd in the nation in sheep inventory.
- 56,000 of these sheep are being used for breeding, and 19,000 are market animals.
- In 2023, 11,000 sheep in Kentucky were being raised for wool production.

Top Sheep Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|--------------|-------|------|
| 1. | Hart | 3,411 | Head |
| 2. | Mercer | 2,723 | Head |
| 3. | Pulaski | 2,711 | Head |
| 4. | Breckinridge | 2,582 | Head |
| 5. | Warren | 2,567 | Head |



Source: USDA NASS
USDA Sheep and Goat Report 2024

GOATS

- Kentucky ranks 9th in the nation for goat production.
- Kentucky is currently home to 64,300 head of goats and kids.
- 59,000 of these goats are meat goats, and 5,300 are used for milk production.
- As of the 2022 census, there were 3,524 goat farms in Kentucky.

Top Meat Goat Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|------------|-------|------|
| 1. | Warren | 2,556 | Head |
| 2. | Crittenden | 2,058 | Head |
| 3. | Barren | 1,001 | Head |
| 4. | Pulaski | 916 | Head |
| 5. | Nelson | 827 | Head |

Source: USDA NASS
USDA Sheep and Goat Report 2024

CORN

- As of 2022, corn is Kentucky's 1st ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$1.4 billion.
- Kentucky ranks 13th in the nation in corn production.
- In 2023, Kentucky planted 1.6 million acres of corn, 1.5 million of these acres were harvested.

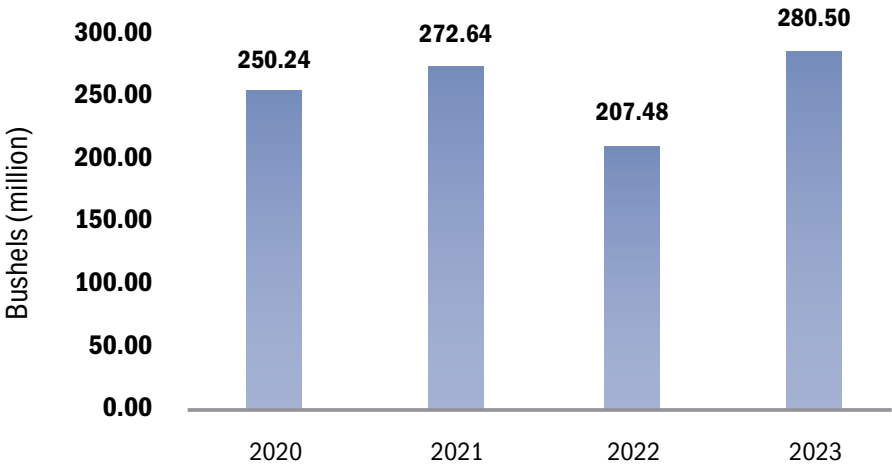
Top Corn Producing Counties (Million Bushels)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|----|
| 1. | Christian | 15.61 | Bu |
| 2. | Graves | 15.06 | Bu |
| 3. | Union | 14.46 | Bu |
| 4. | Henderson | 14.32 | Bu |
| 5. | Daviess | 12.35 | Bu |



- Kentucky produced over 280 million bushels of corn, averaging 187 bushels per acre.
- In 2023, 80,000 acres of corn silage was harvested averaging 22 tons per acre, totaling just over 1.7 million tons.

KY Corn Produced Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA State Agriculture Overview 2023

SOYBEANS

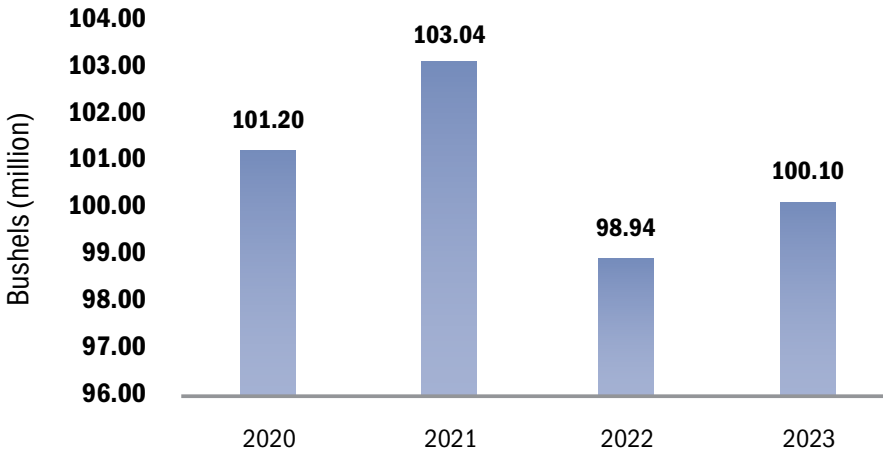
- As of 2022, soybeans are Kentucky's 3rd ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$1.3 billion.
- Kentucky ranks 14th in the nation in soybean production.
- In 2023, Kentucky planted 1.83 million acres of soybeans, and 1.82 million acres were harvested.

Top Soybean Producing Counties (Million Bushels)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|------|----|
| 1. | Henderson | 4.87 | Bu |
| 2. | Daviess | 4.69 | Bu |
| 3. | Christian | 4.66 | Bu |
| 4. | Graves | 4.64 | Bu |
| 5. | Union | 3.91 | Bu |

- Kentucky produced over 100 million bushels of soybeans, averaging 55 bushels per acre.
- In general, most Kentucky producers maintain either a soybean-corn or soybean-corn-winter wheat rotation.

KY Soybean Production Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA State Agriculture Overview 2023
University of Kentucky Soybean Management in Kentucky

WHEAT

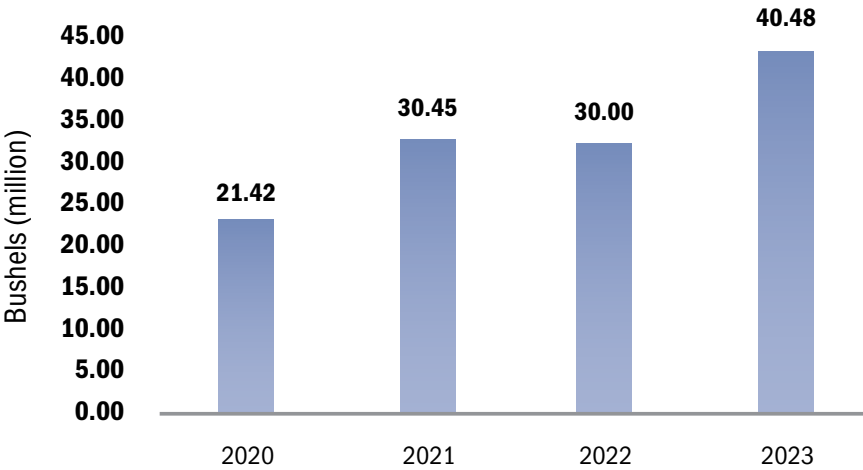
- As of 2022, wheat is Kentucky's 10th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$218 million.
- Kentucky ranks 16th in the nation in wheat production.
- In 2023, Kentucky planted 610,000 acres of wheat, and 460,000 acres were harvested.

Top Wheat Producing Counties (Million Bushels)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|------|----|
| 1. | Christian | 5.03 | Bu |
| 2. | Logan | 4.62 | Bu |
| 3. | Todd | 2.88 | Bu |
| 4. | Simpson | 2.41 | Bu |
| 5. | Warren | 1.95 | Bu |

- Kentucky produced over 40 million bushels of wheat, averaging 88 bushels per acre.
- The largest production year occurred in 2013, when Kentucky farmers produced 45.8 million bushels of winter wheat.

KY Wheat Production Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA State Agriculture Overview 2023
Kentucky Small Grain Association

TOBACCO

- As of 2022, tobacco is Kentucky's 9th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$240 million.
- Kentucky ranks 2nd in the nation in tobacco production.
- In 2023, Kentucky harvested 36,800 acres of tobacco.

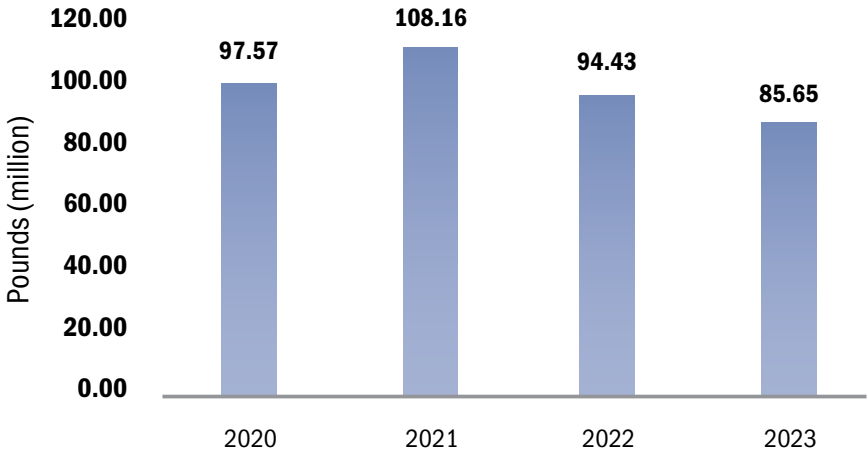
Top Tobacco Producing Counties (Million Pounds)

| | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|------|
| 1. | Christian | 17.19 | Lbs. |
| 2. | Calloway | 5.93 | Lbs. |
| 3. | Barren | 5.87 | Lbs. |
| 4. | Todd | 5.29 | Lbs. |
| 5. | Green | 3.44 | Lbs. |



- Kentucky produced over 85 million pounds of tobacco, averaging 2,327 pounds per acre.
- Despite a declining grower base, tobacco companies have had access to adequate leaf supplies in recent years to meet their needs in a shrinking market.

KY Tobacco Production Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA State Agriculture Overview 2023
University of Kentucky Tobacco Update

HAY

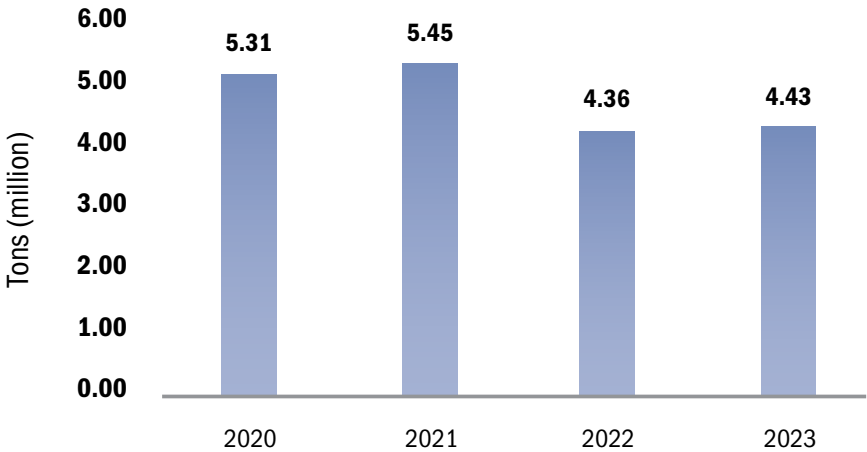
- As of 2022, hay is Kentucky's 6th ranking commodity, with cash receipts over \$326 million.
- Kentucky ranks 9th in the nation in hay production.
- In 2023, Kentucky harvested 1.9 million acres of hay and 90,000 acres of alfalfa hay.

Top Hay Producing Counties

| | | | |
|----|---------|---------|------|
| 1. | Barren | 110,202 | Tons |
| 2. | Pulaski | 86,764 | Tons |
| 3. | Casey | 76,608 | Tons |
| 4. | Grayson | 75,329 | Tons |
| 5. | Marion | 74,108 | Tons |

- Kentucky produced over 4.1 million tons of hay excluding alfalfa, averaging 2.1 tons per acre.
- Kentucky produced over 270,000 tons of alfalfa hay, averaging 3 tons per acre.

KY Hay Production Over Time



Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service
USDA State Agriculture Overview 2023


FORESTRY

- As of 2023, the overall economic contribution for the forest sector remained steady, approximately \$13 billion.
- 2022 encountered significant downturns in lumber prices across all species. A portion of these losses were recovered in 2023.
- Like many others, the industry is suffering from a worker shortage and many mills are low on inventory.
- 117 counties work to harvest timber and deliver it to the 673 wood, paper, and paper-converting industries located in 114 counties throughout Kentucky.
- As of 2023, there are 28,004 jobs in the forest sector and an estimated 57,275 jobs in the forestry industry.

Source: University of Kentucky 2023 Economic Situation and 2024 Outlook
University of Kentucky 2022-23 Forestry Economic Report

HORTICULTURE

- As of 2023, input costs remained up sharply for most specialty crops, especially labor, pesticides, and capital items.
- Cash receipts for fruit are estimated at \$24 million, vegetables at \$55 million, and nursery and greenhouse crops at \$120 million. All of these are at or near record levels of sales for Kentucky.
- As 2024 progressed, strong competitive pressures will continue from outside of the U.S. in the produce market, challenging many of the wholesale market outlets for Kentucky farms.
- Labor costs are a big constraint in this sector, accounting generally for 30-40% of production costs for most produce.



Source: University of Kentucky 2023 Economic Situation
and 2024 Outlook

OUR MISSION

Kentucky Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization dedicated to serving our membership family and their communities. As the Voice of Agriculture, we identify problems, develop solutions, promote economic success, and enhance the quality of life for all.

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU

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