



Soybean Farming

ACH12-24/March 2015

A \$38.7 billion industry, 10 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales.

Ten states...

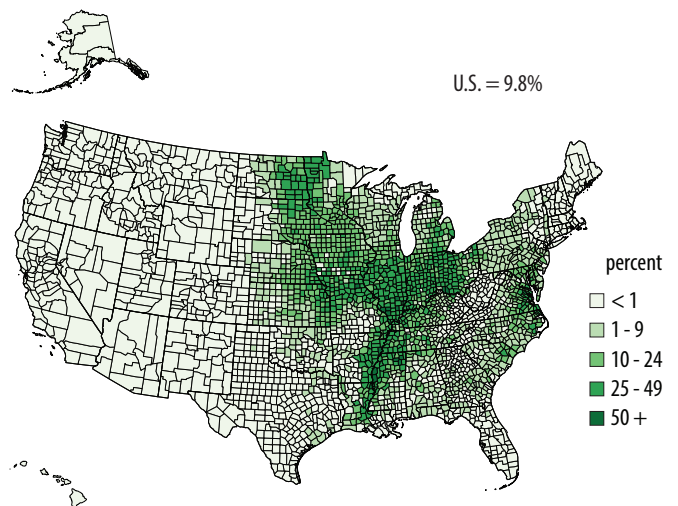
... accounted for 77 percent of U.S. soybean sales in 2012.

Top States in Sales (\$ billions)

Iowa	5.4
Illinois	5.0
Minnesota	3.8
Indiana	3.0
Ohio	2.7
Nebraska	2.5
Missouri	2.0
North Dakota	2.0
Arkansas	1.9
South Dakota	1.7

In 2012, the U.S. soybean industry had sales of \$38.7 billion, accounting for 10 percent of total U.S. agriculture sales. Soybeans are grown in the central and eastern part of the country, with production most concentrated in a small number of north central states. The 2012 Census of Agriculture provides a comprehensive picture of the soybean industry, as well as the oilseed and grain sector overall.

Soybean Sales as Percent of Agriculture Sales, by County, 2012



Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Industry Size, Value, and Location

Soybean sales were 91 percent higher in 2012 than in 2007, when the last agriculture census was conducted. During that time, number of farms with soybean sales increased 6 percent, and U.S. soybean production increased 13 percent, from 2.6 billion bushels to 2.9 billion. (Table 1)

Table 1
U.S. Soybean Farming, 2007 and 2012

	2007	2012	% Change
Sales (\$ billions)	20.3	38.7	+91
Farms with sales	285,089	301,343	+6
Production (billion bushels)	2.6	2.9	+13

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Iowa had nearly 7,000 more farms with soybeans than next-ranked Illinois, and also led in soybean production, with 407 million bushels produced in 2012. Illinois was second (371 million bushels), followed by Minnesota (294 million bushels). These three states accounted for 37 percent of both production and sales. North Dakota and Illinois each had four of the top ten counties in soybean sales.

Top Counties in Soybean Sales (\$ millions)	
Cass, ND	201.7
McLean, IL	190.6
Stutsman, ND	176.1
Champaign, IL	163.6
Richland, ND	150.9
Polk, MN	149.2
Brown, SD	149.1
Livingston, IL	148.2
Iroquois, IL	143.7
Barnes, ND	143.4
<i>Does not include counties withheld to avoid disclosing individual data.</i>	
<i>Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.</i>	

Farm Characteristics

Eighty-three percent of farms with soybean sales were family or individually operated, accounting for 67 percent of sales. Partnerships (including family partnerships) were 9 percent of operations and 19 percent of sales. (Table 2)

Table 2
Soybean Farms by Type of Operation, 2012

	% of Operations	% of Sales
Family/Individual	83	67
Partnership	9	19
Corporation	7	13
Other	1	1
All	100	100

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

Oilseed and Grain Farming (including soybeans)

In 2012, there were 369,332 U.S. farms with more than half of their income coming from sales of oilseed and grain crops, including soybeans. Of these specialized farms, 253,654 had soybean sales of \$35.5 billion, which accounted for 92 percent of the \$38.7 billion in total U.S. soybean sales.

Production Costs. Total production costs on specialized oilseed and grain farms were \$93.1 billion in 2012, a 75 percent increase over 2007, when production expenses were \$53.1 billion. The largest expenses were fertilizer, at \$18.8 billion, and cash rent for land and buildings, at \$13.4 billion. Per farm average costs were \$251,982, a 60 percent increase from 2007.

Producer Characteristics. The 2012 Census of Agriculture identified characteristics of those responsible for the day-to-day operation of oilseed and grain farms. These farmers were slightly younger than principal operators of all farms. Four percent were women, a smaller share than the 14 percent for all farms. Sixty-six percent reported farming as their primary occupation. Thirty-seven percent earned less than a quarter of their income from farming in 2012, while 13 percent earned their entire income from farming. (Table 3)

Table 3
Oilseed and Grain Producers: Key Characteristics, 2007 and 2012
(principal operators of farms specializing in oilseed and grain farming)

	2007	2012	All Farms 2012
	percent		
Gender			
Male / Female	95 / 5	96 / 4	86 / 14
Age			
Under 45 years	19	19	16
45 to 64 years	53	52	51
65 years and older	28	29	33
Primary Occupation			
Farming / Other	66 / 34	66 / 34	48 / 52
Percent of Income from Farming			
< 25%	40	37	70
25% to 49%	14	13	8
50% to 74%	18	19	9
75% to 99%	17	18	7
100%	11	13	6
Average Age (years)	56.1	56.6	58.3

Principal operator is the person responsible for day-to-day operation of the farm. A farm "specializing in oilseed and grain production" has more than half of its sales come from that commodity.

Source: USDA NASS, 2012 Census of Agriculture.

To learn more about soybean farming, the oilseeds and grain sector, the 2012 Census of Agriculture, and how to access national, state, and county data, go to:

www.agcensus.usda.gov