

## Report: United States lost 11,630 farms in 2012

USDA: Nation lost 11,630 farms, 3 million acres of farmland in 2012; Kansas farms held steady

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WICHITA, Kan. (AP) -- The United States now has nearly 2.2 million farms after losing 11,630 farms last year, according to a government report released Tuesday.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service's annual snapshot of farms also pegs the total land in U.S. farms at 914 million acres. That is 3 million acres fewer acres than last year. The average farm size is 421 acres.

In Kansas, however, the numbers remained unchanged with 65,500 farms and 46 million acres. The average Kansas farm size also remained unchanged at 702 acres.

While the overall number of farms declined nationally, the number of the biggest farms, those with \$500,000 or more in sales, jumped by 8.6 percent to 145,190.

Small farms, those with fewer than \$10,000 in sales, fell by 2.5 percent to 1.17 million.

The numbers for farms in other size categories increased by roughly 1 or 2 percent.

The numbers of livestock operations of all types dwindled last year amid a widespread drought that drove up the costs of feed. Beef cow operations were down 1 percent to 729,000; milk cow operations fell 3 percent to 58,000; hog operations shrunk 1 percent to 68,300; and sheep operations dropped 1 percent to 79,500.

The government defines a farm as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced or sold. Land in farms consists of agricultural land used for crops, pasture or grazing.

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