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## Horticulture contributes to Vernon County diversity

Vernon County sales of Christmas trees, fruits and vegetables, greenhouse, nursery and floriculture products total \$6.1 million. Landscape and grounds maintenance businesses create additional full-time jobs and many seasonal jobs.

## Local food sales account for \$2.7 million to economy

More and more Vernon County farmers sell directly to consumers from roadside stands, farmers' markets, auctions and pick-your-own operations, with 237 farms generating \$2,689,000 in local food sales.

## Farmers are stewards of 68% of the county's land

Vernon County farmers own and manage 345,892 acres, or 68.3 percent, of the county's land. This includes cropland, rangeland, pasture, tree farms and farm forests. As stewards of the land, farmers use conservation practices, such as crop rotation, nutrient management and integrated pest management, to protect environmental resources and provide habitat for wildlife.



University of Wisconsin-Extension

University of Wisconsin-Extension is part of the local and statewide network of organizations and agencies that support Wisconsin's \$88.3 billion agriculture industry. A recent statewide survey of nearly 1,000 agricultural service providers from throughout Wisconsin found that UW-Extension helps enhance economic impact by improving agribusiness services to farmers, increasing agribusiness or farm profitability, expanding agribusiness networks, and helping to reduce agribusiness or farm environmental impacts.

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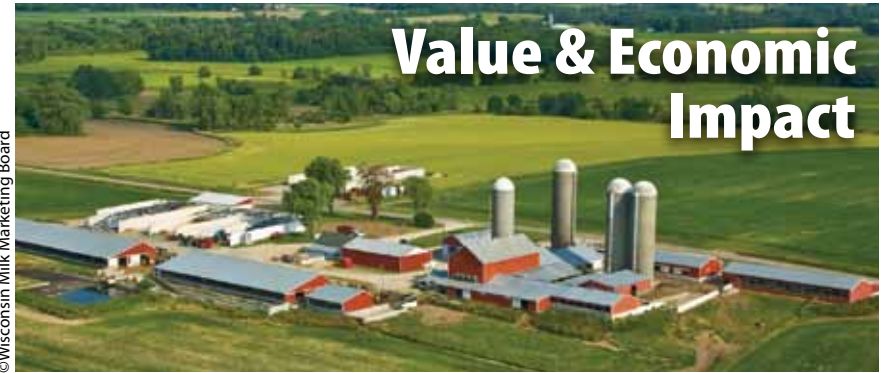
2014

AGRICULTURE – WORKING EVERY DAY FOR WISCONSIN

## Vernon County Agriculture:

# Value & Economic Impact

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**Agriculture works hard for Vernon County every day. Family-owned farms, food processors and agriculture-related businesses generate thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity while contributing to local income and tax revenues.**

Located in the unglaciated Driftless Area of southwest Wisconsin, Vernon County offers a mix of farming styles—from Amish farmers still milking by hand to grain farmers using their GPS units. It is home to the largest farmer-owned organic cooperative in North America.

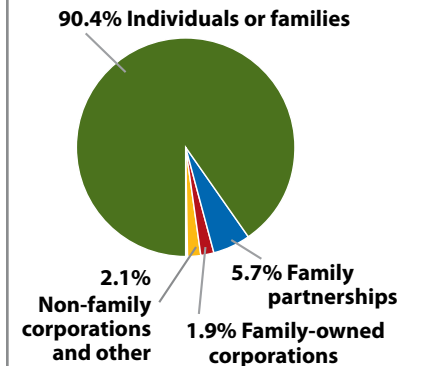
Small farms still make up the core of the county's agriculture. Dairy farms range from larger free-stall operations to smaller purebred Jersey and Holstein herds. Grazing remains popular among the growing number of ranchers raising beef. Poultry, sheep, goats, hay, corn and soybeans complement specialty crops, including grapes, vegetables and a few acres of tobacco and hops. Abundant deer, turkey and world-class trout streams make Vernon County a popular hunting and fishing destination.



## How important is agriculture?

- Agriculture provides **jobs for 5,114** Vernon County residents.
- Agriculture accounts for **\$801 million in economic activity**.
- Agriculture contributes **\$258 million** to the county's total income.
- Agriculture pays **\$11.7 million in taxes**. This figure does not include all property taxes paid to local schools.

## Who owns the farms?



## Agriculture provides 35% of Vernon County's jobs

Vernon County agriculture provides 5,114 jobs, or 35.1 percent, of the county's workforce of 14,578. Production jobs include farm owners and managers and farm employees. Agricultural service jobs include veterinarians, crop and livestock consultants, feed, fuel and other crop input suppliers, farm machinery dealers, barn builders and agricultural lenders, to name a few. Processing jobs include those employed in food processing and other value-added industries that support food processors. Every job in agriculture generates an additional 0.65 jobs in the county.

## Agriculture contributes \$258 million to county income

Vernon County agriculture accounts for \$258.1 million, or 27.7 percent, of the county's total income. This includes wages, salaries, benefits and profits of farmers and workers in agriculture-related businesses. Every dollar of agricultural income generates an additional \$1.10 of county income.

## Agriculture pumps \$800 million into local economy

Vernon County agriculture generates \$800.5 billion in economic activity, about 41 percent, of the county's total economic activity. Every dollar of sales from agricultural products generates an additional \$0.53 of economic activity in other parts of the county's economy.

### Here's how agriculture stimulates economic activity:

- The direct effect of agriculture equals \$522.9 million and includes the sale of farm products and value-added products.
- Purchases of agricultural and food-processing inputs, services and equipment add another \$223.9 million in economic activity. For example, this includes business-to-business purchases of fuel, seed, fertilizer, feed and farm machinery, as well as veterinary services, crop and livestock consultants and equipment leasing.
- This business-to-business activity then generates another \$53.8 million in economic activity when people who work in agriculture-related businesses spend their earnings in the local economy.

## Agriculture pays \$11.7 million in taxes

Economic activity associated with Vernon County farms and agriculture-related businesses generates \$11.7 million in local and state taxes. This figure does not include all property taxes paid to support local schools. If it did, the number would increase dramatically.

Table 1. Taxes paid by agriculture

Sales tax	\$2.7 million
Income tax	\$2.8 million
Property tax	\$3.7 million
Other	\$2.4 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11.7 million</b>

Table 2. Vernon County's top commodities (sales by dollar value, 2012)

1. Milk	\$75.0 million
2. Grain	\$57.8 million
3. Cattle & calves	\$30.3 million
4. Other crops & hay	\$6.5 million
5. Vegetables	\$5.1 million



## Dairy is a key Vernon County industry

Dairy farming is the major agricultural industry in Vernon County. On-farm production and milk sales account for \$133.6 million. Processing milk into dairy products generates another \$443.9 million.

- Nine plants process dairy products in Vernon County.
- On-farm milk production accounts for 958 jobs, and dairy processing accounts for 1,321 jobs.
- At the county level, each dairy cow generates \$4,437 in on-farm sales to producers.
- At the state level, each dairy cow generates over \$34,000 in total sales.



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