

NEW NASS ANALYSIS SHOWS IOWA AG STILL A POWERHOUSE

Written by Iowa Farm Bureau
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WEST DES MOINES, IOWA – Nov. 4, 2011 – Livestock production continues to provide important support to Iowa's economy. According to the recently-released Iowa Agricultural Statistics booklet, Iowa's cattle, hog and sheep producers' receipts grew by 20 percent last year, growing to \$8.32 billion.

Information in the 136-page book is compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) Iowa Field Office, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The book consists of five sections: general information, county information, crops, livestock and farm economics. It also lists several agriculture-related websites on the back cover.

Iowa's farm sector dominance carries across several commodities, from livestock to crops. According to the booklet, the state continues to rank number one in hogs in the United States, raising 29 percent of the nation's hogs. Iowa also leads the nation in raising layer hens (and eggs) and is in the top ten for raising cattle and calves (seventh) and sheep and lambs (tenth).

"The livestock and poultry industries are positive economic factors that contribute to job growth in Iowa's rural communities. Our farmers continue to be more efficient and productive in the face of rising feed and energy costs," said Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF) President Craig Lang. "They are poised to move forward, grow their businesses and continue to be national agricultural leaders."

Despite the cold and wet temperatures that led to planting and harvest delays last year, Iowa farmers continue to lead the nation in the production of corn and soybeans. May began with

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heavy rains, cold temperatures and widespread frost that caused soil erosion and planting delays. But, after dealing with the wettest June on record and snow during the second week of November, Iowa farmers raised the fourth-largest corn crop and the second-largest soybean crop on record.

The combination of strong livestock and crop sectors helped boost Iowa's overall ag economy, with Iowa farmers selling farm commodities worth \$23.2 billion in 2010, up 6 percent from the previous year. The number of Iowa farmers dropped just slightly to 92,400.

"Continued improvements in the general economy during 2010, in both the United States and the world, supported higher commodity prices for Iowa farmers and improvements in net farm income," explained Dave Miller, IFBF director of research and commodity services. "Higher commodity prices helped farmers to overcome higher input prices and poor growing conditions across a significant portion of the state in 2010."

Greg Thessen, director of the NASS Iowa office, said the booklet is an important resource for many different audiences, including farmers, bankers, insurance agents, agribusinesses and more.

"This book wouldn't be possible if farmers didn't participate in our surveys that gather this information. The data not only offers historical perspective, but helps them as they plan for the next season and the future," said Thessen.

Iowa Farm Bureau publishes the book for Iowa Agricultural Statistics. No public funds are used to publish the book.

The book costs \$12 and can be ordered from the Marketing and Communications Division, Iowa Farm Bureau, 5400 University Avenue, West Des Moines, Iowa 50266. In addition, a CD-version of the document is available for purchase for \$10. Checks should be made payable to the Iowa Farm Bureau.

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