

2015 NASS Survey Results



In 2015, Pennsylvania led the U.S. in the number of farms selling directly to consumers, with more than 6,000 operations engaged in direct-to-consumer sales. This was one of many findings from data collected by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in a first-ever Local Food Marketing Practices Survey. With a primary focus of producing benchmark statistics on the number of farms that market food directly, the value of these direct sales, and the marketing practices used in conjunction with direct sales, the survey was administered in all 50 states in 2015.

In 2015, farmers produced and sold \$8.7 billion of edible food commodities directly to consumers, retailers, institutions, and a variety of local food intermediaries such as distributors and wholesalers that market and sell locally branded products. Consumers accounted for 35 percent of these direct food sales, and retailers, 27 percent. Direct farm sales include both fresh foods and processed or value added products such as bottled milk, cheese, meat, jam, cider, wine, etc.

California, with \$2.9 billion in direct farm sales, accounted for 33 percent of the U.S. total. At the regional level, the seven-state southwestern region, of which California is part, had the largest share of direct sales (35 percent). Four of the top ten states in direct sales are among the 11 northeastern states that together accounted for 22 percent of the U.S. total." Michigan ranked number two, New York was third and Pennsylvania ranked fourth in the United States in Direct Farm Sales.

In addition, NASS found that "the majority (53 percent) of farms marketing food directly were located in metropolitan counties, and two-third (67%) of direct food sales were from farms located in metropolitan counties. More than 80 percent of farms selling food directly sold all of their directly marketed food within a 100-mile radius of the farm.