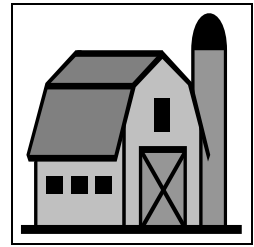


9. Agriculture

“Farming in Sullivan County involves some 311 business locations generating sales of \$23.4 million in 1997. The average value of land and buildings used in these businesses was \$441,768 for a total investment of approximately \$137,390,000 – roughly 6 to 8 major resorts by comparison. Agriculture produces much higher economic multipliers than any other sector of the County economy. Dairy production for example, enjoys a 2.29 income multiplier compared to 1.66 for construction, 1.48 for services, 1.41 for manufacturing and 1.40 for retail and wholesale trade.”¹



The growth in many parts of the County’s agricultural industry provides us with some very positive economic indicators. Total cropland in the County has increased from 30,511 to 34,813 acres. The number of broilers also increased from 771,438 to 1,208,366 between 1992 and 1997, and there were also increases in the number of cows and horses raised as well. The average size of the County’s farms has also increased from 183 acres in 1992 to 187 acres in 1997, and has been on the rise since the late 1970’s. This reflects the economies of scale afforded in running larger farming operations.

According to 1997 numbers, the majority of the farms in the County fall in the 50-499 acre size, with 125 farms in the 50-179 acre range and 83 in the 180-499 acre range. Three (3) farms in 1997 were operating on 1,000 acres of land or more. As of 1998, the Town of Delaware led all towns in percentage of land active in agriculture with 26.75%, followed by Callicoon (17.63%) and Cohecton (13.56%).

The Sullivan County Legislature through its Division of Planning and Community Development (working jointly with Cornell Cooperative Extension) has implemented a number of innovative programs to support the agricultural industry in Sullivan County. The first of these initiatives was the 1998 Agri-Business Revolving Loan Fund (\$600,000 loan pool) program followed by an IDA Agri-Business Tax Abatement Program. In 2001, a full-time Agri Economic Development position was created in the County to provide direct support to the County’s agri-businesses. In 2002, a new \$200,000 Agri-Business Micro-Enterprise Revolving Loan Fund was created to assist smaller agricultural enterprise. In addition to traditional agriculture, the County has two of the largest Foie Gras producers in the United States, a large alpaca farm, numerous organic farms and several cheese producers.

In 1999 the Sullivan County Division of Planning and Community Development, in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension, released its *Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan*, aimed at the continued protection of many of the County’s agricultural districts as part of its smart growth initiative. This strategy, along with innovative agri-business programs, will continue to keep agriculture a very important component of Sullivan County’s economy.



¹ Source: 1999 Sullivan County Agricultural Development and Farmland Protection Plan.

Land Area in Active Agriculture, 1998 Sullivan County, New York

Municipality	Square Miles	Percent of Town Land Area	Percent of Total County Land Area
Sullivan County	1,011.3	57.8	5.7%
Bethel Town	93.5	9.8	10.5%
Callicoon Town	49.6	8.8	17.6%
Cochecton Town	38.1	5.2	13.6%
Delaware Town	35.1	9.4	26.7%
Fallsburg Town	79.2	3.6	4.5%
Forestburgh Town	56.7	NA	NA
Fremont Town	51.4	4.8	9.4%
Highland Town	50.6	NA	NA
Liberty Town	81.9	7.8	9.5%
Lumberland Town	50.4	NA	NA
Mamakating Town	100.0	2.0	2.0%
Neversink Town	86.9	2.7	3.1%
Rockland Town	97.3	1.6	1.6%
Thompson Town	90.5	NA	NA
Tusten Town	50.2	NA	NA

Notes:

NA - Not Available

Source: Agricultural and Farmland Protection Plan. Prepared by Sullivan County Division of Planning & Community Development.

Agricultural Values, 1978 - 1997

Sullivan County, New York

	1978	1982	Year 1987	1992	1997
Market value of agricultural products sold					
Market value	\$35,021,000	\$45,857,000	\$22,676,000	\$20,470,000	\$23,364,000
Average per farm	\$73,729	\$99,638	\$60,799	\$66,894	\$75,126
Crops, incl. nursery and greenhouse crops	\$1,387,000	\$1,432,000	\$1,654,000	\$1,749,000	\$2,117,000
Livestock, poultry and their products	NA	NA	\$21,022,000	\$18,720,000	\$21,247,000
Value of land and buildings					
Average per farm	\$192,735	\$226,517	\$285,552	\$457,702	\$379,677
Average per acre	\$1,070	\$1,387	\$1,940	\$2,103	\$1,861
Estimated market value of all machinery and equipment					
Average per farm	NA	NA	\$31,801	\$51,044	\$62,091

Notes:

NA - Not Available

Source: 1978, 1982, 1987, 1992, & 1997 Census of Agriculture. Prepared by Sullivan County Division of Planning & Community Development

Farmland Statistics, 1978 - 1997

Sullivan County, New York

	Year				
	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997
Type of Farm					
Poultry farms	92	74	88	56	45
Dairy farms	194	164	115	100	72
All other	189	222	170	150	194
Irrigated land					
Farms	NA	NA	12	16	19
Acres	NA	NA	67	170	109
Number of Livestock					
Layers & pullet	2,400,000	2,750,000	560,089	(A)	(A)
Broilers	1,000	3,000	1,134,004	771,438	1,208,336
Turkeys	500	500	(A)	188	15
Cows	14,700	14,100	11,292	10,629	11,012
Horses	900	1,300	726	681	739
Acres of					
Corn (acres)	4,300	4,300	3,374	3,309	3,216
Hay (acres)	22,400	21,800	19,145	17,693	23,488
Pasture (acres)	25,100	25,200	20,652	17,096	16,514
Vegetables (acres)	114	141	174	(A)	157
Land in Orchards (acres)	106	112	69	76	101
Land use					
Total cropland (acres)	40,734	41,580	32,063	30,551	34,813
Permanent pasture (acres)	7,237	6,601	7,200	7,100	6,700
Total woodland (acres)	22,822	22,912	20,629	17,277	14,411
Other land (acres)	4,809	4,570	10,284	8,174	8,843

Notes:

NA - Not available.

(A) - Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.

Source: 1978, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 1997 Census of Agriculture. Prepared by Sullivan County Division of Planning & Community Development

Farmland Values, 1978 - 1997

Sullivan County, New York

	Year				
	1978	1982	1987	1992	1997
Farms					
Number of farms	475	460	373	306	311
Land in farms (acres)	75,602	75,663	62,975	56,002	58,067
Average size of farm (acres)	159	164	169	183	187
Number of farms by size					
1 to 9 acres	30	NA	26	24	27
10 to 49 acres	79	NA	55	43	50
50 to 179 acres	224	NA	171	110	125
180 to 499 acres	124	NA	101	78	83
500 to 999 acres	19	NA	16	16	23
1000 acres and more	0	NA	4	5	3
Number of farms by value and sales					
Less than \$2,500	144	97	111	80	79
\$2,500 to \$4,900	80	73	48	44	38
\$5,000 to \$9,999	45	69	47	38	39
\$10,000 to \$24,999	28*	36*	33	44	54
\$25,000 to \$49,999	46**	21**	29	14	21
\$50,000 to \$99,999	87***	24***	48	23	28
\$100,000 or more	45	62	57	63	52

Notes:

NA- Not available

*\$10,000 to \$19,999

**\$20,000 to \$39,999

***\$40,000 to \$99,999

Source: 1978, 1982, 1987, 1992, & 1997 Census of Agriculture. Prepared by Sullivan County Division of Planning & Community Development

