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Women Farming in NYS: Trends and comparisons over time

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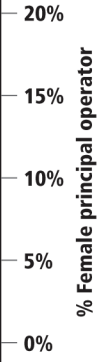
The 2012 Census of Agriculture reveals that U.S. farmers (principal operators) are older, more ethnically diverse, and less likely to be female than five years ago, trends that also hold true in New York State (NYS). While approximately one third of all NYS farm operators are women (33.5% in 2012), they comprise only 18% of "principal operators", that is, the person primarily responsible for daily farm operations. Female principal operators in NYS differ significantly from their male counterparts on several indicators, particularly in the size of farm they run and the average value of products sold. A number of programs across NYS exist to provide training and other resources to support women in agriculture, such as Annie's Project. In cooperation with USDA, Risk Management Agency (RMA), the Northeast Center for Risk Management, and Cornell Cooperative Extension, the New York Annie's' Project extension education team delivers risk management education and training aimed at empowering women in agriculture to become savvy business leaders and partners in today's farming industry. According to co-director Bonnie Collins, women farmers in NYS continue to be an underserved audience. "There is a critical need for education designed specifically for women farmers and to help them manage business risks and enhance the diversity and sustainability of their family farms and communities."

Female principal operators				
Number of farms	4,469	5,672	6,688	6,459
Avg. land in farms	109.5	93.6	88.6	93.6
Primary occupation farming	48%	56%	48%	54%
Average age	52.0	51.5	53.4	55.4
Average value of products sold	26,698	23,196	30,752	33,426
	11.7%	15.2%	18.4%	18.2%
Male principal operators				
Number of farms	33,795	31,583	29,664	29,079
Avg. land in farms	216.0	225.8	221.9	226.2
Primary occupation farming	55%	62%	55%	58%
Average age	53.0	54.6	56.8	57.5
Average value of products sold	83,186	94,553	142,023	178,913
	1997	**2002**	**2007**	**2012**



Additional Resources:

National Annie's Project: http://www.extension.iastate.edu/annie

New York Annie's Project: http://blogs.cornell.edu/anniesproject, or contact Bonnie Collins, bsc33@cornell.edu or David Cox, dgc23@cornell.edu

Cornell Small Farm Program: http://smallfarms.cornell.edu

Small Farm Statistics: https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/about/statistics-and-information-resources

Women, Food and Ag Network: http://wfan.org

2012 Census of Agriculture, Highlights, ACH12-3/May 2014.
Farm Demographics: U.S. Farmers by Gender, Age, Race, Ethnicity and More:
http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Online_Resources/Highlights/Highlights_Farm_Demographics.pdf

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