

Agriculture in Bedford County

Agriculture and Forestry is by far the largest land use in the County. It is also a powerful economic engine, **\$23,647,000 annually in farm sales alone**. According to a recently completed study by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, the total economic impact of agriculture and forestry in Bedford (includes secondary multiplier effects) was \$135,731,096 and the combined industries accounted for 2,889 jobs.

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Value (2007)</u>
Cattle and Calves	\$12,239,000
Milk	\$7,007,000
Other crops and Hay	\$1,593,000
Fruits/Berries	\$1,187,000
Nursery/Greenhouse	\$519,000
Grains (Corn, Wheat)	\$279,000
Vegetables	\$215,000
Horses/Ponies	\$213,000
Christmas Trees	\$47,000
Sheep and lambs	\$31,000
Hogs	\$30,000

**Bedford ranks 32nd among Virginia counties in cash receipts from agricultural product sales

Value of agricultural products sold direct to individuals for human consumption	
1997	\$154,000
2002	\$327,000
2007	\$565,000

Total Land Area	Land in Farms	% Land Area in Farms
486,329 acres	212,237 acres	44
 Average farm Size	149 acres	

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2007

State Rankings of Bedford Agriculture (among Virginia Counties)

All Cattle and Calves (52,031 head)	#4
Beef Cows (26,794 head)	#4
Milk Cows (2,049 head)	#10
Hay (47,333 acres)	#3
Horses (6,200 head)	#4
Goats (1,130 head)	#17
Orchards (261 acres)	#14
Grapes (25 acres)	#27

Sources: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2007
Virginia Agricultural Statistics Bulletin, 2007
2006 Equine Survey Report

Annual Economic Impact of Horses in Bedford (Care and Upkeep)

<u>Number of Horses</u>	<u>Care, \$/Horse</u>	<u>Total</u>
6,200	\$3,642.00	\$22,580,400

Source: 2006 Equine Survey Report

Forestry

The forest industry begins with the forestland owner. On average from 1986 to 2001, Bedford County landowners received \$3,750,334 annually for standing timber sold; 19th in the state.

Bedford Businesses dependent on agriculture:

- Farm Bureau
- Bedford Southern States Cooperative
- Bedford-Augusta Cooperative
- Moneta Farm Service
- Tractor Supply Company
- Royal Oak Farm
- Boone Tractor
- Powers Tractor and Equipment
- Robertson Equipment
- New London Tractor and Implement

- Springlake Livestock Market
- Farm Credit of the Virginias
- Aylor's Farm Store
- Coffee and Saunders Farm and Hardware
- Eco-Friendly Foods – meat processing facility
- Farm Building/Fencing Contractors (at least 3 known)
- Bedford Animal Hospital
- Lil Doc's Veterinary Service
- Equine Veterinarians (5)

Agriculture pays its way - the recently completed COCS study documents that residential development does not pay its way, but agriculture does.

Cost of Community Services Study – Bedford County FY 2004

	Residential	Commercial/Industrial	Agricultural
Land use ratio*	1.07	0.40	0.25

*Cost for each \$1 of revenue generated

Estimated Market Value of Land and Buildings, Dollars/Acre, Bedford

1987	\$1,007.00
1992	\$1,206.00
1997	\$1,943.00
2002	\$2,920.00
2007	\$4,727.00

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Farmer Characteristics

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>	
# Farms, total	1,289	1,428	
Farmer age group			
Under 25 years	--	10	
25-34 years	35	34	
35-44	157	166	
45-54	299	352	
55-59	168	185	
60-64	182	167	
65-69	156	175	
70+	292	340	
Average Age	59	59	

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture