

Profile of agriculture in Ontario County, NY

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Agriculture Resources

Location

Ontario County occupies the western portion of the Finger Lakes region, in Upstate New York. The topography ranges from nearly level land interrupted by glacial drumlins at the northern edge to rolling and then steep terrain to the south.

Soils

The northern Finger Lakes region is noted nationally for an abundance of fertile soil. Half of the Ontario County land area is classified as Prime Farmland (adequate moisture and drainage, adequate soil depth and texture, are not susceptible to erosion or flooding, and sustain high yield production with minimal fertilizer and energy requirements). More than 100,000 additional acres of farmland are highly productive, level to gently rolling, and are of statewide importance.

Soil Type	Total Acres	Percent of Land Area
Prime Farmland	206,693	50%
Unique Farmland	2,538	1%
Additional Farmland of Statewide Importance	102,669	25%
Total Acres of Important Farming Soils in Ontario County	311,900	76%

Source: Ontario County Agriculture Enhancement Plan, 2000

Growing season

- Frost free days - 140 to 180 days (varies due to elevation and proximity to Lake Ontario, Canandaigua Lake, and other small lakes)
- Average last frost is between April 30 and May 10
- Average first frost is between September 30 and October 10

Precipitation

Annual precipitation averages from 33 to 36 inches, with growing season precipitation averaging 16 inches. Droughts are unusual, as are floods.

Summary

Farmland resources in Ontario County are of the highest quality in the Northeast US, combining favorable precipitation with excellent fertility, tilth, and moderate or negligible slopes. Climate provides a lengthy growing season, suitable for many different temperate annual, perennial, vine, and orchard crops. These conditions support diverse dairy, beef, and other livestock enterprises as well (see Agriculture by the Numbers below).



Product	2012 Sales	Percent of Total
Dairy Products	85,893,000	60%
Vegetables	11,257,000	12%
Grains & dry beans	15,257,000	10%
Cattle & calves	14,335,000	10%
Nursery & greenhouse	3,367,500	2%
Other Products	8,980,000	6%
TOTAL SALES	\$142,980,000	

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, New York Agricultural Statistics Service

Agriculture Business Resources

Ontario County rates in the top 10 percent of the "Best Places to Farm" in the United States

Ontario County and nine other Upstate NY counties are considered among the nation's most fiscally robust agriculture communities in a report produced by Farm Futures magazine in April 2009.

To develop these rankings of Best Places to Farm, Farm Futures magazine analyzed agriculture census data from 1987 to 2012 to calculate countywide financial performance, including return on assets, profit margin, asset turnover and average net farm income. 2944 counties were ranked by all four factors, with the average determining the final position on the list.

Agriculture Markets

Urban markets

- Ontario County is adjacent to Rochester, NY and Monroe County, a metropolitan region with a population of 1.2 million.
- Ontario County population is 109,707(2014 estimate)
- Nearby urban markets include Syracuse (60 miles) and Buffalo / Niagara Falls (80 miles)

Ground transportation routes

- I-90 NYS Thruway (northern Ontario County)
- Routes 5 & 20 (central Ontario County)
- Route 14 (eastern Ontario County)

Current agriculture income

Cash Receipts from Farm Marketing (2012): \$43.64 million aggregate farm income

Agriculture community

Approximately 853 farms of all scales - small, large, part-time, full-time, organic, conventional.

On average farms earn a total \$32,366 annually (354 farms) from farm related sources.

Approximately 1,600 people are employed on farms or jobs directly tied to farm operations.



Agriculture infrastructure

Agriculture suppliers

American Equipment LLC (Farmington)
Blowers Agra Service (Hall)
Coryn Farm Supplies (Canandaigua)
Blazey Tractor (Canandaigua)
Country Max (Farmington)
Tractor Supply Company (Canandaigua, Geneva)
Lakeland Equipment (Hall)
Monroe Tractor (Canandaigua)
Seedway (Hall)
Millers True Value (Geneva)
Phelps Supply (Phelps)
Phelps Mercantile (Phelps)
Runnings (Canandaigua)
Castle Harvester Metal Fabricators (Seneca Castle)

Crop processing and storage

Seneca Foods (Geneva)
C.R. Zornow (Seneca Castle)
J.D. Rugenstein & Sons (Phelps)
Great Lakes Kraut (Shortsville)
Sheppard Grain (Phelps)
Thompson Grain (Manchester)
J.D. Rugenstein & Sons (Phelps)

Agriculture Financial Lenders

Farm Credit East (Phelps)
USDA Farm Service Agency (Canandaigua)
Community Bank (Geneva)
Lyons National (Geneva)
Bank of the Finger Lakes (Geneva)

Livestock Marketing

Finger Lakes Livestock

Academic and research institutions

NYS Agriculture Experiment Station (Geneva, NY): The leading state institution for research and development of solutions in Entomology, Food Science & Technology, Horticultural Sciences, Plant Pathology, Integrated Pest Management, and Plant Genetic Resources.

Cornell University Agriculture & Food Technology Park (the "Tech Farm"): research and development park, fostering enterprise development agriculture, food science, and bio-based industries.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County: Dissemination of agriculture research through specialized production teams (Dairy, Field Crops, Vegetable, Small Farms, Greenhouse); agriculture economic development coordination; pesticide certification; farm business development.



Agriculture / land use planning entities

Ontario County Department of Planning and Research
Ontario County Agriculture Enhancement Board
Ontario County Farm Bureau

Tourism and community resources

NY Wine and Culinary Center
Canandaigua Farmers Market
Geneva Farmers Market
Victor Farmers Market
Canandaigua VA Medical Center Farmers Market
Clifton Springs Farmers Market
Shortsville Farmers Market
Cheshire Union Farmers Market
Honeoye Village Market
Wineries, Breweries
Robotic milking systems
Hop yards
Multiple agriculture and food festivals

Agriculture by the numbers in Ontario County

Dairy cows: 19,598 milk cows producing 85,893,000 lbs. of milk annually
Grain corn: 33,463 acres producing 4,298,517 bushels annually
Silage corn: 17,973 acres producing 304,685 tons annually
Soybeans: 26,917 acres producing 1,121,519 bushels annually
Wheat: 7,769 acres producing 475,341 bushels annually
Vegetable farms: 79 farms covering 4,126 acres
Orchard-based farms: 68 farms covering 1,198 acres
 Apple farms: 16 farms, 543 acres
 Apricots: 2 farms, acreage n/a
 Sweet cherries: 3 farms, n/a
 Tart cherries: 2 farms, 34 acres
 Grapes: 54 farms, 912 acres
 Peaches: 5 farms, n/a
 Pears: 5 farms, 4 acres
 Nut farms: 7 farms, 42 acres
Berries (all): 20 farms, 65 acres (all brambles, blueberries, strawberries)
 Raspberries: 12 farms, 12 acres
 Strawberries: 15 farms, 45 acres
Nurseries and greenhouses (foliage, potted flowers): 30 farms, 86 acres and 184,432 sq. feet enclosed
Christmas trees: 23 farms, 222 acres
Maple syrup: 29 farms, 3,970 gallons
Grain storage: 172 farms, storing 5,217,444 bushels

Source: 2012 Census of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture, New York Agricultural Statistics Service



ANNUALVALUE OF SALES BY COMMODITY

Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	\$51,232,000
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	\$11,257,000
Fruits, tree nuts, and berries	\$3,608,000
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	\$3,675,000
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	\$65,000
Other crops and hay	\$7,398,000
Cattle and calves	\$14,335,000
Milk and other dairy products from cows	\$85,893,000
Sheep, goats, and their products	\$784,000
Horses, ponies	\$506,000
Value of equine inventory	\$18,900,000

TOP LIVESTOCK INVENTORY ITEMS

Cattle and calves	47,890
Layers	3,594
Broilers and other meat type chicken	2,441

TOP CROP ITEMS (acres)

Forage - hay, grass silage	40,685
Corn for grain	33,463
Corn for silage	17,973
All Wheat for grain	7,769
Soybeans	26,917

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, United States Department of Agriculture, New York Agricultural Statistics Service

