

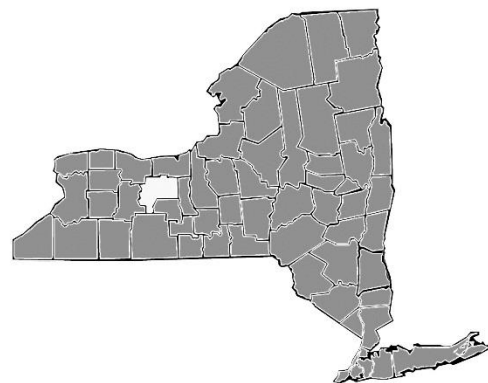
Profile of Agriculture in Ontario County, NY

October 2018 Updated December 2022

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. 39% 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 83,000 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	159,910	39%
Prime if drained Farmland	67,130	16%
Additional Farmland of Statewide Importance	83,406	20%
Total Acres of Important Farming Soils in Ontario County	297,446	72%

Source: Ag Enhancement Plan 2018

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 May through September precipitation averages 16 inches. Rainfall is evenly distributed throughout the growing season, however, periods of drought during the summer season can often endanger crops.

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.

There is a diversity in types of farms in Ontario County. The farms include dairy, beef, corn (silage and grain), soybeans, wheat, vegetable farms (cabbage and mixed vegetables), orchards (apples, stone fruits, and some nuts), berries (brambles, blueberries, and strawberries), vineyards, nurseries, greenhouses, and high tunnels, Christmas trees, maple syrup and grain storage.

833 farms of all sizes with total sales \$205,160,000

56% of Ontario County farms earn more than \$10,000.00 annually (468)

27% (225) Ontario County farms hire employees.

Market Value of Products Sold

Crop Sales: \$ 63,250,000.00
Livestock, poultry and their products: \$141,910,000.00
(milk from cows-\$120,567,000)
Rank 4th in state

Total Sales: \$205,160,000.00

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2017 Census of Agriculture-Ontario County

Agriculture Markets

Urban markets

- Ontario County is adjacent to Rochester, NY and Monroe County, a metropolitan region with a population of 747,642 (July 1, 2017) Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/monroecountynynewyork>
- Ontario County population is 109,899 (July 1, 2017) Source: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ontariocountynynewyork>
- 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) Route 96

Agriculture infrastructure

Agriculture suppliers include: Monroe Tractor, Landpro, Blowers Agra Service, Coryn Farm Supply, Country Max, Tractor Supply, Seedway, Phelps Supply, Phelps Mercantile, Runnings, Castle Harvester Metal Fabricators, Millers True Value

Crop processing and storage include: Seneca Foods, Great Lakes Kraut (leaving NYS), Sheppard Grain, The DeLong Co. Inc. (formerly Thompson Grain), C.R. Zornows, J.D. Rugenstein & Sons

Agriculture Financial Lenders include Lyons National Bank, Community National Bank, Bank of the Finger Lakes, Farm Credit East, USDA Farm Service Agency

Livestock marketing: Finger Lakes Livestock

Academic and research institutions include: AgriTech (Formerly NYS Ag 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 (Northwest NY Dairy, Field Crops, Livestock, and Field Crops Team, (includes Farm Business Management and Small Farms), Cornell Vegetable Program, and Finger Lakes Grape Program (Viticulture) and county staff (agriculture economic development coordination, natural resources, general agriculture), and Harvest New York.

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 include New York Kitchens (Formerly New York and Wine Culinary Center), Wegmans Organic Farm, many local Farmers’ Markets (in season), multiple agriculture and food festivals, Wineries, and Breweries, robotic milking systems, farm bio-digesters, and hop yards.