

### Dutchess County Agriculture

Dutchess County agriculture comprises over 170,000 of the county's 512,000 total acres (30%). Our farms produce a total of \$44.8 million in goods and are a large part of the county's \$438 million. Agriculture is one of the county's largest industries; its diversity and impact on the local economy is substantial.



Soukup Farm. Photo credit Sean Carroll

### Agriculture in Dover

The Town of Dover revised its Master Plan in 1993. The new plan placed most of the Town's agricultural land in the Rural Residential District, which is the largest articulated district. This District specifically calls for open space preservation and cluster development, on the basis that too much development can overwhelm the land. The town of Dover has a substantial amount of both open space and active agricultural land. The majority of the open space land in the town of Dover is located in the northwest corner of the municipality, or in the river valley of both the Ten Mile River and the Swamp River.

In the open space portion of the master plan, the Town of Dover articulates several goals for protection of its active agricultural lands, including long-term conservation plans for the properties, active promotion of agricultural activities and agriculturally based business, and adopting regulations to limit development on prime agricultural soils.

The Town has also participated in two intermunicipal resource protection initiatives, a Harlem Valley aquifer study and a Route 22 corridor study. The recommendations of both studies include measures specifically designed to discourage development on important resources, and to concentrate development in existing population centers.

From 2008 to 2022, Dover saw an 11% increase in its number of Agricultural District parcels. The growth came from an increase in the amount of farm parcels from 163 to 181 over the thirteen years.

### A Closer Look

Communities in Dutchess County contain a diverse range of farm enterprises, from dairy, livestock and field crops to horses, orchards, and vineyards. Many of the farms produce a variety of goods as well. For example, some dairy farms also produce hay or grains. However, if the majority of the farm's income is generated from dairy, dairy is considered the enterprise. Farm enterprise types were developed from documentation provided by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets; they were then aggregated into larger categories for simplification.

Table 1. Farms and Acreage in Dover

Number of Farm Parcels	183
Average Size of Farm	72 acres
Land in Farms	13,087 acres
Total Land in Dover	36,025 acres
Percentage of Town in Farms	36%

Town of Dover

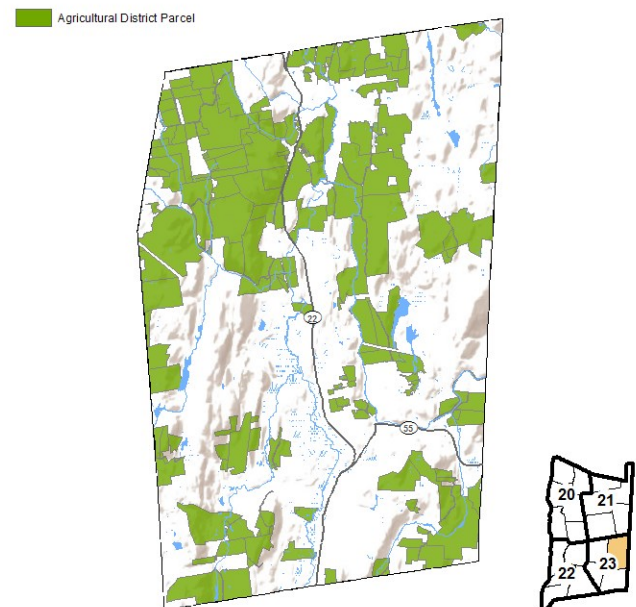


Figure 1. Map of Town of Dover in Agricultural District 23

It is important first to note that this data is based on farm *parcel* data collected, and therefore does not necessarily reflect the number of actual farms. For example, one farm could have one *or* several parcels.

Figure 2 illustrates the relative acreage distribution of farm enterprises in the town of Dover. The largest segment (by acreage) is *Beef and Livestock*, with farm operations on 4,310 acres of property. Farm property includes all the property tax parcels owned and/or operated on by a farm operation. Actual cropped or pasture area may be less than the area of the entire farm property. *Production Agriculture* is another particularly large agricultural segment in Dover, consisting of 4,234 acres.

*Specialty Crops*, though not at the top of the list, has a substantial percentage in the Town of Dover, totaling 1,059 acres. Dover is home to Crown Maple (Madava Farms) - a nearly 800 acre tree farm devoted to the production of maple syrup, which falls into this category of *Specialty Crops*.

Most farms in Dutchess County are small farms, grossing less than \$10,000 in annual sales. These farms also typically make fewer capital investments. Dover is not an exception. There are more farms with annual investments in the 'Below \$10,000' category than there are in the other 5 categories (see Figure 3).

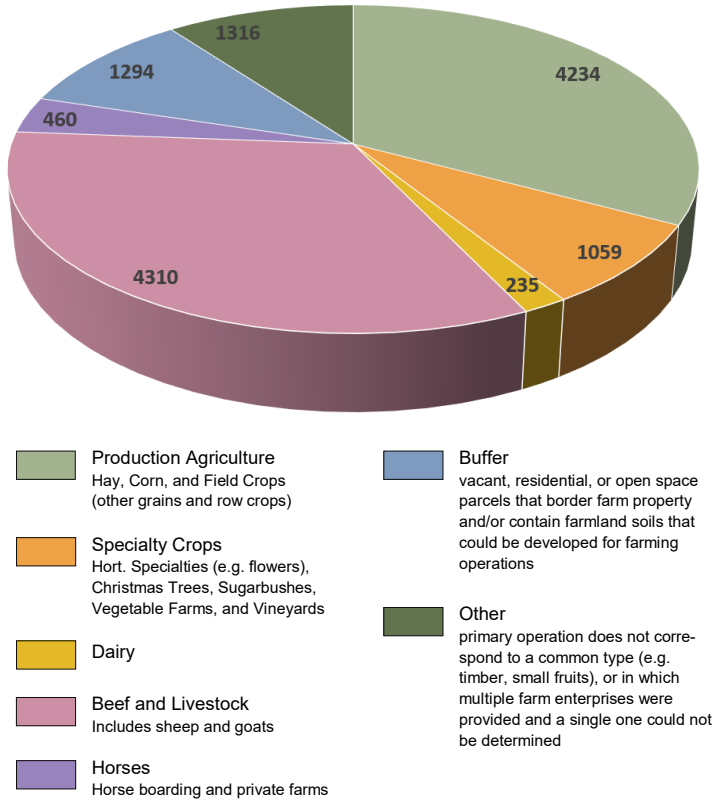


Figure 2. Acreage Distribution by Enterprise Category

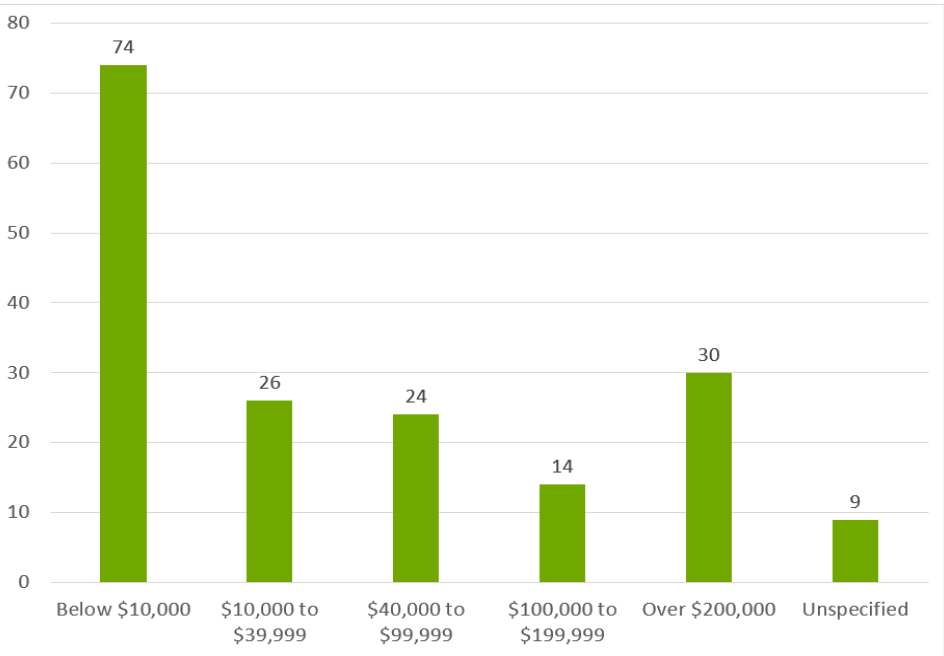


Figure 3. Number of Farm Parcels by reported Capital Investment

In terms of the economic benefits for Dutchess County and the region as a whole, small farms generate significant dollars that are then spent on investments (equipment, vet fees, etc.) that fuel the local economy. Larger farm operations, although fewer in number, generate higher gross sales and capital investment. A considerable number of Dover's farm parcels (50) had capital investments between \$10,000 and \$100,000, while 44 invested \$100,000 or more (Figure 3). These figures are important to consider when looking at the impact of agriculture in the county, as a large portion of these capital investments go back into the local economy.

**Sources:**

Agricultural District Recertification Process 2015 for 2016 Recertification. Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County. April 2016. Updated 2022.

Census and Demographics. Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. Retrieved from <http://co.dutchess.ny.us/countygov/departments/planning/plcensus.htm>, June 2015.

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