

East Fishkill, New York

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.



Fishkill Farms. Photo credit Sean Carroll

Agriculture in East Fishkill

East Fishkill is the site of the County's largest purchase of development rights project, the 402-acre Silver Ledge Farm located at the gateway intersection of Interstate 84 and the Taconic Parkway. The County's Open Space and Farmland Protection Matching Grant Program provided a match for that secured state funding provided by the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act Environmental Protection Fund Farmland Protection Program administered by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets. Likely as a result of these efforts, land in the proposed Agricultural District has increased by 520 acres between 2008 and 2022. This increase of nearly 8% represents a departure from the typical trend of decreasing agricultural land in the town.

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.

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. 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.

Figure 2 (reverse) illustrates the relative acreage distribution of farm enterprises in the town of East Fishkill. The largest segment (by acreage) is *Production Agriculture*, with farm operations on 3,179 acres of property. *Specialty Crops* is another particularly large agricultural segment in East Fishkill, consisting of 871 acres.

Table 1. Farms and Acreage in East Fishkill

Number of Farm Parcels	317
Average Size of Ag Parcel	24 acres
Land in Farms	7,175 acres
Total Land in East Fishkill	36,848 acres
Percentage of Town in Agricultural Use	19%

Town of East Fishkill

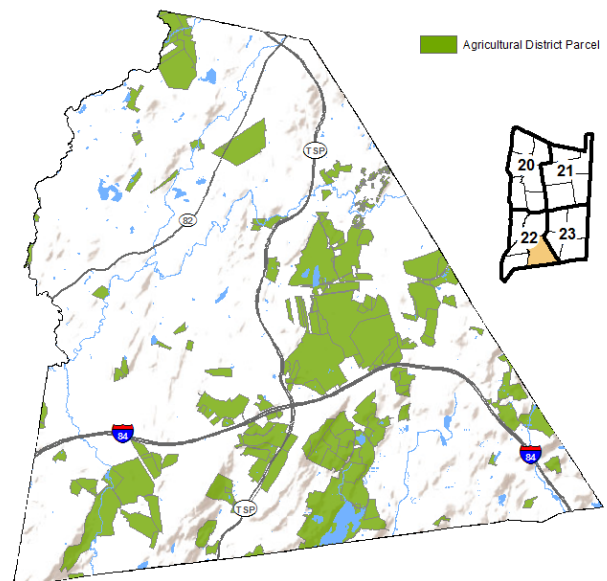


Figure 1. Map of Town of East Fishkill in Agricultural District 22

Most farms in Dutchess County are small farms, grossing less than \$10,000 in annual sales. These farms typically make fewer capital investments. East Fishkill is not an exception. There are far more farms with capital investments in the 'Below \$10,000' category than there are in any of the other 4 categories (see Figure 3).

The high number of farms in East Fishkill with less than \$10,000 in annual capital investment may be somewhat skewed by agricultural “buffer” properties, which are typically not in agricultural production and don’t generate sales nor require 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 East Fishkill’s farm parcels (53) had capital investments between \$10,000 and \$100,000, while 22 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.

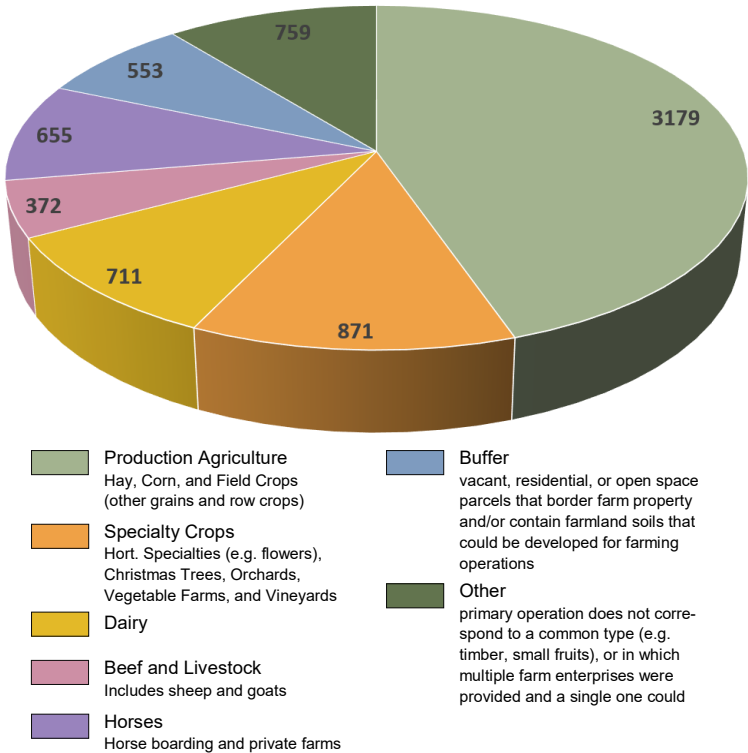


Figure 2. Acreage Distribution and Number of Farms by Enterprise Category

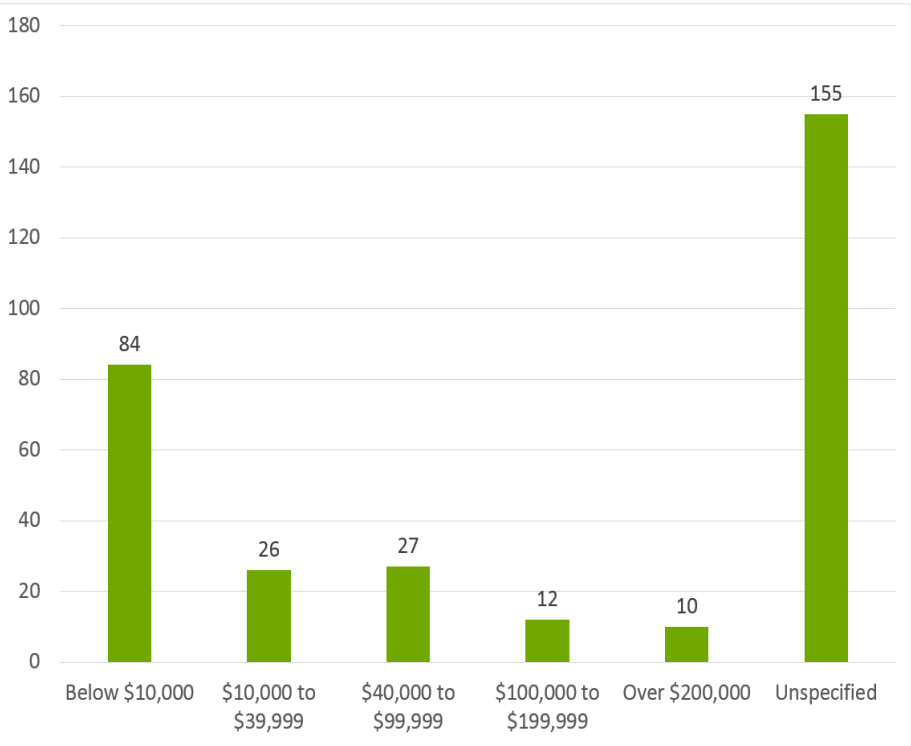


Figure 3. Number of Farms by reported Capital Investment



Photo: Sean Carroll

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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