

LaGrange, 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.



Sprout Creek Farm. Photo credit Sean Carroll

Agriculture in LaGrange

The Town of LaGrange is under significant residential and commercial development pressure because of its location on the Route 55 commuter corridor. Several of its major farms have already been converted to residential use and proposals for additional development are pending. At the same time, the Town is taking steps to concentrate development in an around its town center, Lagrangeville. As land for large subdivisions becomes scarce in the towns to the south, LaGrange represents an increasingly attractive alternative. The Town's 1987 master plan recommends low, very low and rural density in the areas where its Agricultural District parcels are located. To better manage growth in the town a master plan to create and focus development around a new town center is under way.

Land proposed for inclusion in the Agricultural District has decreased a considerable amount from the 2006 state recognized acreage as population has increased 7% from 2000 census estimates. However, LaGrange did gain 746 new acres in the Agricultural District between 2008 and 2022.

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.

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 side) illustrates the relative acreage distribution of farm enterprises in the town of LaGrange. The largest segment (by acreage) is *Production Agriculture*, with farming on 2,266 acres of property. *Dairy* is another particularly large agricultural enterprise in LaGrange, comprising 1,386 acres.

Table 1. Farms and Acreage in LaGrange

Number of Farm Parcels	226
Average Size of Ag Parcel	33 acres
Land in Farms	7,357 acres
Total Land in LaGrange	24,846 acres
Percentage of Town in Agricultural Use	30%

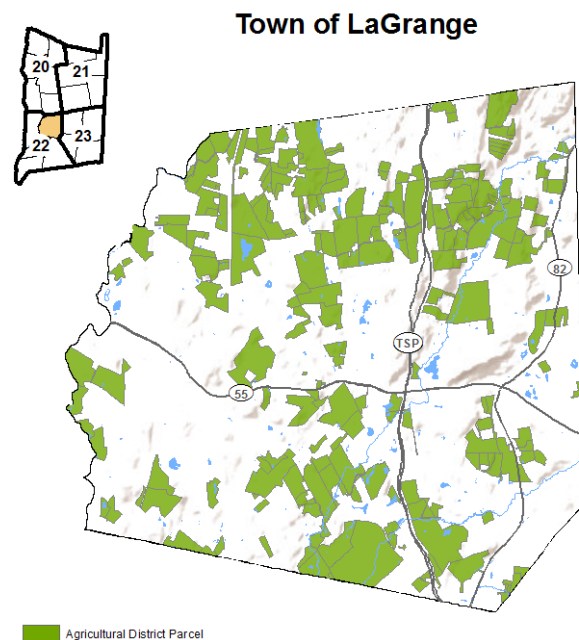


Figure 1. Map of Town of LaGrange in Agricultural District 22

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

The high number of farms in LaGrange with less than \$10,000 in annual sales and 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, but rather act as vacant or open space parcels that border farm property or could potentially be used for farming operations.

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 significant number of LaGrange's farm parcels (47) had capital investments between \$10,000 and \$100,000, while 29 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.

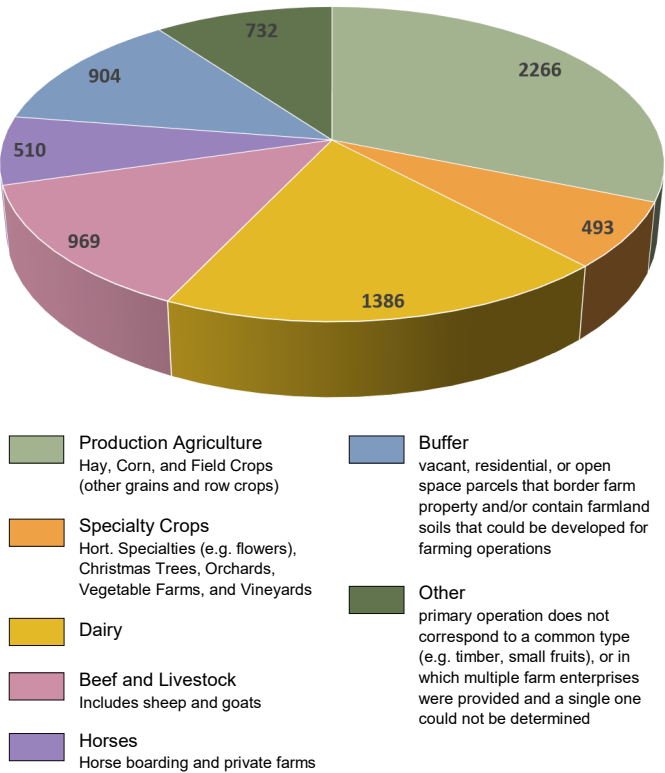


Figure 2. Acreage distribution by Farm Enterprise Category

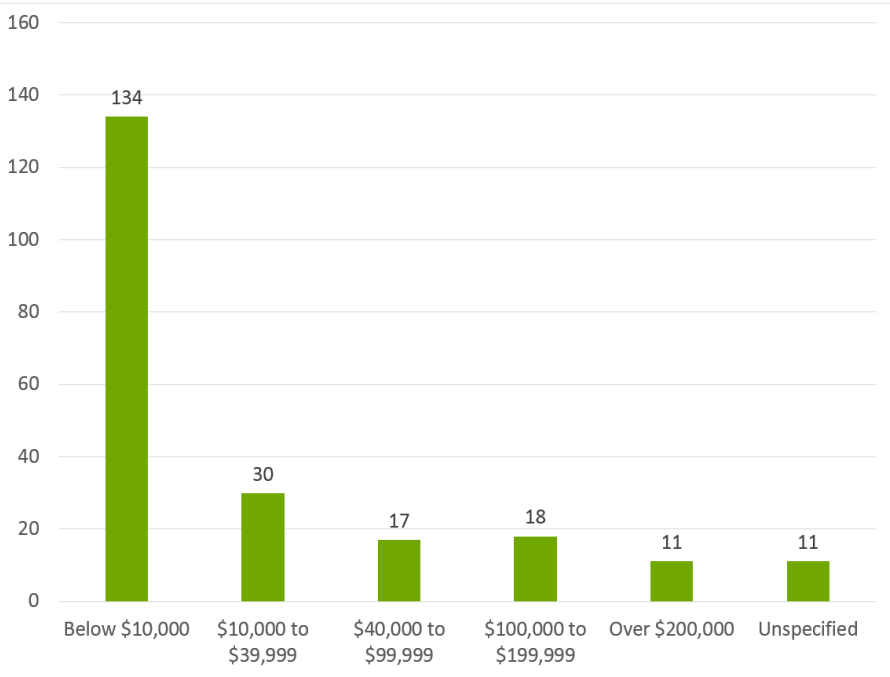


Figure 3. Number of farms parcels by reported capital investment



Vanscott Farms. Photo credit 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.

CCEDC provides equal program and employment opportunities. The programs provided by this agency are partially funded by monies received from the County of Dutchess.