

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.



Chaseholm Farm. Photo credit Sean Carroll

Agriculture in Pine Plains

The Pine Plains Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2004 contains plans for land use patterns that are generally supportive of agriculture. Land uses that are encouraged in Agricultural District areas are agricultural residential, mountain, and conservation. There are some areas within the District that are threatened by the land use proposed in the plan. These are highway business, high and medium density residential uses that are not usually compatible with agricultural uses. However, the County generally supports higher density development close to villages and hamlets to avoid incompatible sprawl in the rural countryside. The industrial and light industrial uses that are proposed are near the town center and are the most logical place for growth to occur.

The Town of Pine Plains has experienced consistent population growth during the past decade, however it has maintained its support of agriculture and farming throughout this period. Consequently, from 2008 to 2018, Pine Plains has seen a 7% increase in its Agricultural District acreage.

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets provided an award to acquire the development rights on the 171.4-acre Pulver Farm; the Dutchess County Open Space and Farmland Protection Matching Grant Program provided the required matching funds. The Pulver Farm anchors an operation that cultivates approximately 1,800 acres and includes additional farm businesses that contribute to the economic viability of the Town's traditional agriculture industry.

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.

Table 1. Farms and Acreage in Pine Plains

Number of Farm Parcels	223
Average Size of Ag Parcel	59 acres
Land in Farms	13,136 acres
Total Land in Pine Plains	19,921 acres
Percentage of Town in Farms	66%

Town of Pine Plains

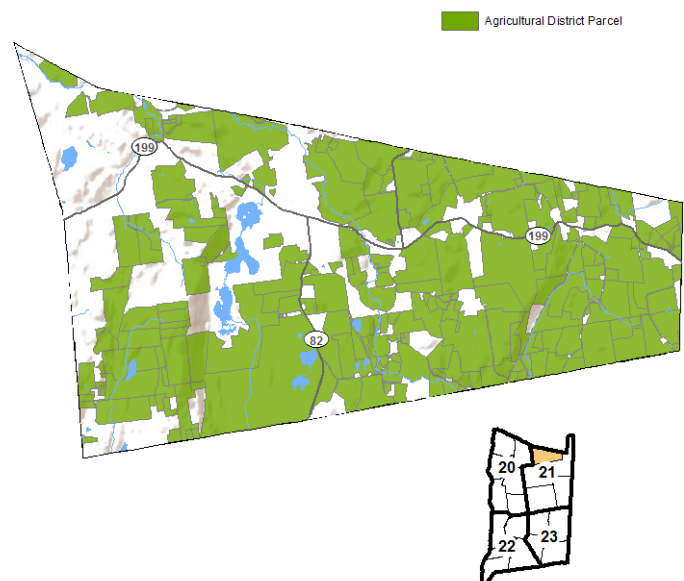


Figure 1. Map of Town of Pine Plains in Agricultural District 21

Figure 2 illustrates the relative acreage distribution of farm enterprises in the town of Pine Plains. The largest segment (by acreage) is *Production Agriculture*, with farm operations on 5,690 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. *Beef and Livestock* is another particularly large agricultural segment in Pine Plains, consisting of 2,781 acres.

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

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 Pine Plain's farm parcels (39) had capital investments between \$10,000 and \$100,000, while 49 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.

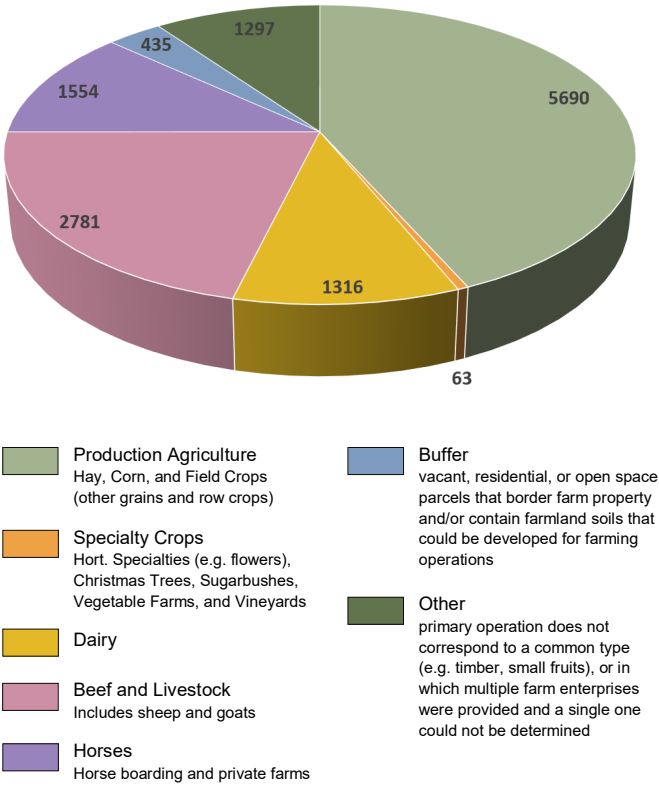


Figure 2. Acreage Distribution by Enterprise Category

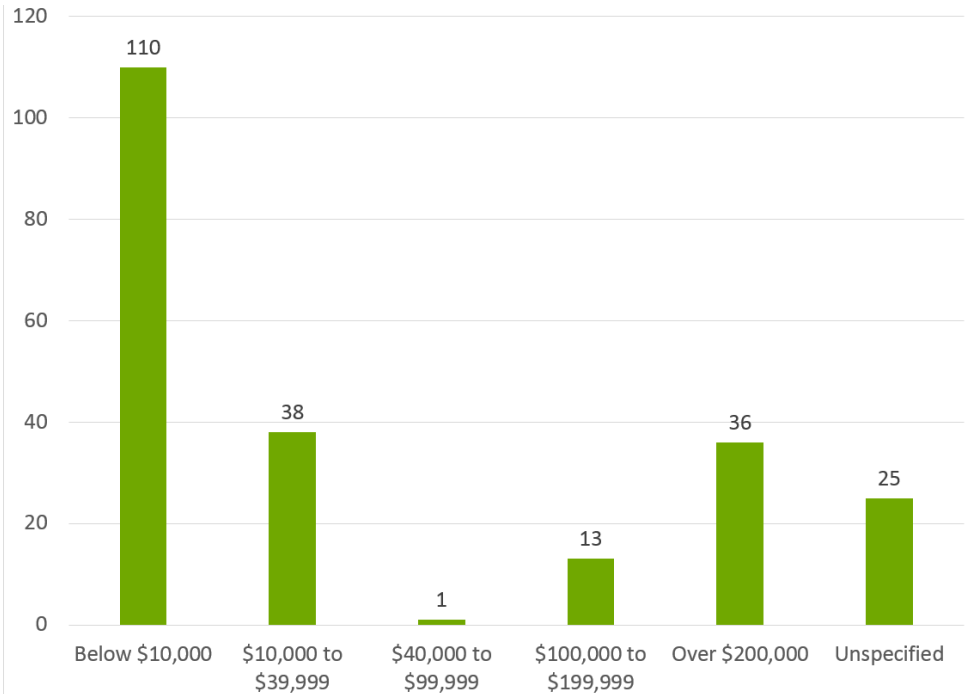


Figure 3. Number of Farm Parcels by reported Capital Investment

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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