

Poughkeepsie, 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.

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.

Table 1. Farms and Acreage in Poughkeepsie

Number of Farm Parcels	36
Average Size of Ag Parcel	21 acres
Land in Farms	790 acres
Total Land in Poughkeepsie	23,674 acres
Percentage of Town in Agricultural Use	3%



Poughkeepsie Farm Project—Vassar College. Photo: farmproject.org

Agriculture in Poughkeepsie

The town of Poughkeepsie's Master Plan, adopted in 1990, recommended low density development in the lands included within the Agricultural District. The plan also recommended that the Town prepare a detailed open space plan and including site-specific recommendations for conservation of its most significant open spaces, including the area known as Peach Hill. This defunct orchard on Salt Point Turnpike became a passive recreation area as a result of a funding partnership that included the Town, the State of New York, Dutchess County, and Scenic Hudson, Inc. Although the Town saw a 60% increase in Agricultural District acreage from 2008 to 2022, the pressures of suburban growth around the City of Poughkeepsie will make the conservation of the remaining farmland in the Town difficult.

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

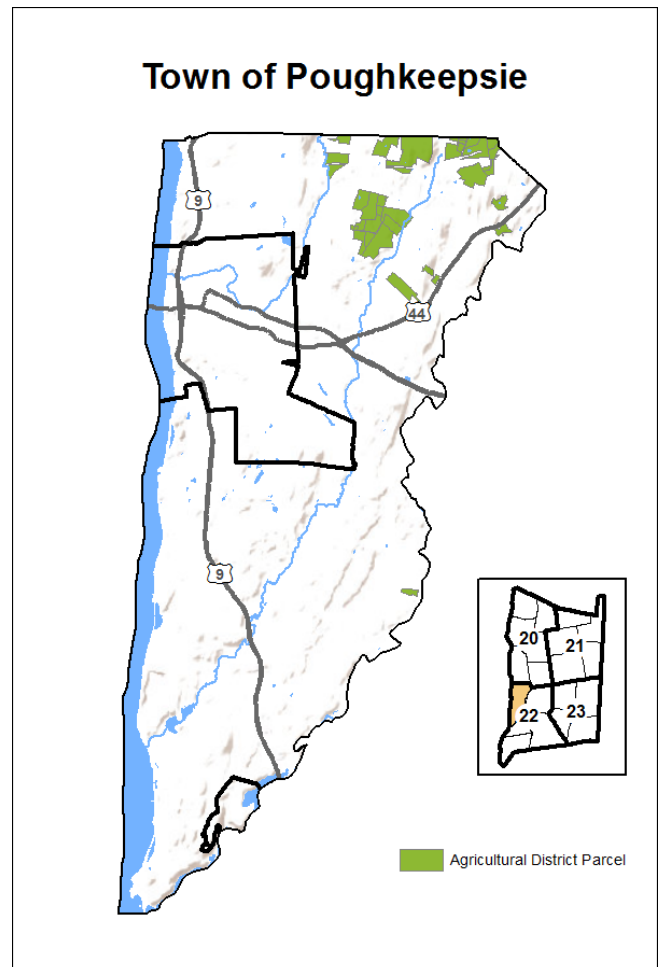


Figure 1. Map of Town of Poughkeepsie in Agricultural District 22

Figure 2 illustrates the relative acreage distribution of farm enterprises in the town of Poughkeepsie. The largest segments (by acreage) are "Other" followed by Beef and Livestock, with farm operations on 302 and 224 acres of property, respectively. Specialty Crops is another particularly large agricultural segment in Poughkeepsie, comprising 135 acres.

Most farms in Dutchess County are small farms, grossing less than \$10,000 in annual sales. These farms typically make fewer capital investments. Poughkeepsie is not an exception. There are more farms with annual capital investments in the 'Below \$10,000' category than there are in any of the 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 small number of Poughkeepsie's farm parcels (7) had capital investments between \$10,000 and \$100,000, while 6 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.

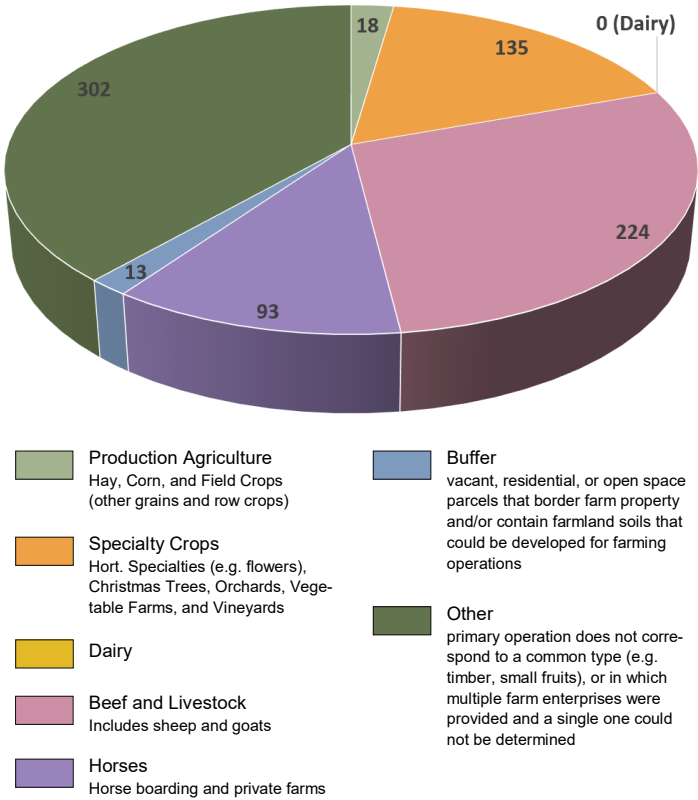


Figure 2. Acreage Distribution and Number of Farms by Enterprise Category

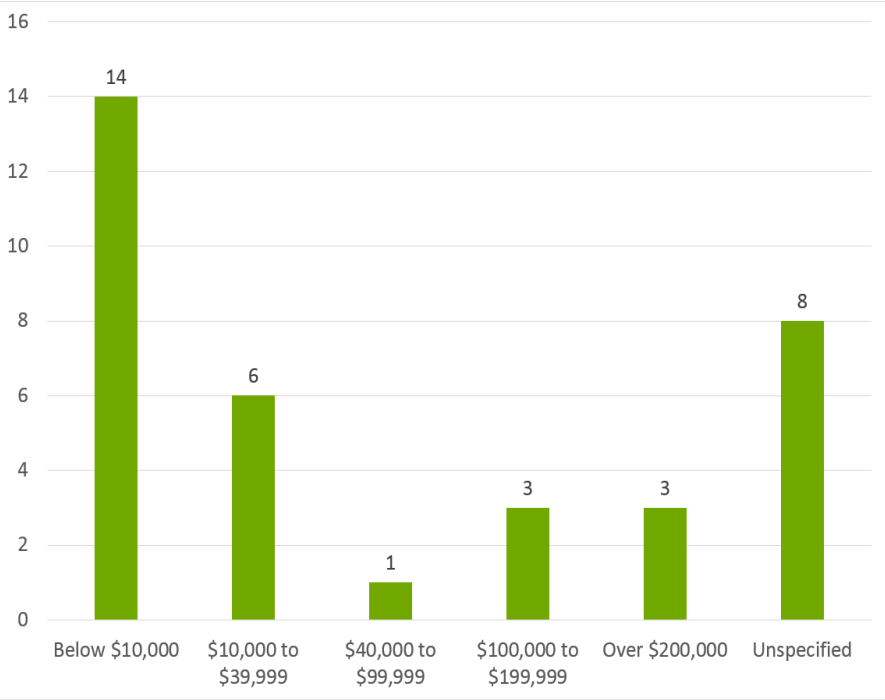


Figure 3. Number of Farms by reported Capital Investment



Solvang Tree Farm. Photo: dutchesstourism.com

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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