



Agriculture Production Statistics

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Agriculture Production Statistics

Abstract

The Agricultural Production Statistics is a long-standing, large-scale survey programme providing robust and reliable statistics on agricultural and forestry activity in New Zealand. The surveys collect information on livestock numbers, arable farming, horticulture and land use activities and practices on farms and forests. The surveys are undertaken in partnership with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

Agricultural statistics are produced annually. A census is conducted every five years, with surveys, based on a sample population, conducted in the remaining years.

Agricultural statistics are released twice each year, with a provisional release in mid-December and a final release in mid-May the following year.

Agricultural statistics are available via the Stats NZ website on [InfoShare](#) and [NZ.Stat](#).

Purpose

The purpose of the Agricultural Production Statistics is to collect and provide up-to-date, robust statistics on livestock, arable farming, horticulture and forestry activity in New Zealand.

The surveys collect information about:

- land use
- livestock farming (including sheep, pigs, beef and dairy cattle and deer)
- arable farming (including grain and seed crops)
- horticulture (including fruit and vegetables)
- farm practices (including fertiliser use).

Population

Agricultural Production Statistics Population

The Agricultural Production Statistics Population includes all units identified on Statistics New Zealand's Business Register as having agricultural activity. The Business Register is a list of businesses in New Zealand, based on their registration for goods and services tax (GST) with Inland Revenue. In the case of agriculture the Business Register includes the following units:

- those units registered for GST (and filing a non-zero GST return) that have indicated involvement in agricultural activity (as defined above)
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those businesses with more than \$200,000 of GST sales or purchases, or that are an employer, whose main activity is not agriculture but have indicated some secondary agricultural activity.

The compulsory registration level for GST is \$60,000 so there is a partial and unquantifiable coverage of units below this level.

Usage and limitations of the data

Agricultural Production Statistics are key to understanding the state of the agricultural sector and its contribution to the New Zealand economy. Agricultural statistics are used to support the information needs of a variety of stakeholders, including decision-makers across government, industry bodies, researchers and the broader community.

- Prior to 1990, a limited number of statistics are available at a national level.
- There was no Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 1997, 1998 or 2001. In 2000, the survey related only to horticulture.
- The population for the 2002 Agricultural Production Census and subsequent surveys differs from that of previous agricultural censuses and surveys. Figures from 2002 onwards may not be directly comparable with previous years.
- The current programme of agricultural surveys is designed to produce results to a Regional Council level and the censuses to a Territorial Authority level.
- Horticulture is not surveyed in all intercensal years. When included, the surveys are sent to all horticulture farmers.

Main users of the data

Internal: National Accounts (including the Longitudinal Business Database), Tatauranga Umanga Māori, Environmental Reporting, System of Environmental and Economic Accounts

External: Ministry for Primary Industries, Regional Councils, Agricultural Suppliers and Agricultural Research Organizations

Frequency

4 Annual

Significant events impacting this study series**History of Agricultural Production Statistics**

Agricultural data can be dated back to 1861 when it was regularly collected by government agencies.

Up to and including the season 1908-09, agricultural and pastoral statistics were collected annually by sub-enumerators appointed by the Department of Agriculture. In the season 1909-10 information was collected for the principal crops only. A full detailed collection was made for the 1910-11 season in conjunction with the Population Census of 1911. From then to 1914-15 no complete collection was made, and the postal collection was found in some respects to be unsatisfactory. From 1916 until 1930 the actual collection of the agricultural and pastoral statistics schedules was carried out annually through the police organisation. The system required officers in charge of police stations to obtain all necessary particulars by a personal canvass of occupiers of holdings of one acre or over located outside boroughs.

In 1931 it was decided, for reasons of economy, to dispense with the assistance of the police organisation and so avoid the travelling and other expenses incidental to the personal canvass system. Instead, the statistics were obtained on questionnaires distributed through the post by the Census and Statistics Department. Although a considerable saving was effected in this way, various circumstances combined to create difficulties and delays in completing the work of compilation.

In 1932 a new system was adopted, representing a combination of both the postal and the personal-canvass systems. The services of the police organisation were requisitioned to this end, it being realised that the local knowledge of police officers in reference to changes in occupancy, etc., as well as their proximity to occupiers within their respective districts was a valuable asset in securing returns.

In 1950, a special Census of Agriculture was conducted as part of the World Census of Agriculture. A considerably wider scope was covered in this special census than in the normal annual collection. In particular, a comprehensive examination of farm machinery was undertaken for the first time, while, again, an analysis of farm population and employment was made. In order to carry out such a detailed collection it became necessary to revert to the system in operation up to 1930, whereby particulars were obtained by a personal canvass of occupiers.

Commencing with 1952-53, Agriculture Statistics were collected using a sample of approximately 12,000 farms, instead of a full collection of 90,000 farms. This was a postal survey. However, this method of surveying farmers ceased after the 1954-55 survey year.

From 1955-56 until 1987 a full postal census was conducted annually. Full censuses were also conducted in 1990 and 1994. Between 1987 and 1996 sample surveys of agriculture production were conducted in the years between censuses.

There were no surveys of agriculture production in 1997 and 1998. A sample survey of farms predominantly involved in livestock farming was conducted in 1999. In 2000 a full coverage survey of all farms involved in horticultural activity was conducted. There was no survey of agriculture production in 2001.

Current Programme

The reinstatement of the Agriculture Statistics programme in 2001 saw the taking of an Agriculture Production Census in 2002. Coverage included farms involved in livestock, cropping, horticulture and forestry. This survey was the first in an on-going programme of censuses and surveys being undertaken by Statistics New Zealand with the cooperation of the Ministry for Primary Industries.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2003 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2004 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2005 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2006 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Census conducted in 2007 was a full coverage census of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2008 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2009 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2010 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2011 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Census conducted in 2012 was a full coverage census of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2013 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2014 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2015 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2016 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Census conducted in 2017 was a full coverage census of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2018 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2019 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2020 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census.

An Agricultural Production Survey conducted in 2021 was a sample survey with coverage of the same sectors as the 2002 Agricultural Production Census except for horticulture.

Variables