



# New England Agricultural Statistics

A field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service  
United States Department of Agriculture



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Before we go any further, I should introduce myself. I am Gary Keough, your new Director of the USDA/NASS New England Field Office. I have worked for NASS for over 25 years. I have worked in our offices in South Dakota, Missouri, Washington DC, Michigan, and Puerto Rico. Aubrey Davis, your previous Director, retired on January 3, 2006 after 42 years with NASS. He served 17 of those years as the Director of the New England Field office.

Believe it or not the 2007 Census of Agriculture is just around the corner. A test version of the questionnaire has been sent to selected operations to determine if we have made improvements that are understandable. Agriculture changes and we must change with it. The importance of organic agriculture is growing and this is one area where we are expanding the amount of data collected.

To have a successful 2007 Census of Agriculture, we must start with the best possible list of farms. We will be contacting State and Federal Departments of Agriculture, Farm Organizations and Commodity Associations for list building assistance in order to accomplish this task. Of particular interest are women, minority, and limited resource operators.

Although personnel may change, some things never change. Our appreciation for the thousands of farm operators across the region who willingly contribute to our estimating program doesn't waver. You **are** the heart and soul of our program for without your cooperation the rest of the story could not be accurately written. We also appreciate the cooperation and support extended by the New England Commissioners of Agriculture (CT, ME, MA and NH), the Chief of the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture and Marketing, and the Vermont Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture. Without their financial contribution, this annual bulletin would not be printed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Gary Keough'.

Gary R. Keough  
Director

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Cover Photograph by Joe Jeff Fitzsimmons