

Factory Farm Map

Methodology

Where is this data from? The data used in this map is from the United States Department of Agriculture’s 2002 Census of Agriculture. You can locate this information online at: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census_of_Agriculture/index.asp

How was this data chosen?

The USDA’s Census of Agriculture gathers a variety types of data. For this map, we used the categories of data in the Census that best match the Environmental Protection Agency’s definition for a confined animal feeding operation (CAFO), also known as a factory farm. (See table below)

The EPA’s CAFO definition is complex, and the USDA’s Census does not measure data based on exactly the same criteria. However, the Census categories on which this map is based are measurements of large-scale animal facilities that best match the EPA criteria.



Our map is designed to illustrate two different things in each state and county – *the total number of animals* being raised on factory farms as well as the *number of factory farms*. It DOES NOT attempt to show how many animals are on a particular factory farm, because this type of data is not publicly available through USDA’s Census. In fact, in some counties on the map labeled “Data Withheld,” data for that county was unavailable from

Summary of CAFO Size Thresholds for All Sectors

Sector	Large	Medium ¹	Small ²
Cattle or cow/calf pairs	1,000 or more	300–999	Less than 300
Mature dairy cattle	700 or more	200–699	Less than 200
Swine (weighing over 55 pounds)	2,500 or more	750–2,499	Less than 750
Swine (weighing less than 55 pounds)	10,000 or more	3,000–9,999	Less than 3,000
Turkeys	55,000 or more	16,500–54,999	Less than 16,500
Laying hens or broilers (liquid manure handling system)	30,000 or more	9,000–29,999	Less than 9,000
Chickens other than laying hens (other than a liquid manure handling system)	125,000 or more	37,500–124,999	Less than 37,500
Laying hens (other than a liquid manure handling system)	82,000 or more	25,000–81,999	Less than 25,000

¹ Must also meet one of two “method of discharge” criteria to be defined as a CAFO or may be designated.

² Never a CAFO by regulatory definition, but may be designated as a CAFO on a case-by-case basis.

USDA because there was only one factory farm in that area, so revealing the number of animals on facilities of a certain size (i.e. factory farms) in that area would reveal how many animals that one facility had. USDA intentionally withholds data from places where this is the case.

What does the cattle map show?

Our map displays the number of cattle on feedlots that hold 500 or more cattle, and the number of feedlots that hold 500 or more cattle. Cattle on farms that have less than 500 head, or farms that have less than 500 head are not counted in our map.

To access the data we mapped, choose “state-county” under the “Query Downloadable Options” drop-down menu for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Then for Step 1, select: “Table 11. Cattle and Calves – Inventory and Sales: 2002 and 1997.” For Step 2, select “Inventory- Cattle and Calves- Cattle on Feed- 2002 farms by inventory 500 or more.” You can select either the “farm” option or the “numbers” option depending on which data you want. For Step 3, Primary Location, choose “United States,” for the Secondary Location, choose “All States” or “All States, Only Counties” and then hit Add and Get Data.

What does the dairy map show?

Our map displays the number of dairy cows on facilities with 500 or more dairy cows, and the number of dairy facilities that hold 500 or more cows. Dairy cows on farms that have less than 500 head, or farms that have less than 500 head, are not counted in our map.

To access the data we mapped, choose “state-county” under the “Query Downloadable Options” drop-down menu for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Then for Step 1, select: “Table 11. Cattle and Calves – Inventory and Sales: 2002 and 1997.” For Step 2, select “Inventory - Cattle and calves - Cows and heifers that had calved - Milk cows - 2002 farms by inventory - 500 or more” You can select either the “farm” option or the “numbers” option depending on which data you want. For Step 3, Primary Location, choose “United States,” for the Secondary Location choose “All States” or “All States, Only Counties” and then hit Add and Get Data.

What does the hog map show?

Our map displays the number of hogs on facilities with 1,000 or more hogs, and the number of hog facilities that house 1,000 or more hogs. Hogs on farms with less than 1,000 hogs, or farms that have less than 1,000 hogs, are not counted in our map.

To access the data we mapped, choose “state-county” under the “Query Downloadable Options” drop-down menu for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Then for Step 1, select: “Table 12. Hogs and Pigs – Inventory and Sales: 2002 and 1997.” For Step 2, select “Inventory – Total Hogs and Pigs – Farms by Inventory – 1,000 or more” You can select either the “farms, 2002” option or the “numbers, 2002” option depending on which data you want. For Step 3, Primary Location, choose “United States,” for the Secondary Location choose “All States” or “All States, Only Counties” and then hit Add and Get Data.

What do the chicken maps show?

The map shows two types of chickens: broilers (raised for their meat) and layers (used to lay eggs).

The map displays the number of broiler chickens on facilities with 500,000 or more broilers sold per year and the number of broiler chicken facilities with 500,000 or more sold per year. Broiler chickens on farms with less than 500,000 birds, or farms with less than 500,000 birds, are not counted in our map.

To access the data we mapped, choose “state-county” under the “Query Downloadable Options” drop-down menu for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Then for Step 1, select: “Table 13. Poultry – Inventory and Sales: 2002 and 1997.” For Step 2, select “Inventory - Any poultry - Broilers and other meat-type chickens – 2002 farms by number sold- 500,000 or more.” For Step 3, Primary Location, choose “United States,” for the Secondary Location choose “All States” or “All States, Only Counties” and then hit Add and Get Data.

We divided the number we received from USDA’s Census of Agriculture by 5.5, because there is an average of 5.5 batches of broilers produced per year at any given facility. Therefore, dividing by 5.5 shows the number of broilers present at a facility at any given time.

The map also displays the number of layer chickens on facilities of 100,000 or more layers and the number of layer chicken facilities of 100,000 or more. Layer chickens on farms with less than 100,000 birds, or farms with less than 100,000 birds, are not counted in our map.

To access the data we mapped, choose “state-county” under the “Query Downloadable Options” drop-down menu for the 2002 Census of Agriculture. Then for Step 1, select: “Table 13. Poultry – Inventory and Sales: 2002 and 1997.” For Step 2, select “Inventory - Any poultry – Layers 20 weeks and older – 2002 farms by inventory – 100,000 or more.” For Step 3, Primary Location, choose “United States,” for the Secondary Location choose “All

States” or “All States, Only Counties” and then hit Add and Get Data.

Why are there no values for number of chickens on the county level?

The USDA’s 2002 Census of Agriculture does not provide this information. For the county level, we only graph the number of facilities.

How were the combination maps determined?

We wanted to illustrate the burden some parts of the country experience because of the heavy presence of several types of factory farms. There are two combination map types: cattle, dairy, and hogs in one and broiler and layer chickens in another. We kept chickens separate from the other animals because there is no comparable information on the county level for the number of chickens in factory farms, and because there are some important differences between chickens and the other animals.

For the cattle/dairy/hog map we created a ranking of a particular state or county’s factory farm profile relative to the national total. We assigned scores for each animal category based on the number of animals in that state or county relative to the total number of animals of that type in the country. We did this because one cow is not the same as one pig when it comes to the environmental impact of factory farms and because the total number of animals very different for each type of animal.

For instance, if County X had 10 of the nation’s 100 total factory farm beef cattle, 15 of the nation’s 80 total factory

farm dairy cattle, and 8 of the nation’s 200 total factory farm hogs, the County has 0.1 of the total beef cattle, 0.19 of the total dairy cattle, and 0.04 of the total hogs. These county totals for each animal type were then combined to create the combination map.

The procedure for the chicken combination map is the same, keeping in mind that we divided the number of broiler chickens on large-scale facilities by 5.5 prior to ranking for reasons explained in the chicken section.

What does DW or Data Withheld mean?

The “D” value stands for “Data Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms.” When a state or county has just a few facilities of a particular type, the USDA does not disclose the number of animals for the state or county. For instance, if Montgomery County had one large-scale chicken farm and the USDA revealed that there are 152,000 chickens in Montgomery County, the public would know the how many chickens that particular facility had. To avoid disclosing that information, they list that county as Data Withheld.

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