

Hunter College of the City University of New York  
Department of Geography  
Geography of New York State  
Exercise 15 – Required

AGRICULTURE

Due by December 6, 2012 (late submission will be penalized)

*The purpose of this exercise is to compare the agricultural productivity between your counties and with that of NYS. You will compare your counties to the state averages, look at the county profiles and assess the effect of the weather during this growing season on your counties' agricultural production. The US Census of Agriculture is conducted in years ending in a 2 and 7. The most recent statistics are from 2007.*

This exercise has **three parts**.

PART I. STATEWIDE COMPARISONS (*comparing NYS to each of your counties*)

Go to the **US Department of Agriculture 2007 Census of Agriculture** web site at <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov>. In the middle of the page under “**FIND DATA BY**” click on “**State & County**.” Click on “**New York**”, then “**County Profiles-State & County**.” Direct link is [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full\\_Report/Census\\_by\\_State/New\\_York/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Census_by_State/New_York/). Click on “**Statewide Summary**.” **PRINT** the NYS summary (2 pages). Click on each county assigned to you and **PRINT** each county's summary (2 pages each). Use the summaries for easy reference.

**QUESTION 1: In chart format show how do the agricultural trends in each of your counties compare to the trends experienced by New York State between the 2002 and 2007 agricultural censuses.**

Look at the statistics.

- a) Compare the **percent of change** for NYS and your counties in the following areas:
  - Number of farms
  - Land in farms
  - Average size of farms
  - Market value of products sold
- b) From the pie graphs, compare the percentage of **Type of Land in Farms** for NYS and the 3 counties.
- c) From page 2, list the top 5 ranking **VALUE OF SALES BY COMMODITY GROUP (\$1,000)** from the NYS summary and summaries for the 3 counties. (Rank by highest number, e.g. 54<sup>th</sup> place may be the highest for a county within NYS!)
- d) Make a statement about the similarities and differences between the four. If a county does not have an agricultural base or if the data cannot be disclosed, include that information in your statement.

PART II. COUNTY PROFILES (**comparing your three counties to each other**)

This is the link to a table where you may do county comparisons using the 2007 census data: [http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full\\_Report/Volume\\_1\\_Chapter\\_2\\_County\\_Level/New\\_York/st36\\_2\\_001\\_001.pdf](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Full_Report/Volume_1_Chapter_2_County_Level/New_York/st36_2_001_001.pdf).

**QUESTION 2:**

- a) **Select any four categories for your county whose name begins with the letter closest to the letter A.** (*There are more categories beginning on page 9.*)
- b) **Make a chart comparing those same four categories with the statistics for your two other counties and for NYS.**
- c) **Make a statement highlighting the differences between the three counties and how they stand against NYS figures for the 4 categories chosen.**

**PART III. CROP WEATHER.**

Growing season is a very important part of agriculture. The longer the growing season, the better it is for crops. Local weather can be both beneficial and detrimental to the growing process. NASS issues weekly crop weather reports between April and November. Weather conditions (too wet; too dry; too cold; too warm) affect all stages of the agricultural process (crop planting, growing, harvesting; raising of poultry and livestock). Weather conditions will influence quality, yield and price.

Return to [www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics by State/New York](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_York). Under “New York Publications” scroll the box and click on “Crop Progress and Condition.” Use the **2012** calendar.

The direct link is:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics by State/New York/Publications/Crop Progress & Condition/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_York/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/index.asp).

**QUESTION 3:**

**A. How did weather conditions in 2012 affect agriculture in NYS and in particular, agriculture in your counties?** (*Note: Not all counties will be mentioned in each report.*) Read the 2012 reports for April 23, June 23, August 27 and October 22.

1) Note any significant weather related conditions for each of your counties or the regions where your counties are located that is included in the four weekly reports.

2) **Compare similar dates for 2011.** In general, how did the two growing seasons compare to each other?

**B. Freeze Data.** Consult the same monthly weather station data (CLIM20) you used in the Climate Exercise. **Weather Station location map** is found at

<http://cdo.ncdc.noaa.gov/climatenormals/clim20/state-pdf/ny.pdf>. Retrieve the information from CLIM20 for the stations at <http://hurricane.ncdc.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/climatenormals/climatenormals.pl>. **NOTE:** Pages 4 and 5 of the weather station data sheets used in the **Climate Exercise** contain data on the frost free season and other degree day information. On the Freeze Data Table, use the **28°F line** for the following questions. This may be done in chart format to compare the 3 counties.

1) What is the **date** that your county would experience a 50% chance of a late frost (spring freeze)?

2) What is the **date** your county would experience a 50% of an early frost (fall freeze)?

3) What is the **number of days** of the year that your county would experience a 50% chance of 28°F or lower temperature (freeze free period)?

4) **Yes or No:** Does agricultural productivity of each county (chief products and value) reflect the length of its growing season?

**OTHER LINKS. (This is for informational purposes only.)**

Aspiring teachers check the NASS **Kids Page** and **Educators' Corner**. [www.nass.usda.gov/ny](http://www.nass.usda.gov/ny) and [www.nass.usda.gov/Education and Outreach/NASS Kids/](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/NASS_Kids/). There are education links on the right and left side bars. Lesson plans can be found at <http://www.agclassroom.org/ny/resources/lesson.htm>.

At <http://www.agriculture.ny.gov/ColorNY.pdf> there is a coloring book.

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