

# LOUISIANA FARM LABOR



## Young Producers in Louisiana 2017 Census of Agriculture

The 2012 U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Census (Ag Census, 2012) revealed demographic challenges in agriculture with the average farmer being 58.3 years old. In Louisiana, the average farmer was reported to be 58.5 years old (Ag Census, 2014). Agricultural stakeholders stressed the importance of having a young cohort of farmers to be able to sustain the farm sector as the current generation of farmers retires.

The 2017 Census of Agriculture (Ag Census, 2017) explicitly collected information on young producers for the first time. According to the USDA, a young producer is

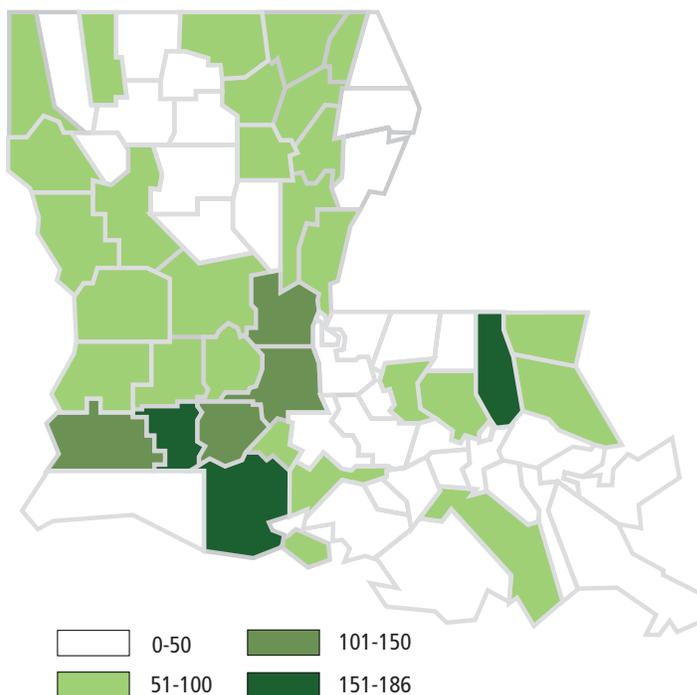
someone who is 35 years of age or younger (Ag Census, 2017). The census collected information from up to four operators in a farm and reported 321,261 young producers in the United States.

This document highlights information related to young producers in Louisiana based on the 2017 Ag Census. It reports on producer characteristics and farm operation characteristics. Of the total young producers in the 2017 Ag Census, 3,807 (1.19%) were in Louisiana. Of them, about 68% (2,574 young producers) indicated themselves as principal producers of their operations.

### Young Producer Characteristics

Three out of five young producers in Louisiana are male, with 2,356 (61.89%) male producers and 1,451 (38.11%) female producers in the state. This is comparative to the overall U.S. young producer number, in which male producers accounted for 63.84% and female producers for 36.15%. Furthermore, 1,770 male and 804 female young producers identified as principal producers within the farm.

**Parish Data.** Of all the parishes in Louisiana, Vermilion, Tangipahoa, Jefferson Davis, Calcasieu, St. Landry and Avoyelles parishes had the largest number of young producers with 186, 173, 155, 140, 129 and 122 producers, respectively. This data is consistent with young principal producers in Louisiana. This shows that most young Louisiana producers are located in the southern region of the state. Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, St. Charles and St. James parishes had the smallest concentration of young producers in Louisiana.



Of the 3,807 young producers in Louisiana, 3,590 (94.30%) producers and 2,460 (95.57%) principal producers were white (Table 1). Black and African American producers made up the next largest number of young producers in Louisiana with 142 (3.73%) producers and 71 (2.76%) principal producers. Spanish, Hispanic and Latino

producers were the third largest category with 84 (2.21%) producers and 51 (1.98%) principal producers. American Indian and Alaskan Native producers made up one of the smaller portions of young farmers in Louisiana, with 26 (0.68%) producers and 18 (0.70%) principal producers (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Louisiana Young Producer Race and Ethnicity Composition**

Race/Ethnicity	All Producers	All Principal Producers
White	3,590	2,460
Black or African American	142	71
Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino	84	51
More Than One Race Reported	42	22
American Indian or Alaskan Native	26	18
Asian	7	3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

## Operation Characteristics

**Farm Specialization.** In Louisiana, most young producers operated beef cattle farming and ranching enterprises. Of the 2,932 farms in which a young producer was present, 417 of these farms focused on aquaculture and other animal production. Sugarcane and hay farming were relatively popular among young farmers in Louisiana, with 375 farm establishments in these areas. Cotton farming, dairy cattle and milk production operations were the least popular among young Louisiana farmers, with 16 and seven farm establishments, respectively.

**Farm Size.** In total, there were 2,932 farms that were operated by young producers in Louisiana for a total of 1,098,026 acres. These farms greatly varied in size. The most common farm size for young producers is between 10 and 179 acres, specifically between 10 and 49 acres (Table 2). Of these farmers, 2,449 owned their land and 1,324 farmers rented or leased the land on which their farm operates. Of the farmland owners, 1,608 producers were full owners of their land and 1,324 producers were either part owners or tenants of their farmland (Ag Census, 2017).

**Economic Class.** Economic class classifies farms by summing the market value of agricultural products that a farm sells and the amount of federal farm program payments that a farm receives. Most young Louisiana producer and principal producer farms had an economic class of less than \$1,000, with 865 and 661 producers, respectively. A large number of young producer farms also had an economic class of \$50,000 or more (Table 3).

**Table 2. Average Farm Size Operated by Young Producer in Louisiana**

Size	Any Producer	Any Principal Producer
1-9 acres	18.18%	19.45%
10-49 acres	32.61%	33.32%
50-179 acres	23.84%	22.97%
180-499 acres	11.15%	11.17%
500 or more acres	14.22%	13.09%

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

**Table 3. Louisiana Young Producer Farm Economic Class**

Economic Class	Any Producer	Any Principal Producer
Less than \$1,000	29.50%	30.25%
\$1,000 to \$2,499	11.05%	11.81%
\$2,500 to \$4,999	11.02%	10.30%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	11.63%	10.89%
\$10,000 to \$24,999	12.24%	12.17%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	5.62%	5.63%
\$50,000 or more	18.93%	18.95%

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

**Loans and Federal Farm Payment Programs.** The Loans and Federal Farm Program Payments sections accounts for additional payments received by young Louisiana producers for various reasons. Most young Louisiana farmers (670 producers) received payments other than CCC and conservation. Additionally, 99 farmers received payments related to land conservation, which is especially significant to Louisiana and its environment (Table 4).

**Table 4. Louisiana Young Producer Loan and Federal Farm Payment Programs**

Payment	Any Producer	Any Principal Producer
Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Loans	3.27%	3.56%
Conservation Reserve, Wetlands Reserve, Farmable Wetlands, etc.	12.45%	12.03
Other Federal Farm Payment	84.28%	84.41%

Source: USDA NASS, 2017 Census of Agriculture

## For more information:

Ag Census (2014) Farm Demographics. "US Farmers by Gender, Age, Race, Ethnicity, and More"  
[www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights/2014/Farm\\_Demographics/Highlights\\_Farm\\_Demographics.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights/2014/Farm_Demographics/Highlights_Farm_Demographics.pdf)

Ag Census (2017) 2017 Census of Agriculture. "Full Report"  
[www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/index.php#full\\_report](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/index.php#full_report)

Ag Census (2012) Beginning Farmers. "Characteristics of Farmers by Years on Current Farm"  
[www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights/2014/Beginning\\_Farmers/index.php](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Highlights/2014/Beginning_Farmers/index.php)

## Glossary:

**Commodity Credit Corporation loans.** This category includes nonrecourse marketing loans for wheat, corn, sorghum, barley, oats, cotton, rice, soybeans, Austrian winter peas, honey, dry edible peas, lentils, chickpeas, peanuts, sunflower seed, flaxseed, canola and other rapeseed, safflower, mustard seed, crambe, sesame seed, wool and mohair. (Appendix B, Ag Census 2017)

**Farm with sales of less than \$1,000.** This category includes farms with sales of less than \$1,000 but having the potential for sales of \$1,000 or more. Some of these farms had no sales in the census year. It provides information on all report form items for farms that normally would be expected to sell agricultural products of \$1,000 or more. (Appendix B, Ag Census 2017)

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