

# DatelineERS

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Economic Research Service

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*ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.*



[www.usda.gov/oce/forum/index.htm](http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/index.htm)

## Commodity Markets and Trade

ERS Outlook reports provide timely analysis of major commodity markets and trade.

### *This Month*

- Feed
- Wheat
- Oil Crops
- Rice
- Sugar and Sweeteners
- Fruit and Tree Nuts
- Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry

All reports along with a calendar of future releases are available at:

[www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook](http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook)

## Household Food Security in the United States, 2009

[www.ers.usda.gov/Features/HouseholdFoodSecurity/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Features/HouseholdFoodSecurity/)

Eighty-five percent of American households were food secure throughout the entire year in 2009, meaning that they had access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. The remaining households (14.7 percent) were food insecure at least some time during the year, including 5.7 percent with very low food security. In households with very low food security, the food intake of one or more household members was reduced and their eating patterns were disrupted at times during the year because the household lacked money and other resources for food. Prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security were essentially unchanged from 14.6 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively, in 2008, and remained at the highest recorded levels since 1995, when the first national food security survey was conducted. Fifty-seven percent of all food-insecure households participated in one or more of the three largest Federal food and nutrition assistance programs during the month prior to the 2009 survey.



## Labor, the Produce Industry, and the Global Economy

[www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/err106/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/err106/)

Fruit and vegetable production is a labor-intensive process, and over half of the hired workers employed by growers are believed to be unauthorized immigrants. The authors of this report assess how particular fruit and vegetable commodities might adjust if labor rates increased. According to the report, if the labor supply decreases, costs of farm labor will increase. Analysis of case studies suggests a range of possible resulting adjustment scenarios, including increased mechanization for some crops, reduced U.S. output for a few crops, and increased use of labor aids to improve labor productivity for others.



## Examining the New Financial Reform Bill

[www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AIS89/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AIS89/)

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act makes significant changes to Federal regulation of the U.S. over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives market, with the goals of improving market transparency and reducing systemic default risk. This report reviews some important features of the new law and discusses their potential impact on agribusiness, much of which will depend on how the rules are written and implemented by regulators.

## Rural Population Loss

[www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR107/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR107/)

Population loss through net outmigration is endemic to many rural areas. Over a third of nonmetro counties lost at least 10 percent of their population through net outmigration over 1988-2008. Some of these counties have had very high poverty rates, substantial loss in manufacturing jobs, and high unemployment. Lack of economic opportunity was likely a major factor in their high outmigration. Most high net outmigration counties, however, are relatively prosperous, with low unemployment rates, low high school dropout rates, and average household incomes. For these counties, low population density and less appealing landscapes distinguish them from other nonmetro counties. Both types of outmigration counties stand out on two measures, indicating that quality-of-life factors inhibit immigration: a lack of retirees moving in and local manufacturers citing the area's unattractiveness as a problem in recruiting managers and professionals.



## Amber Waves

**Amber Waves** magazine covers the full range of ERS research and analysis, covering food, farming, natural resources, and rural America.

[www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves](http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves)

### ***Varied Interests Drive Growing Popularity of Local Foods***

As demand for local foods grows, so do questions about what constitutes “local” foods, what characterizes local food markets, and how local food markets affect farmers, consumers, and communities.

### ***Local Food Supply Chains Use Diverse Business Models To Satisfy Demand***

Case studies show that as demand has increased, local foods are reaching consumers through an expanding array of supply chain arrangements and marketing outlets.

### ***Labor-Intensive U.S. Fruit and Vegetable Industry Competes in a Global Market***

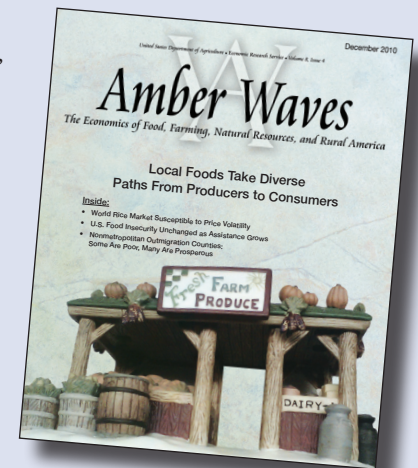
Reduction in the supply of workers that could make agricultural labor more expensive for the U.S. fruit and vegetable industry may impact industry competitiveness but the effects would vary by commodity.

### ***Price Spikes in Global Rice Markets Benefit U.S. Growers, at Least in the Short Term***

“Thin” markets such as the global rice trade, where only a small share of global production is traded, may exhibit price volatility and large annual variations in trade levels.

### ***The Two Faces of Rural Population Loss Through Outmigration***

Nearly half of the Nation’s nonmetropolitan counties lost population through net outmigration between 1988 and 2008, but the underlying causes and potential policy solutions vary widely.



How to get more information...

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