



Dateline ERS

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Economic Research Service

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

ERS is the main source of 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.

New on the web

Poverty: Resources Roundup

A collection of ERS research on the economic, social, and demographic characteristics affecting the income and poverty levels of rural residents. The research focuses largely on rural communities, but it also covers specific segments of the U.S. population who are most at risk of economic hardship and who often receive assistance from Federal programs.

www.ers.usda.gov/News/povertypage.htm

Commodity Markets and Trade

ERS Outlook reports provide timely analysis of major commodity markets and trade, including special reports on hot topics. All reports, along with a calendar of future releases, are available at:

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/outlook

Amber Waves September 2005

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

www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves

Asia-Pacific Transportation Infrastructure: Linking Food Sources to Urban Centers

The Asia-Pacific food system faces the challenge of rapid urbanization and concentration of food demand, while food-producing areas remain geographically dispersed. Sustaining growth in urban food demand requires streamlining domestic supply chains, including transportation infrastructure (roads, railroads, inland waterways, ports and airports) connecting urban with food-producing areas, or negotiating trade agreements to open domestic markets to foreign food supplies, or some combination of approaches.

Rural Areas Benefit from Recreation and Tourism Development

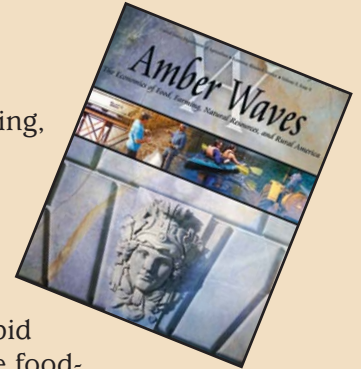
The promotion of recreation and tourism has been both praised and criticized as a rural development strategy. This study uses regression analysis to assess the effect of recreation and tourism development on socioeconomic conditions in rural recreation counties. The findings imply that recreation and tourism development contributes to rural well-being, increasing local employment, wage levels, and income, reducing poverty, and improving education and health.

Farm Poverty Lowest in U.S. History

In the 1930s, commodity programs could have reasonably been expected to boost rural economies and the well-being of farm families. More than three-fourths of all rural counties depended on agriculture as their primary source of income. There were 30.4 million people living and working on 6.3 million farms. By the turn of the 21st century, 6 million people lived and worked on 1.8 million active farms, representing 1 percent of total U.S. population. Only 20 percent of rural U.S. counties now depend on agriculture for more than 15 percent of earnings.

Improving Air and Water Quality Can Be Two Sides of the Same Coin

Agricultural production practices have generated a variety of substances that enter the atmosphere and have the potential of creating health and environmental problems. The air in some farming communities can be as impaired by pollutants like ozone and particulates as is the air in urban areas. Two challenges for reducing air emissions from agriculture are potential inter-relationships with water quality, and a lack of information on farm-level emissions.



Economic Environment Favorable for Rural Areas

www.ers.usda.gov/publications/eib4

The U.S. economic environment is quite favorable for rural areas, according to *Rural America at a Glance, 2005*. Domestic economic growth in 2005 is expected to be above average, propelled by a rise in wages, business profits, and relatively low interest rates.

The Latest Data Products Updated on the Web

U.S. Agricultural Trade Update

www.ers.usda.gov/data/fatus/monthlysummary.htm

Updates on the quantity and value of U.S. farm exports and imports, plus price trends.

Season-Average Price Forecasts

www.ers.usda.gov/Data/PriceForecast/

Season-average price forecasts for corn, soybeans, and wheat.

Farm Sector and Household Income Forecast for 2005

www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/farmincome/

USDA perspective regarding the 2005 incomes earned within the farm sector of the U.S. economy, by farms within the sector and by



Dairy Policies in Japan

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/LDP/Aug05/ldpm13401/

Dairy Policies in Japan provides a detailed description and analysis of Japan's policies that support its milk producers and regulate dairy markets. Domestic supply controls boost the milk price, and government subsidies for the production of manufacturing milk, for environmental improvements, and for hazard insurance provide additional support to farms. Regulations about milk labeling have affected milk powder use. At the border, tariff-rate quotas offer limited opportunities to private firms within the quota amounts, and impose very high tariffs on imports of dairy products outside the quota. If Japan's policies were liberalized, prices and production in Japan would fall, but sizable milk production would remain.

The Demographics of Sugar Consumption

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/SSS/aug05/sss24301/

ERS draws on USDA data to report on consumption of sugar and other sweeteners by income, race, ethnic origin, age, and region. *Sweetener Consumption in the United States: Distribution by Demographic and Product Characteristics* helps fill a gap by reporting findings for sweetener consumption by income and demographic characteristics. Among the findings: per capita sweetener consumption is highest in the Midwest and lowest in the Northeast. U.S. consumption of sugars added to food items increased by 23 percent between 1985 and 1999.

Impact of the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act

www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/LDP/Sep05/ldpm13501/

Did the Mandatory Requirement Aid the Market? Impact of the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act focuses on fed cattle markets to compare the mandatory price reporting system developed by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service in 2001 with the previous voluntary reporting system. The study also evaluates whether the mandatory system has improved the amount and quality of information available to the market. Results show that mandatory reporting has given the market additional information about prices for different kinds of sales transactions. The trend toward formula purchases has slowed since mandatory price reporting was implemented, and the volume of cattle moving under negotiated purchases has increased.

How to get more information ...

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