



RESEARCH REPORT

A publication providing statistical information on Howard County demographics, socioeconomic and employment trends and patterns. Available from the Department of Planning and Zoning by calling (410) 313-4370.

Howard County 2007 Census of Agriculture

Introduction

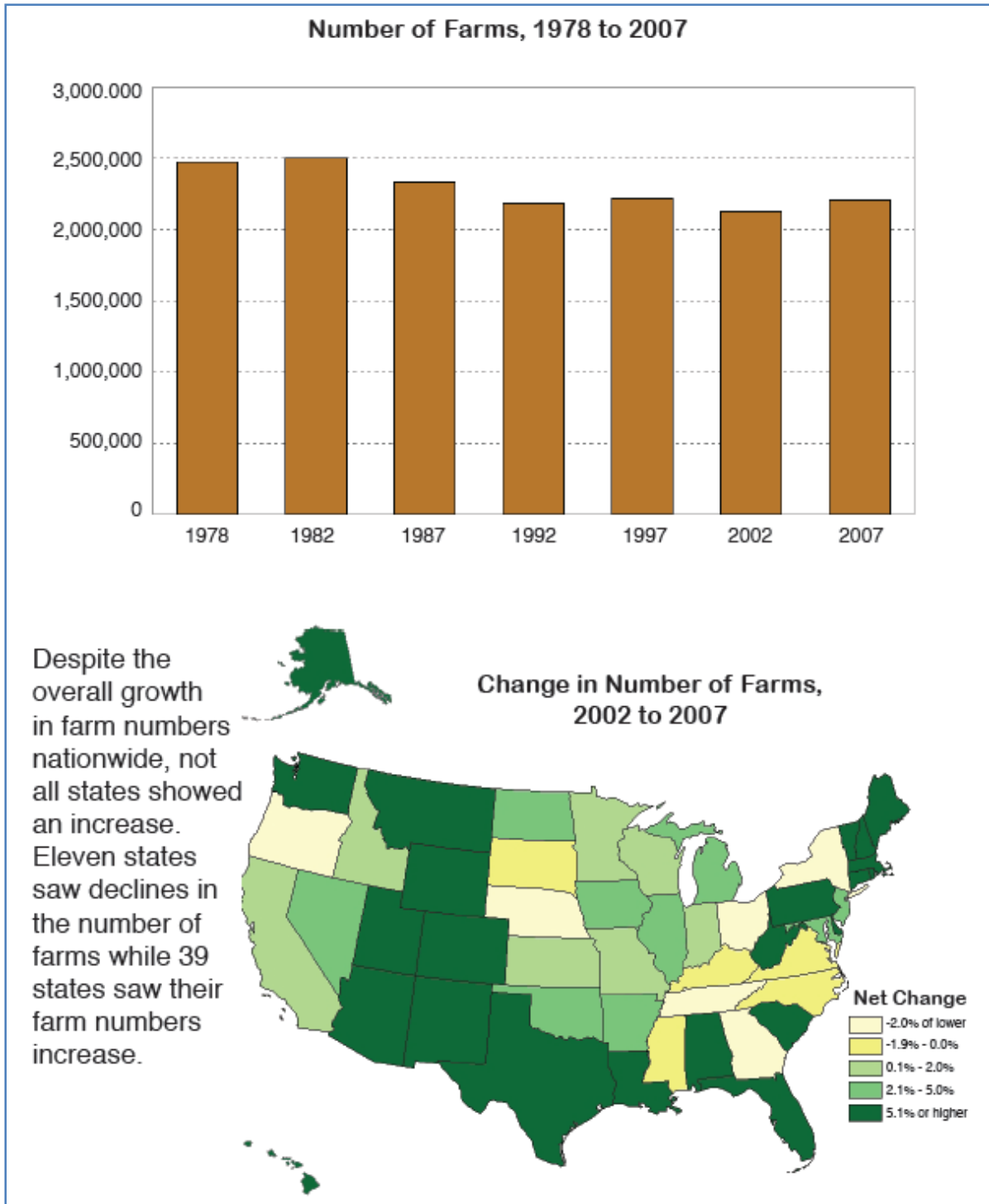
Every five years the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) conducts a Census of Agriculture across the United States. The results from the latest 2007 Census were released in February, 2009 and updated in December, 2009. This Research Report summarizes some of the major the findings for Howard County. Twenty year of USDA Census data are reported so trends over time can be understood. The report also includes agricultural preservation information from the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, comparing preservation trends to farmland changes over time. Some statewide Agriculture Census data ranking Maryland counties are also highlighted starting on Page 23. To begin, overall United States results are briefly discussed to provide further context.

The first Census of Agriculture was enumerate in 1840, and was repeated every 10 years thereafter until 1920. After 1920 it has been conducted every 5 years. The U.S. Census Bureau was responsible for the Census until 1992, after which the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the USDA became the responsible agency. The Census of Agriculture provides a detailed picture of United States farms and ranches and people who operate them. It serves as a uniform sources of comprehensive agricultural data for every state and county in the United States.

Overview of U.S. Results

The 2007 Census counted a total of 2,204,792 farms in the United States, a net increase of 75,810 farms since 2002, a 4% rise. Close to 300,000 new farms have begun operation since the last census in 2002. These new farms tend to have more diversified production, fewer acres, lower sales and younger operators who also work off-farm. The results show a continuation in the trend towards more small and very large farms and fewer mid-sized farms. The majority of U.S. farms are smaller operations. More than 36% of all farms are classified as residential/lifestyle farms where operators have a primary occupation other than farming. Another 21% are retirement farms. Farming is becoming more diverse with organic, value-added, and specialty production on the rise.

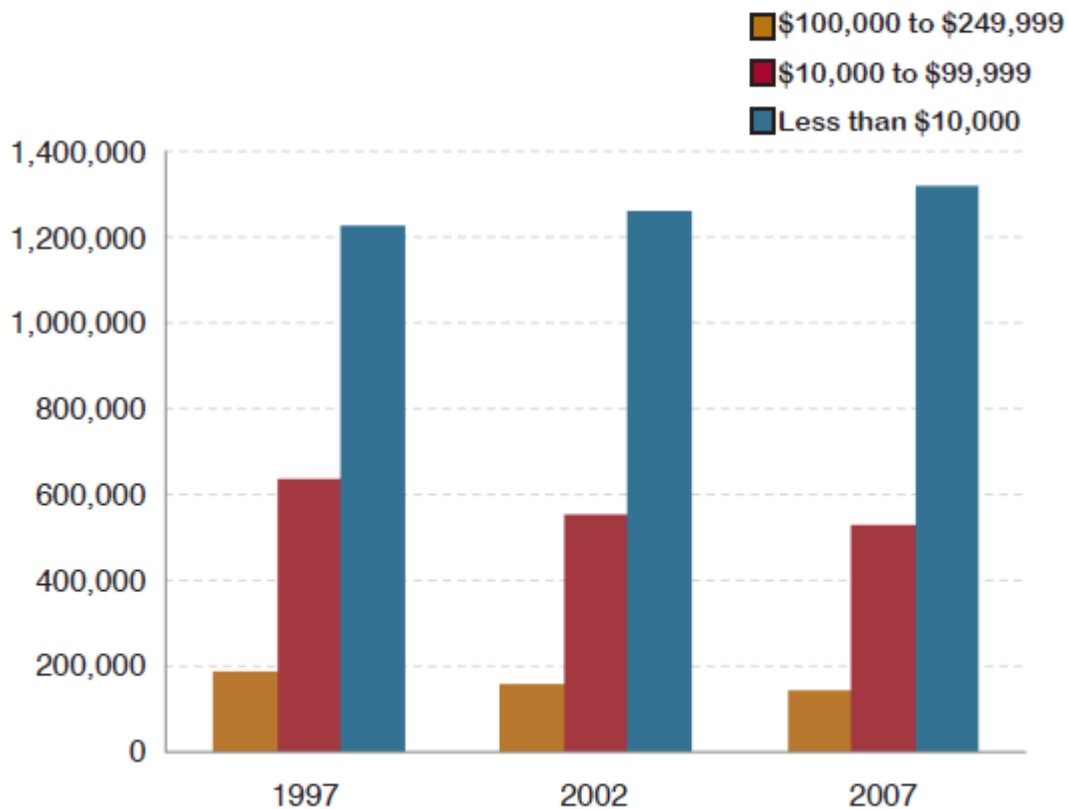
The chart and map below, taken from a USDA publication, summarize U.S. farmland trends. Note from the map that the number of farms in Maryland has increased since 2002 whereas Virginia shows a slight decrease.



Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

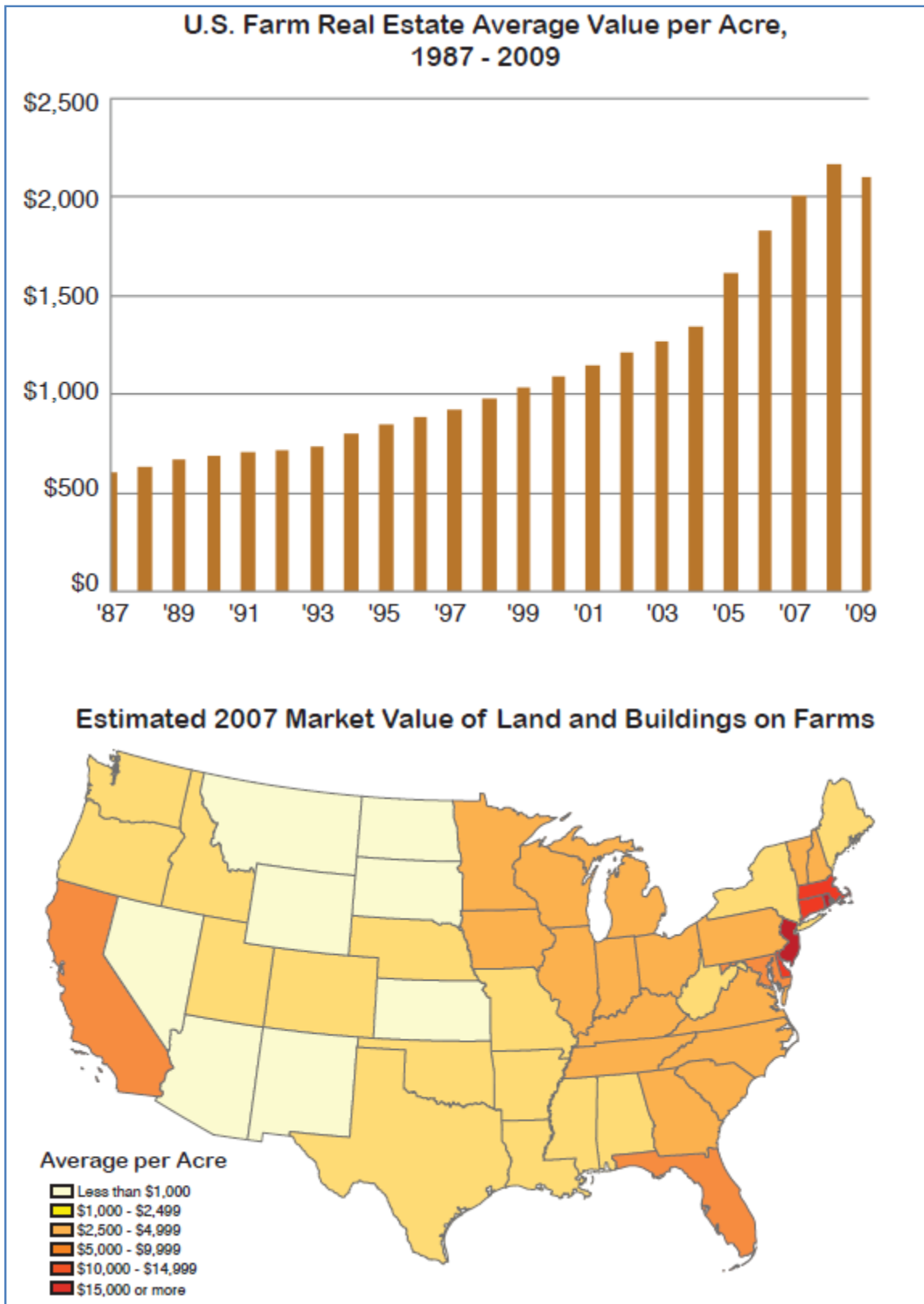
The number of small farms counted in the 2007 Census of Agriculture was 1,995,133, or 91 percent of all farms. Overall small farms increased 1 percent from 2002 to 2007, but the increase was not seen in all sales classes. Farms with sales less than \$10,000 increased while farms with sales of more than \$10,000 decreased. U.S. farms with sales between \$100,000 and \$249,999 decreased by 7 percent.

Number of Small Farms, 1997 to 2007



Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. (Small farms are classified as farms with \$250,000 or less in sales of agricultural commodities.)

The chart and map below shows that the value of farm land and buildings has been increasing steadily since 1987, and more dramatically during the recent housing boom years beginning in the early part of the last decade. The map shows that Maryland has higher than average farm land and building values compared to other states, at an average of between \$5,000 and \$9,999 per acre, in line with California and Florida.



Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Agriculture in Howard County

Number and Size of Farms

There were 335 farms in Howard County in 2007 as reported by the U.S. Census of Agriculture. This is 22% less than the 432 farms reported 20 years earlier in 1987. The table below summarizes the steady decrease every 5 years since 1987.

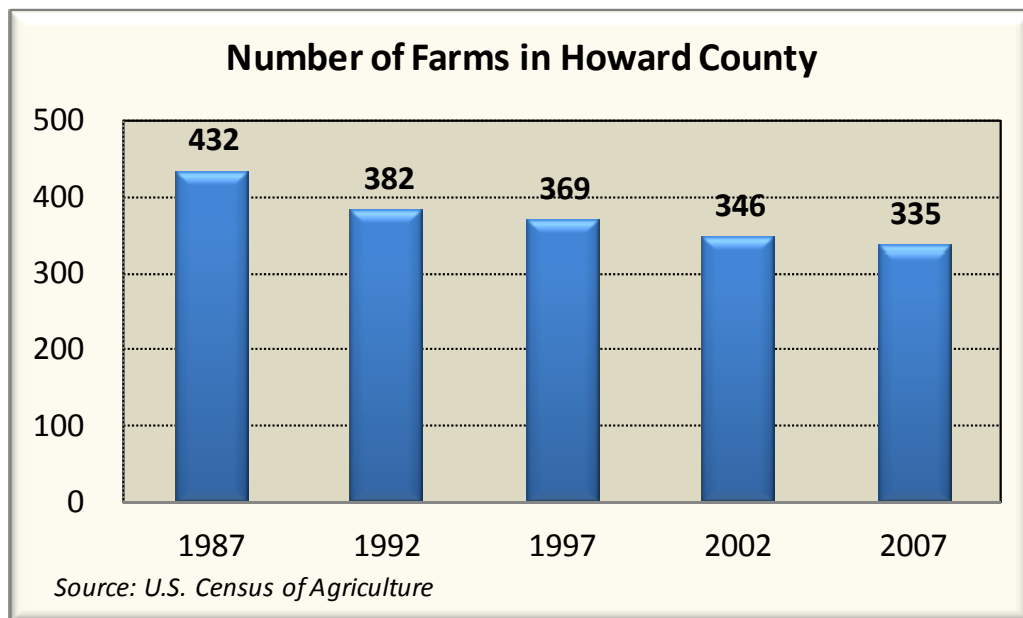
The table also shows a 46% reduction in total farm acreage, from 54,041 acres in 1987 to 29,371 acres in 2007. In 1987, about one-third of all land in Howard County was farmland compared to about 18% of all land in 2007.

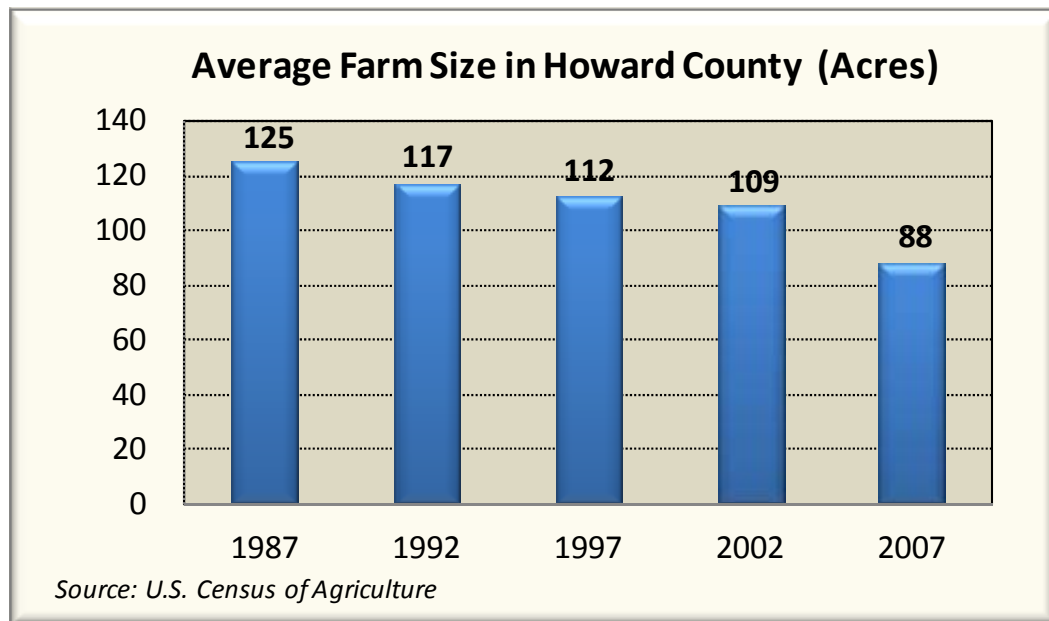
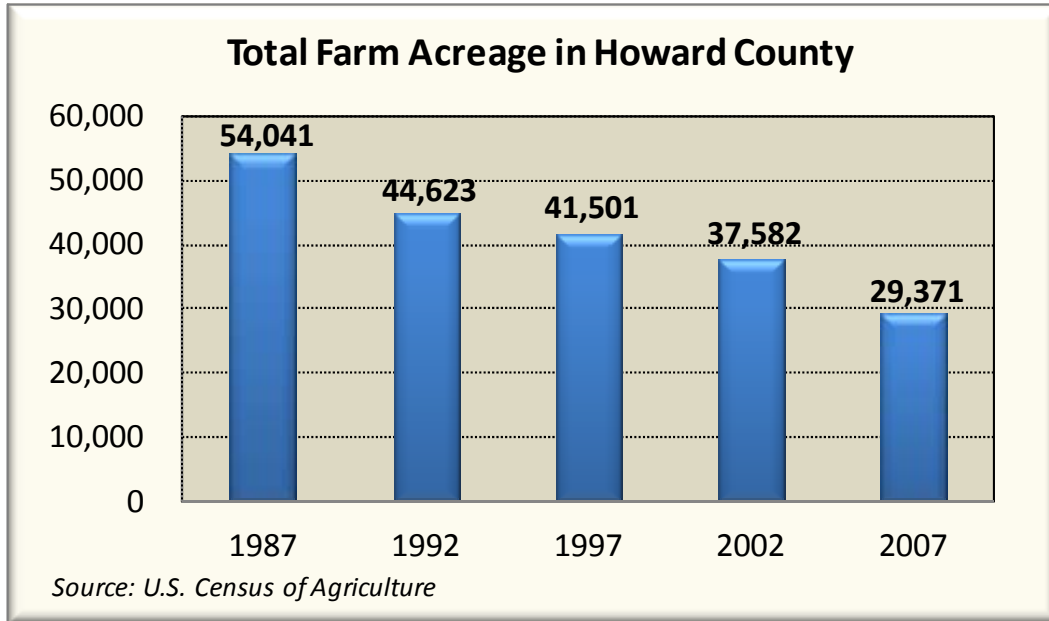
The average farm size has also decreased from 125 acres in 1987 to 88 acres in 2007. This represents a 30% reduction in average farm size.

Howard County Farms - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	20 Year Change	20 Year % Change
Number of Farms	432	382	369	346	335	(97)	-22%
Land in Farms (acres)	54,041	44,623	41,501	37,582	29,371	(24,670)	-46%
Average Size of Farm (acres)	125	117	112	109	88	(37)	-30%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture



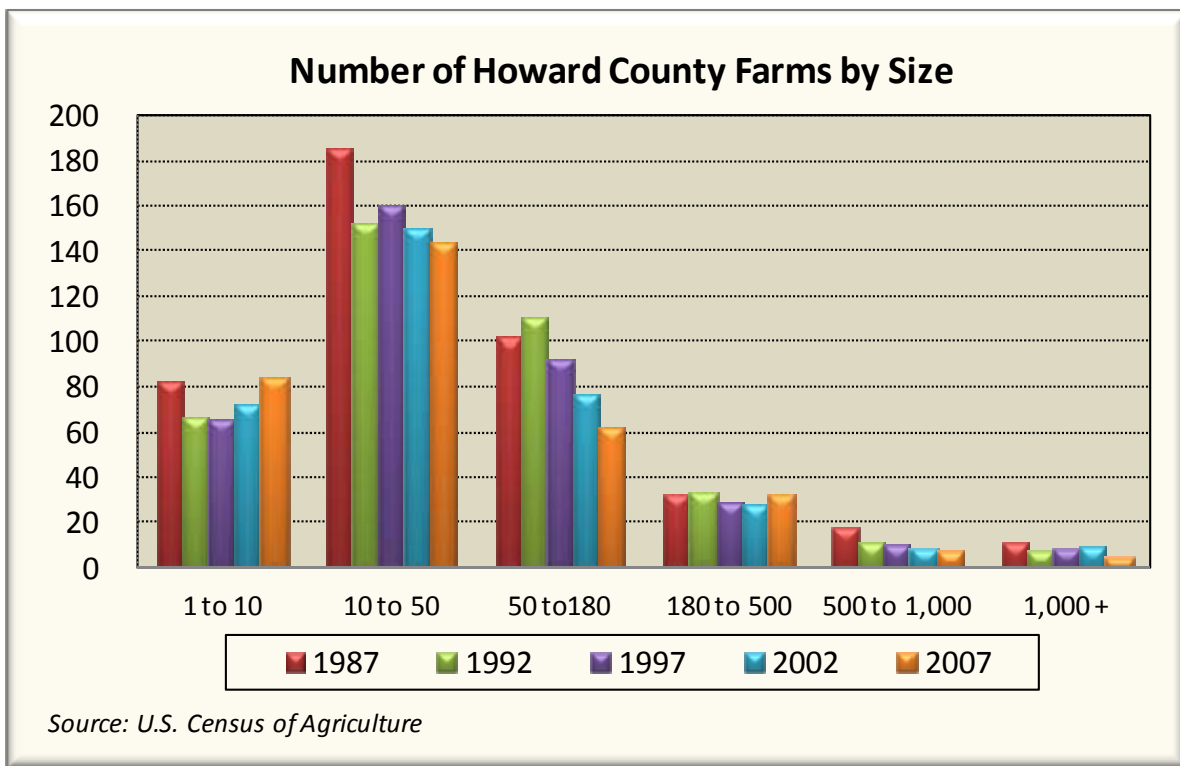


Similar to trends across the country, smaller sized farms in Howard County have been increasing. In particular, since 1992, the number of 1 to 10 acre farms have increased from 67 in 1992 to 84 in 1997. Most farms in Howard County are in the 10 to 50 acre range, followed by the 50 to 180 acre range. The number of farms of these sizes have been in decline, however. The number of farms that are between 180 and 500 acres have remained relatively steady, whereas larger farms 500 acres and up have been in decline. As of 2007, there were 8 farms in Howard County in the 500 to 1,000 acre range and 5 farms greater than 1,000 acres. The table and chart below summarize these numbers.

Number of Howard County Farms by Size (acres) - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	20 Year Change	20 Year % Change
1 to 9.99	83	67	66	72	84	1	1%
10 to 49.99	185	152	161	150	144	(41)	-22%
50 to 179.99	102	110	93	77	62	(40)	-39%
180 to 499.99	32	33	29	28	32	0	0%
500 to 999.99	18	12	11	9	8	(10)	-56%
1,000 +	12	8	9	10	5	(7)	-58%
Total	432	382	369	346	335	(97)	-22%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

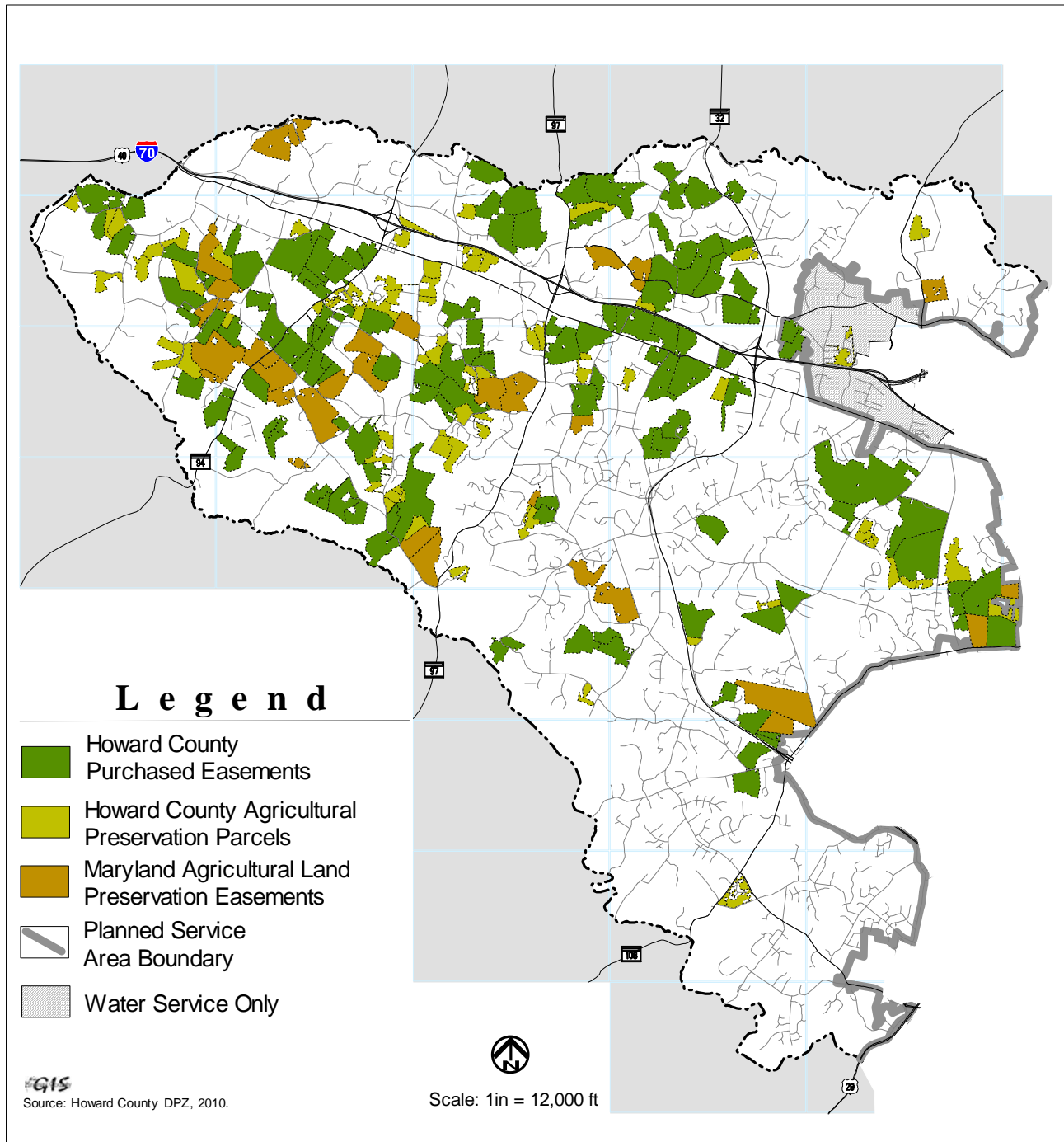


Agricultural Land Preservation

The decrease in farms in Howard County is not unexpected given the population growth that has occurred over the last 20 years. This is a typical pattern in a suburbanizing County in close proximity to economically vibrant urban cores such as Baltimore and Washington. The County has been proactive during this period to protect farmland as new development has occurred. The goal has been to achieve a balance between property rights and growth pressures and farmland preservation over time. Growth pressures in Howard County, given its location between two major fast growing metropolitan areas, are immense. The County has responded with proactive policies and programs since the early 1980's.

The map below shows the total preserved agricultural land in the Rural West as of April, 2010. The County has an established Planned Service Area boundary (shown on the map) where no public water and sewer service is allowed in the Rural West. This boundary was solidified in the 1982 General Plan with only minor adjustments since then.

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION IN HOWARD COUNTY - 2010



Howard County's Agricultural Land Preservation program (ALPP), which began in 1984, has been the primary tool for preserving farmland. Most of the preserved farmland in this program is from the purchase of easements where a farmer can voluntarily choose to sell a perpetual easement to the County while holding fee simple title to the land and continuing to farm. The easement restricts development on the land and remains with the land even when it is sold.

Farmland may also be preserved in the ALPP through the dedication of preservation parcels as part of the development process in the rural western part of the County. This occurs through the subdivision process either as the dedication of sending parcel using the Density/Cluster exchange Options or the dedication or preservation parcels within cluster subdivisions. These options were established through the County's Zoning Regulations in 1992.

The State also has an easement purchase program known as the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), which first began acquiring easements in the County in 1979. This program was more active at preserving farmland in its initial years, but has decreased over time in Howard County as land has become more expensive making it difficult to compete with other counties where land is cheaper. The Foundation also imposes restrictions on secondary agricultural activities which discourage farmers from participating in that program.

The table and chart below show the growth in agricultural preservation easement acreage since 1987 and compares that to farmland as reported by the Census of Agriculture. By 2007, more than 20,000 acres of land had been permanently preserved in agricultural preservation easements. As farmland has decreased in the County over the 20 year period, the preserved agricultural acreage has increased. An estimated 13% of farmland was under protective easement in 1987. By 2007, this increased to 69%. This is a rough estimate given that not all land under easement is active farmland. Nonetheless, it provides a clear picture of preservation progress in relation to the decrease in farmed acreage over time in Howard County.

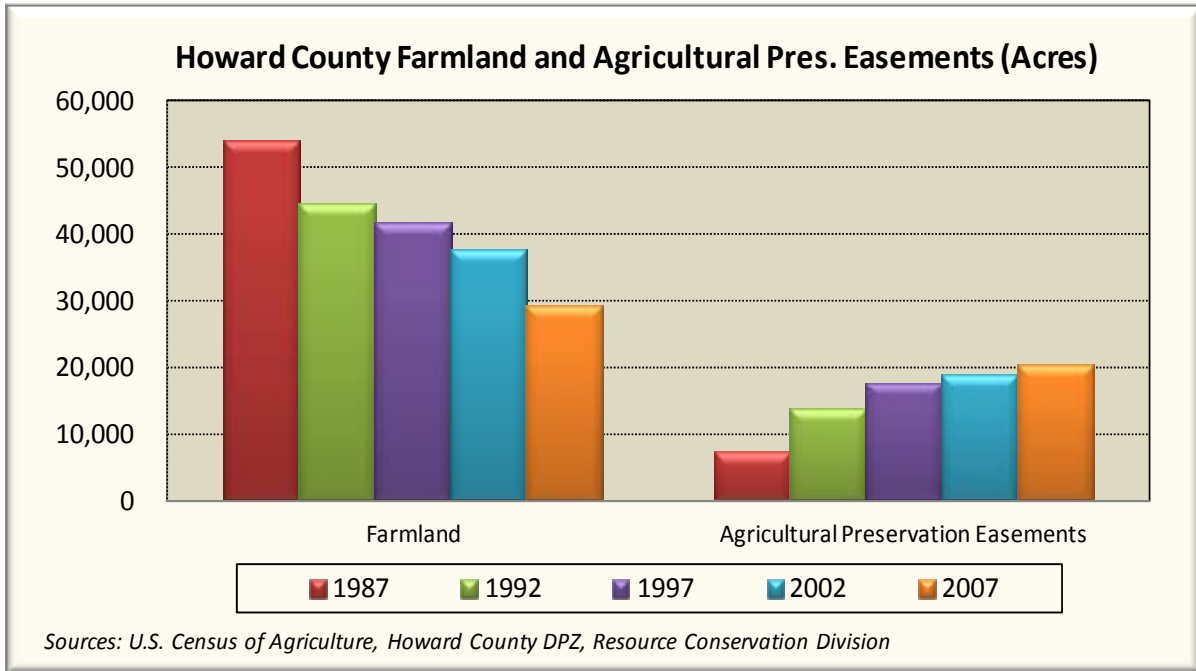
It is important to note the in addition to agricultural preservation easements, *environmental preservation easements* have also been created through the subdivision process. Currently, 7,357 acres of land in the Rural West are under general environmental easements. Some of this land is currently being farmed.

Howard County Farms and Agriculture Preservation (acres) - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Farmland	54,041	44,623	41,501	37,582	29,371
Agricultural Preservation Easements	7,224	13,724	17,653	18,894	20,267
County Purchased Easements	3,374	9,817	12,884	13,285	13,503
State Purchased Easements	3,850	3,907	3,907	3,922	3,984
County Dedicated Easements	0	0	862	1,687	2,780
Ratio of Ag Pres Easements to Farmland	13%	31%	43%	50%	69%

Note that not all land with agricultural preservation easements are actively farmed. Also, some farmland is also reported in eastern Howard County. Based on a zip code analysis it is estimated that 19 small farms were reported in eastern Howard County in 2007.

Sources: U.S. Census of Agriculture, Howard County DPZ - Resource Conservation Division



Land in Farms

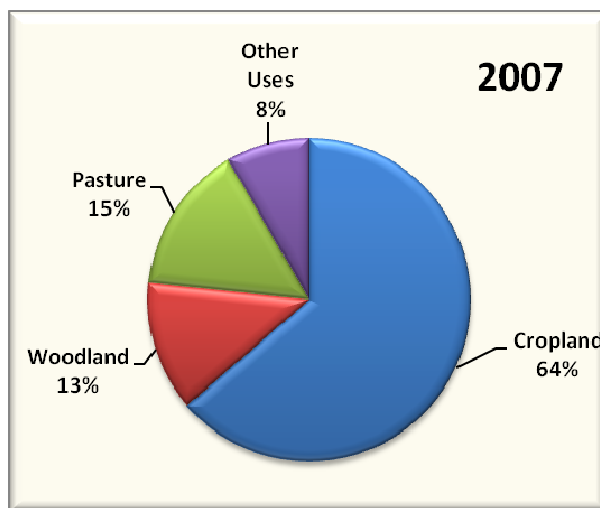
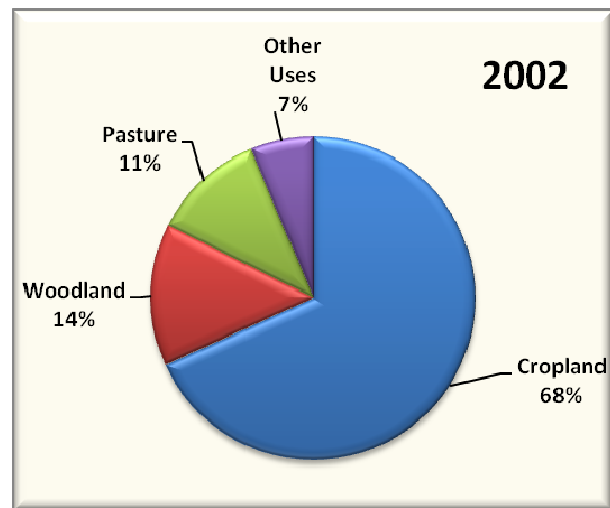
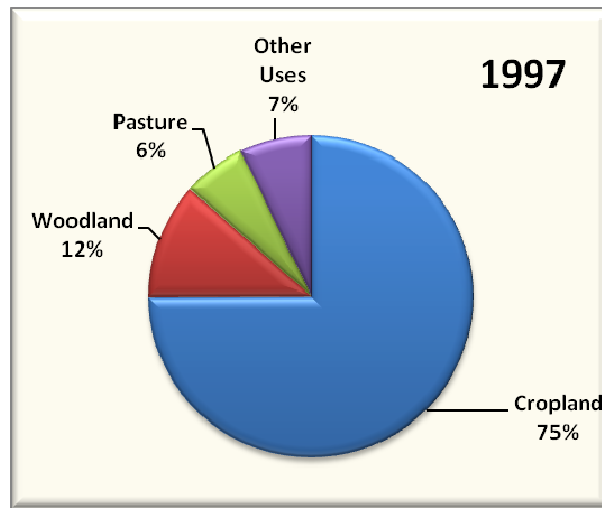
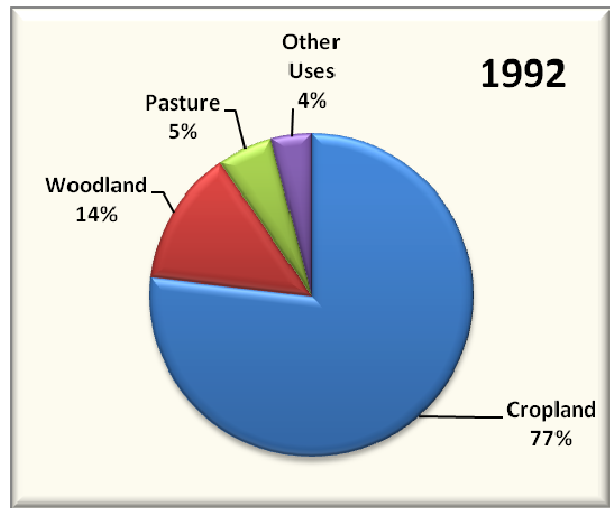
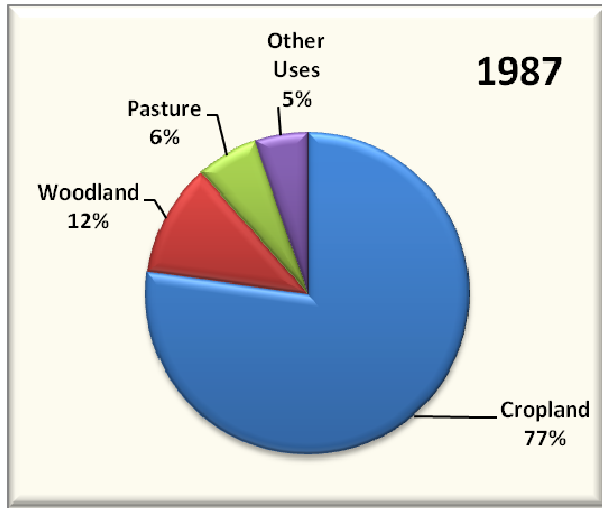
Howard County farmland has changed over the last 20 years. Since 1987, the percentage of cropland has decreased whereas the percentage of pastureland has increased. In 1987 cropland made up 77% of all farmland. By 2007 cropland was only 64% of the total. During the same time period, pastureland increased from 6% to 15%. This trend matches the growth in the equine industry in Howard County over the last 20 years. As indicated in the 2000 General Plan, the \$140 million per year equine industry is a primary contributor to the stability and growth of the County's agriculture and tourism economies. The table and charts below summarize the acreage changes.

Howard County Land in Farms - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Cropland	41,711	34,281	31,095	25,632	18,685
Woodland	6,137	6,061	4,829	5,341	3,838
Pasture	3,356	2,467	2,617	4,237	4,391
Other Uses	2,837	1,814	2,960	2,372	2,457
Total	54,041	44,623	41,501	37,582	29,371

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Other Uses include land in farmsteads, buildings, livestock facilities, ponds, roads, wasteland, etc.



Farm Production

Total sales in nominal dollar terms have increased since 1987, from \$18.3 million in 1987 to \$22.7 million in 2007. However, if inflation is taken into account using the Consumer Price Index, the \$22.7 million in sales in 2007 is only worth \$12.4 million in 1987 dollars, *so there has been a 45% decrease in the real market value of farm production.*

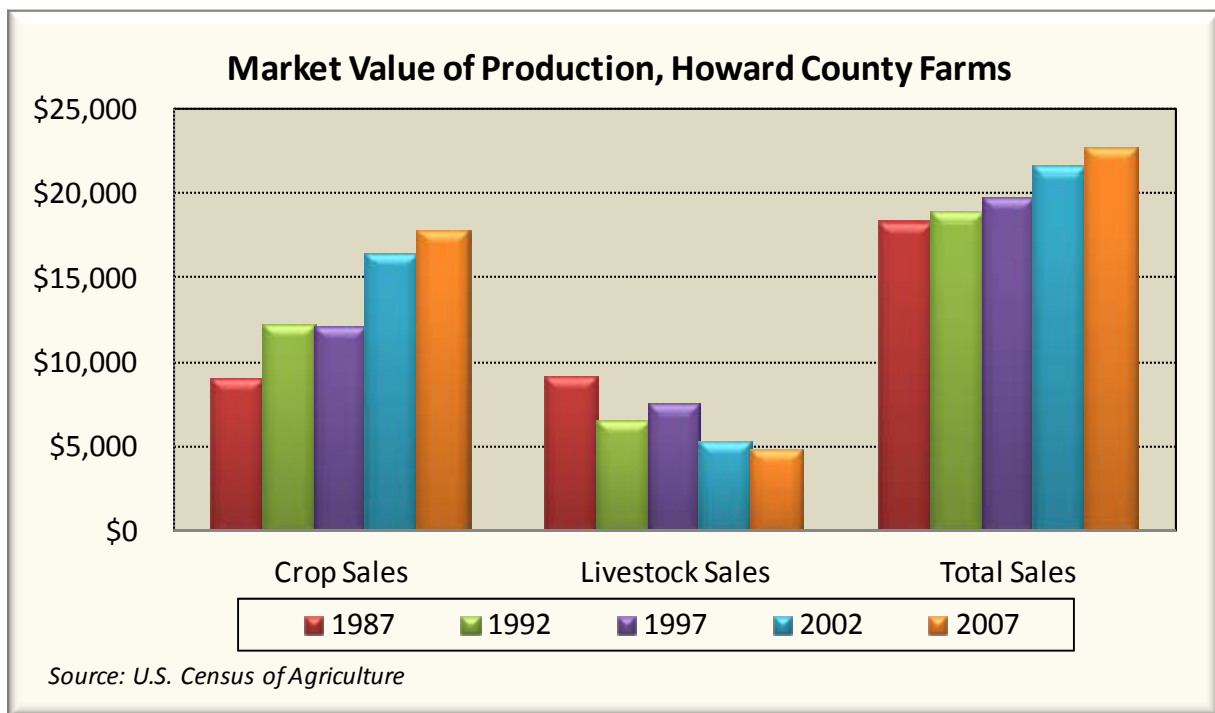
An interesting trend that is clearly apparent over the 20 year time period is that livestock sales have decreased as crop sales have increased in nominal terms. In 1987 the monetary value of crop sales were about the same as livestock sales, a fifty-fifty split. By 2007, however, livestock sales were only 21% of total sales. This is shown in the table and chart below.

Howard County Farms, Market Value of Production - 1987 to 2007 (X 1,000)

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Crop Sales	\$9,068	\$12,294	\$12,146	\$16,421	\$17,892
Livestock Sales	\$9,237	\$6,655	\$7,561	\$5,240	\$4,793
Total Sales	\$18,305	\$18,949	\$19,707	\$21,661	\$22,685

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Crop sales include nursery and greenhouse. Livestock sales include livestock, poultry and their products.



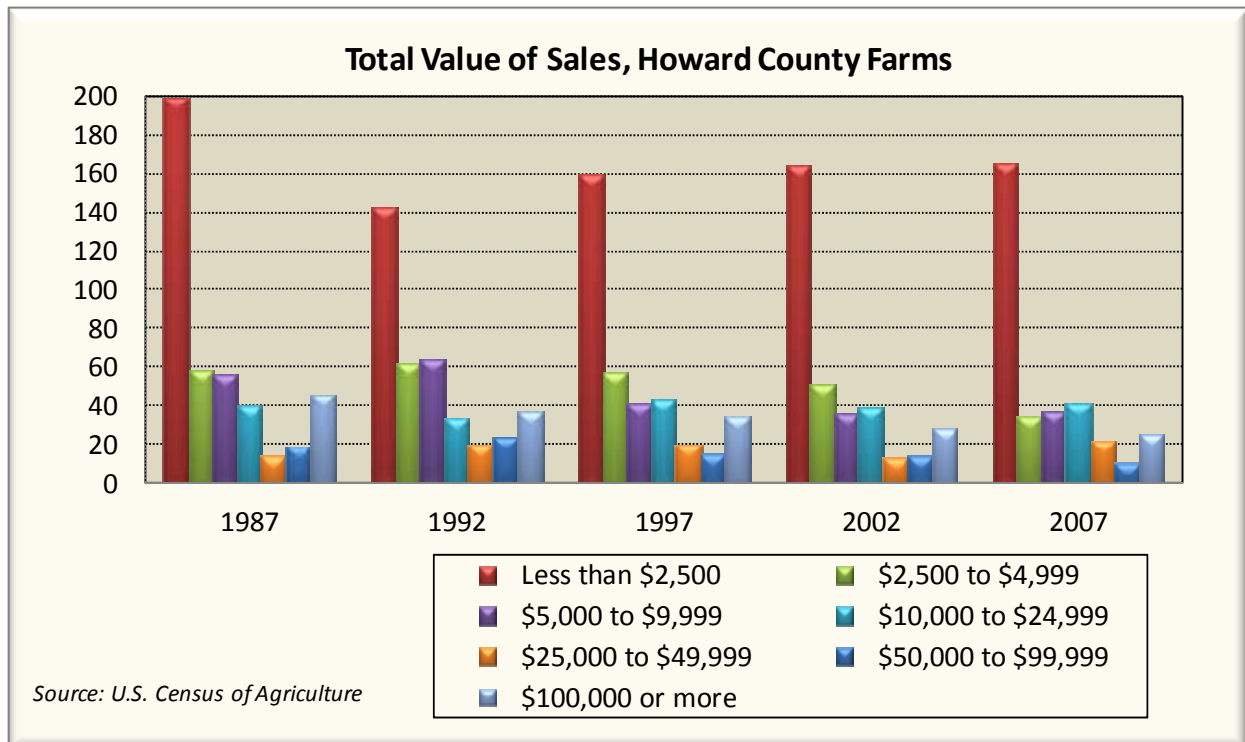
Another key observation from the data is that about half of the total farms have sales less than \$2,500 per year. The number of farms that make \$100,000 in annual sales has steadily decreased from 46 in 1987 to 26 in 2007. Farm production expenses have increased, from \$39,365 on average per farm to \$86,167 per farm in 2007 (\$47,210 in 1987 dollars). In 2007, an average *net income loss* per farm was reported, the only time this has been reported since 1987. The table and charts below show summarize this.

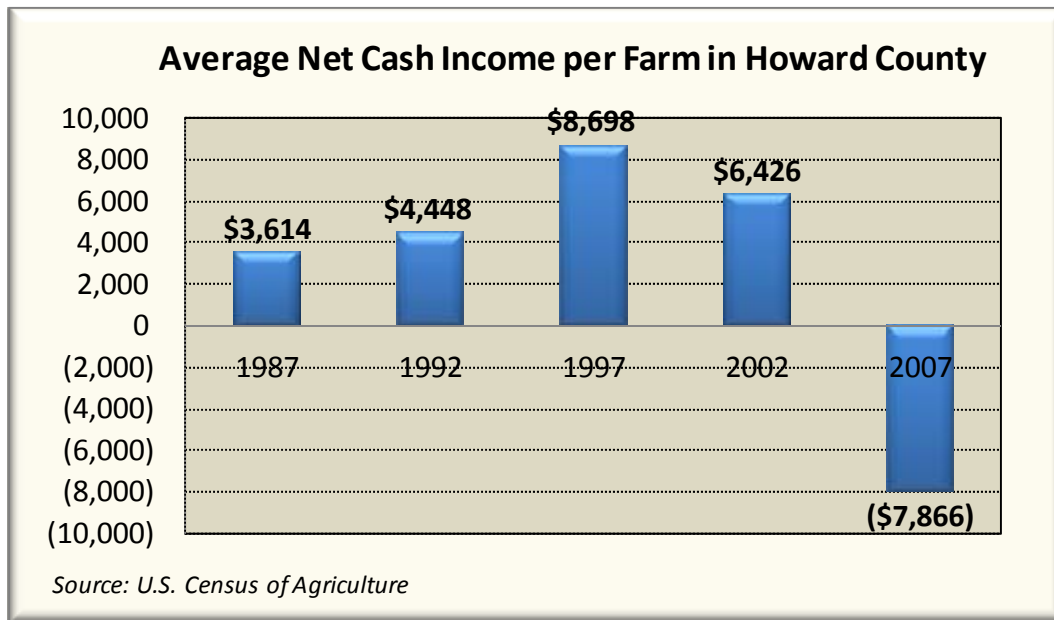
Howard County Farms, Economic Characteristics - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Farms by Value of Sale					
Less than \$2,500	199	142	159	164	165
\$2,500 to \$4,999	58	62	57	51	34
\$5,000 to \$9,999	56	64	41	36	37
\$10,000 to \$24,999	40	33	43	39	41
\$25,000 to \$49,999	14	20	20	13	22
\$50,000 to \$99,999	19	24	15	14	10
\$100,000 or more	46	37	34	29	26
Total Number of Farms	432	382	369	346	335
Total farm production expenses (1)	\$17,006,000	\$15,819,000	\$16,144,000	\$22,382,000	\$28,866,000
Average per farm	\$39,365	\$41,303	\$50,609	\$64,315	\$86,167
Net cash farm income of operation (1)	\$1,561,000	\$1,704,000	\$2,775,000	\$2,236,000	(\$2,635,000)
Average per farm	\$3,614	\$4,448	\$8,698	\$6,426	(\$7,866)

(1) Data based on a sample of farms.

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture





Breaking down farm sales by commodity type shows some prominent trends. The nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod commodities have growth considerably since 1987, while cattle and milk and other dairy product commodity values have declined. In 1987, these categories were relatively equal representing between 20 and 25% each of total commodity sales. By 2007, the nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod commodity category was close to 60% of total farm sales, whereas cattle was 4% and milk and other dairy products was 9% of the total. The first table below shows values and the second table shows the percent of total sales (based on the totals in the table on page 12).

Howard County Farms, Value of Sales by Commodity Group - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Farms by Value of Sale (\$1,000's)					
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	\$3,278	\$3,144	\$2,228	(D)	\$2,940
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	NA	NA	NA	(D)	\$510
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	(D)	(D)	(D)	\$897	\$360
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	\$4,543	\$7,833	\$8,664	\$11,537	\$13,441
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	NA	NA	NA	\$220	\$47
Other crops and hay	NA	(D)	NA	(D)	\$594
Poultry and eggs	\$16	\$24	(D)	\$13	(D)
Cattle and calves	\$3,933	\$2,603	\$1,363	(D)	\$917
Milk and other dairy products from cows	\$3,827	\$2,974	\$3,257	\$2,419	\$1,979
Hogs and pigs	\$559	\$352	(D)	\$69	\$30
Sheep, goats, and their products	NA	NA	NA	\$50	(D)
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	NA	NA	NA	\$1,716	\$1,245
Other animals and other animal products	NA	NA	NA	(D)	\$26

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

(NA) Not available or not published. Some historic data are not published because they are not comparable, electronic files are unavailable, or summarizing could compromise respondent confidentiality.

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Howard County Farms, Percent of Total Sales by Commodity Group - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Farms by Value of Sale (\$1,000's)					
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas	17.9%	16.6%	11.3%	(D)	13.0%
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes	NA	NA	NA	(D)	2.2%
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	(D)	(D)	(D)	4.1%	1.6%
Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod	24.8%	41.3%	44.0%	53.3%	59.3%
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	NA	NA	NA	1.0%	0.2%
Other crops and hay	NA	(D)	NA	(D)	2.6%
Poultry and eggs	0.1%	0.1%	(D)	0.1%	(D)
Cattle and calves	21.5%	13.7%	6.9%	(D)	4.0%
Milk and other dairy products from cows	20.9%	15.7%	16.5%	11.2%	8.7%
Hogs and pigs	3.1%	1.9%	(D)	0.3%	0.1%
Sheep, goats, and their products	NA	NA	NA	0.2%	(D)
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys	NA	NA	NA	7.9%	5.5%
Other animals and other animal products	NA	NA	NA	(D)	0.1%

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual farms

(NA) Not available or not published. Some historic data are not published because they are not comparable, electronic files are unavailable, or summarizing could compromise respondent confidentiality.

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Livestock inventories for major livestock categories have been decreasing over time in Howard County since 1987. In 1987, the Census reported that there were 2,721 hogs and pigs on Howard County farms. By 2007, this number was reduced to only 91. There were 9,841 cattle and calves in 1987. By 2007 there were only 3,121. In the meantime, the equine industry has been on the rise. The Census first reported horse inventories in 2002 at which time there were 1,382 horses in Howard County. The number has increased to 1,432 horses in 2007. This corresponds to the increase in pasture land discussed on Page 10. The table and chart below summarize the results. Sheep and lambs and Layers, which have remained relatively steady by comparison, are also included.

Howard County Farms, Livestock Inventories - 1987 to 2007

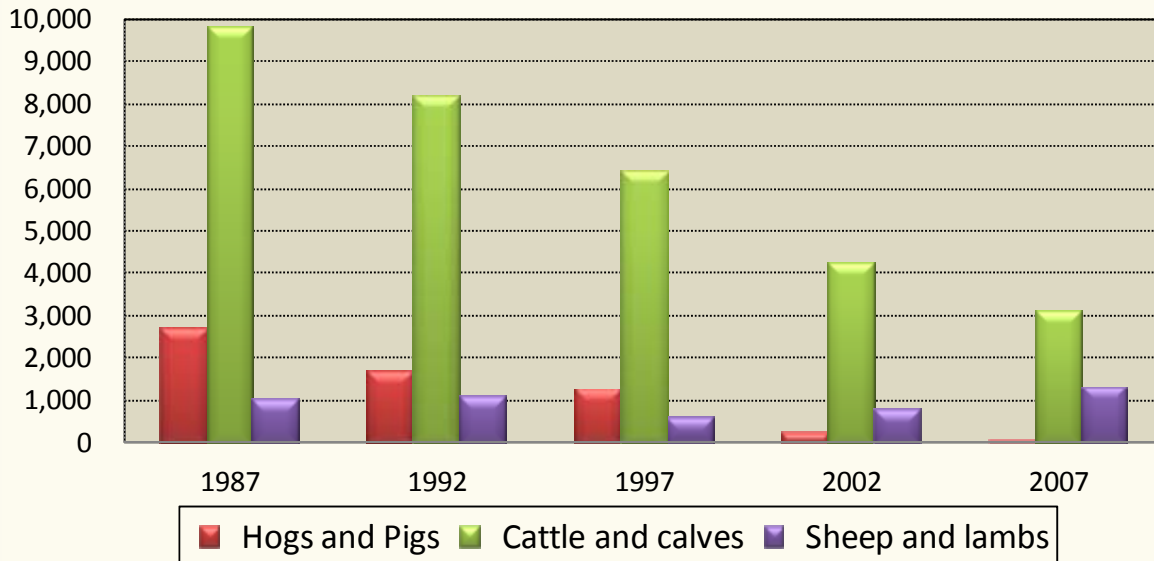
Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Livestock Inventories					
Hogs and Pigs	2,721	1,730	1,266	263	91
Cattle and calves	9,841	8,203	6,409	4,266	3,121
Horses and ponies	NA	NA	NA	1,382	1,432
Sheep and lambs	1,013	1,081	599	780	1,330
Layers (1)	NA	NA	851	987	805

(1) Chickens that lay eggs

(NA) Not available or not published. Some historic data are not published because they are not comparable, electronic files are unavailable, or summarizing could compromise respondent confidentiality.

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Howard County Farms, Livestock Inventories



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Total top crop acreage has also decreased significantly since 1987. Corn remains the top crop in terms of crop acreage. This is followed by forage and hay, soybeans and then wheat, respectively. The table and chart below summarize these acreages over the 20 year period.

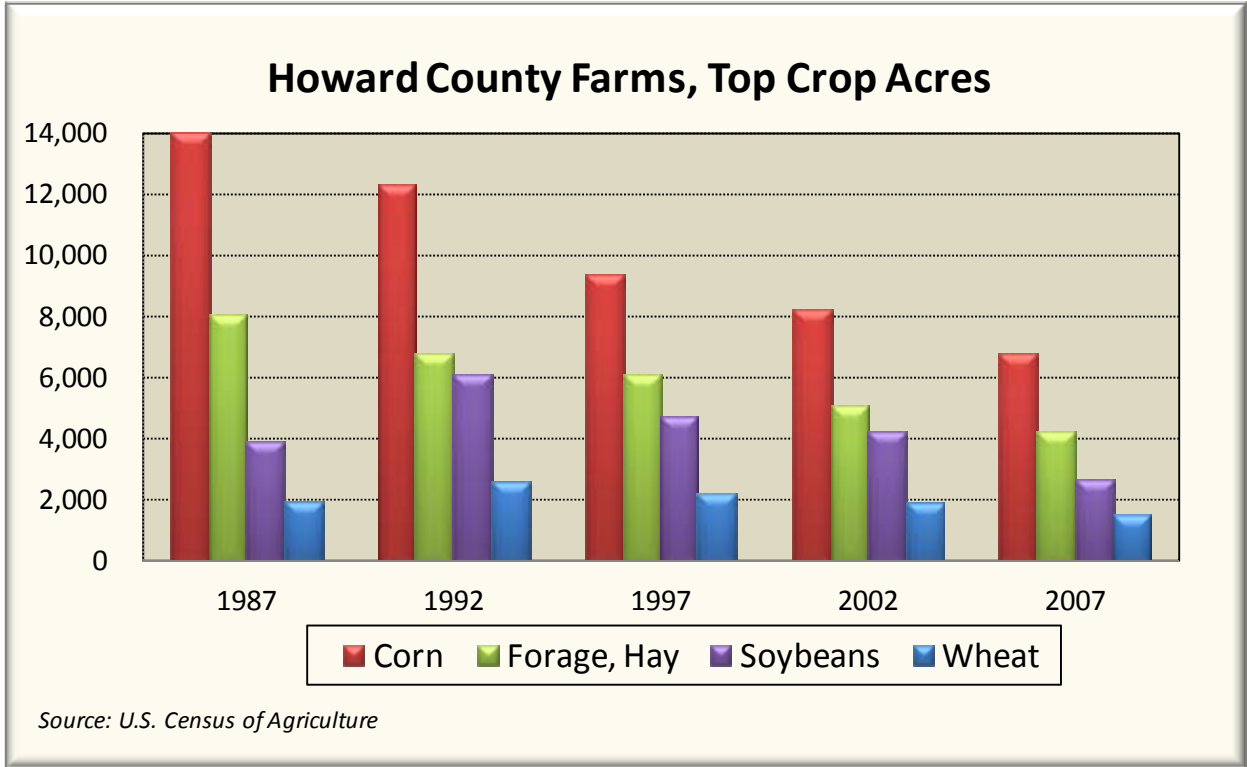
Howard County Farms, Top Crop Acres - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Top Crop Acres					
Corn (1)	14,000	12,300	9,400	8,200	6,800
Forage, Hay (3)	8,000	6,800	6,100	5,076	4,230
Soybeans (2)	3,900	6,100	4,705	4,234	2,676
Wheat (2)	2,000	2,600	2,229	1,942	1,531

(1) From USDA annual survey for all years (not 5 year Census)

(2) From USDA annual survey for 1987 and 1992. From Agricultural Census for 1997, 2002 and 2007.

(3) From USDA annual survey for 1987, 1992, and 1997. From Agricultural Census for 2002 and 2007.



Farm Operators

All farms are classified by tenure of operator. Full owners operate only land they own. Part owners operate land they own and also land they rent from others. Tenants operate only land they rent from others or work on shares from others. Farms with hired managers are classified according to the land ownership characteristics reported. For example, a family or corporation owns all the land used on the farm and hires a manager to run the farm. The hired manager is considered the farm operator, and the farm is classified with a tenure type of “full owner” even though the hired manager owns none of the land he or she operates. Most farms in Howard County are full owner farms. Smaller numbers of farms are classified as part owner or tenant.

The majority of farm operators have a principle occupation other than farming. In 2007, of the 335 farms in Howard County, 203 of them (60%) were operated where the primary occupation of the principal operator was not farming. Previous censuses also reported this same general pattern.

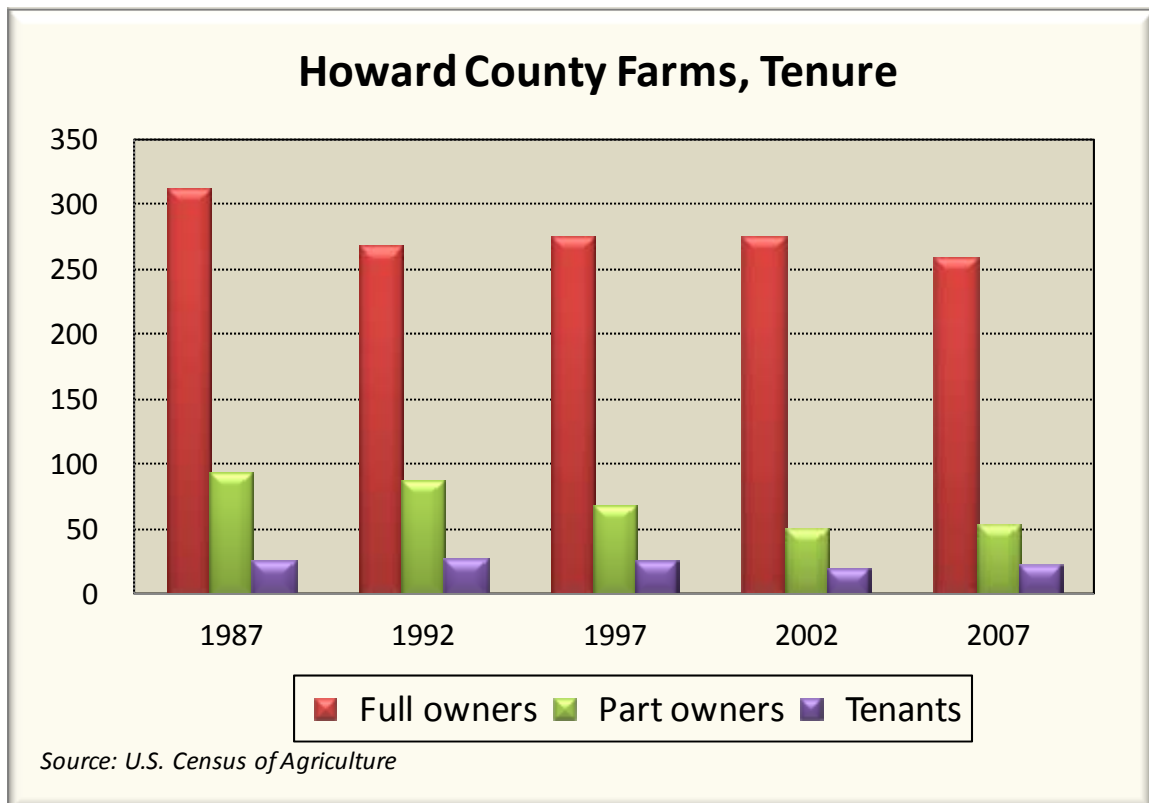
By far, most farms in Howard County are family or individual farms, 264 of the 335 farms in 2007. This compares to 39 corporate farms, 24 partnerships and 8 other (coop, estate or trust, institution, etc.).

The average age of the principal farm operator in Howard County has risen to 58.3 years old in 2007 from 52.4 years old in 1987. The average number of years a farmer has operated the same farm has also increased over this time period, from 17.4 to 22.4 years.

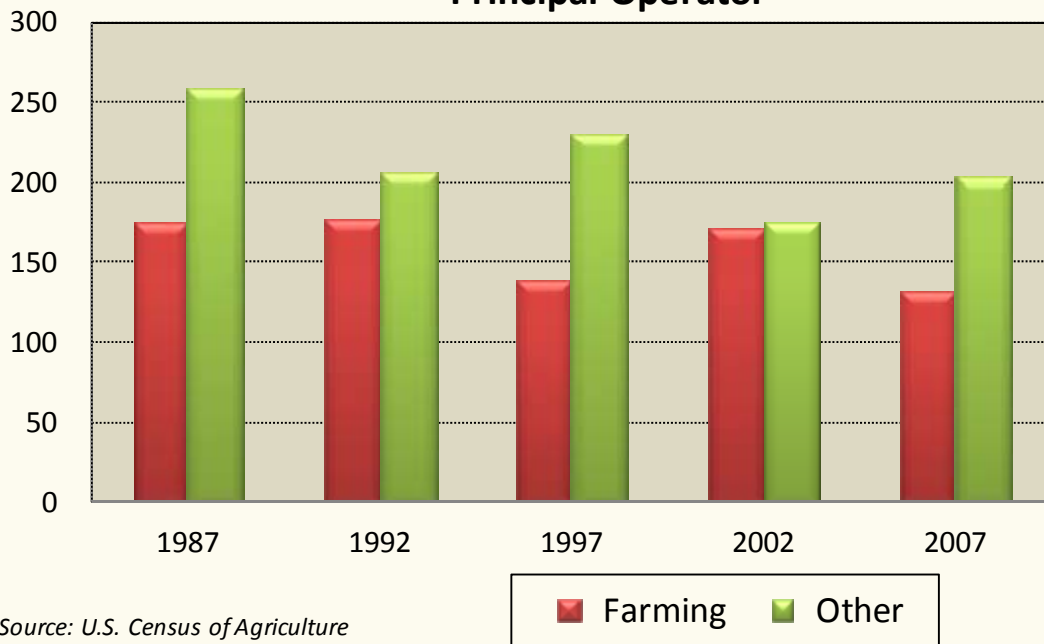
Howard County Farms, Farm Tenure & Operator Characteristics - 1987 to 2007

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
Tenure of Principal Operator					
Full owners	313	267	275	276	260
Part owners	93	88	69	50	53
Tenants	26	27	25	20	22
Total	432	382	369	346	335
Principal Occupation of Primary Operator					
Farming	174	177	139	171	132
Other	258	205	230	175	203
Total	432	382	369	346	335
Type of Organization					
Family or Individual	350	312	289	292	264
Corporations (inc. family held corp.)	27	32	44	31	39
Partnerships	51	33	31	22	24
Other - Coop, Estate or Trust, Inst., etc.	4	5	5	1	8
Total	432	382	369	346	335
Principal Oper. Avg. Years on Present Farm	17.4	20.3	20.3	20.3	22.4
Principal Oper. Avg. Age	52.4	55.9	56.4	56.5	58.3

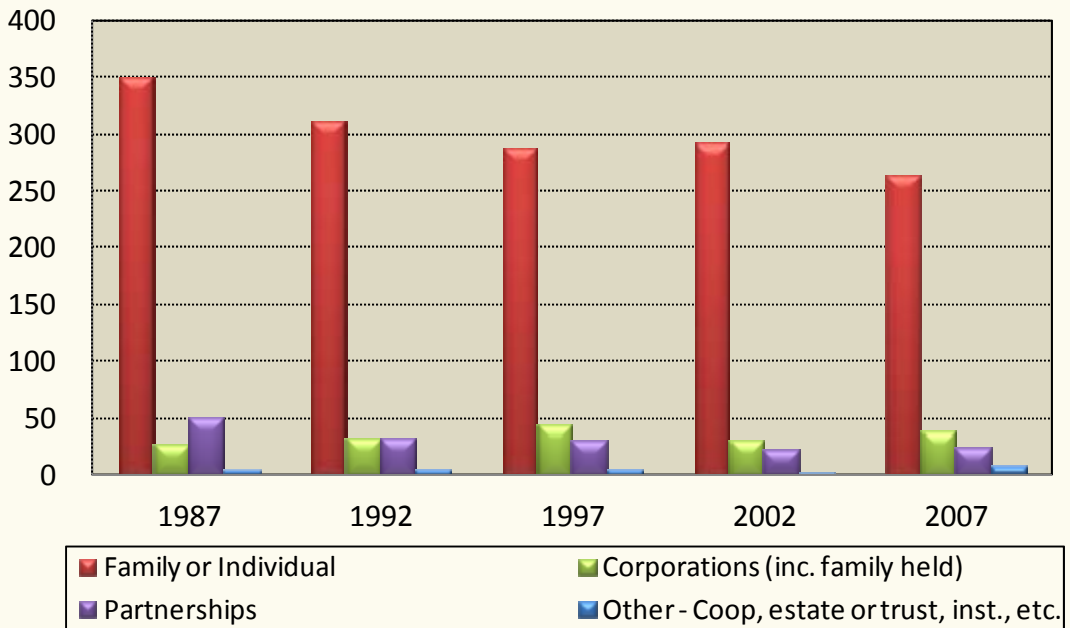
Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture



Howard County Farms, Primary Occupation of Principal Operator



Howard County Farms, Type of Organization



Farm Typology

For the first time in 2007, farms were classified by “typology.” The Economic Research Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has established a typology grouping farms by similar characteristics. There are 8 farm typology categories under two major groupings, small family farms with sales less than \$250,000 and other farms. The small family farm group is divided into 5 subcategories:

1. ***Limited-resource farms*** have a market value of agricultural products sold with gross sales of less than \$100,000, and a total principal operator household income of less than \$20,000.
2. ***Retirement farms*** have market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$250,000, and a principal operator who reports being retired.
3. ***Residential/lifestyle farms*** have a market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$250,000, and a principal operator who reports his/her primary occupation as other than farming.
4. ***Farming occupation/lower-sales farms*** have a market value of agricultural products sold of less than \$100,000, and a principal operator who reports farming as his/her primary occupation.
5. ***Farming occupation/higher-sales*** farms have a market value of agricultural products sold of between \$100,000 and \$249,999, and a principal operator who reports farming as his/her primary occupation.

Other farms are subdivided into 3 subcategories:

1. ***Large family farms*** have a market value of agricultural products sold between \$250,000 and \$499,000.
2. ***Very large family farms*** have a market value of agricultural products sold of \$500,000 or more.
3. ***Nonfamily farms*** are farms organized as nonfamily corporations, as well as farms operated by hired managers.

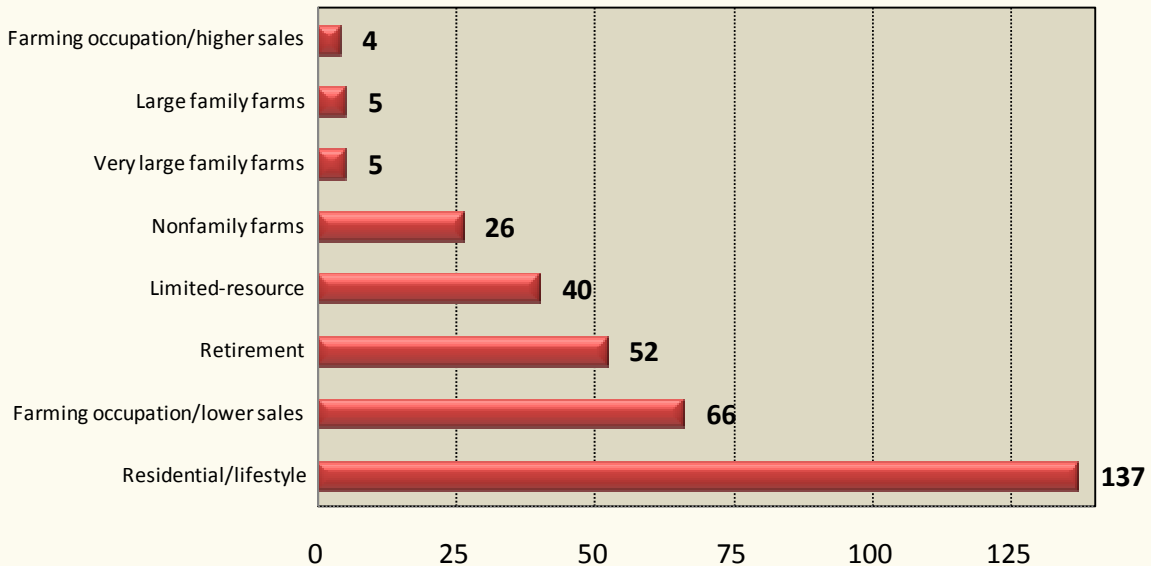
The table and charts on the following pages summarize the 2007 farm typology results for Howard County. The majority of farms were residential/lifestyle farms, followed by farming occupation/lower sales farms and then retirement farms. Nonfamily farms had the greatest overall acreage, followed by residential/lifestyle farms and then very large family farms. The third chart below derives the average size per farm by farm typology. On average, limited resource and retirement farms are the smallest at 35 acres each, followed by residential/lifestyle farms at 50 acres and then farming occupation/lower sales farms at 54 acres.

Howard County Farms, Farm Typology - 2007

	Acres		Farms	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Small Family Farms				
Limited-resource	1,419	5%	40	12%
Retirement	1,805	6%	52	16%
Residential/lifestyle	6,902	23%	137	41%
Farming occupation/lower sales	3,549	12%	66	20%
Farming occupation/higher sales	1,496	5%	4	1%
Subtotal	15,171	52%	299	89%
Large family farms	2,749	9%	5	1%
Very large family farms	4,460	15%	5	1%
Nonfamily farms	6,991	24%	26	8%
Total	29,371	100%	335	100%

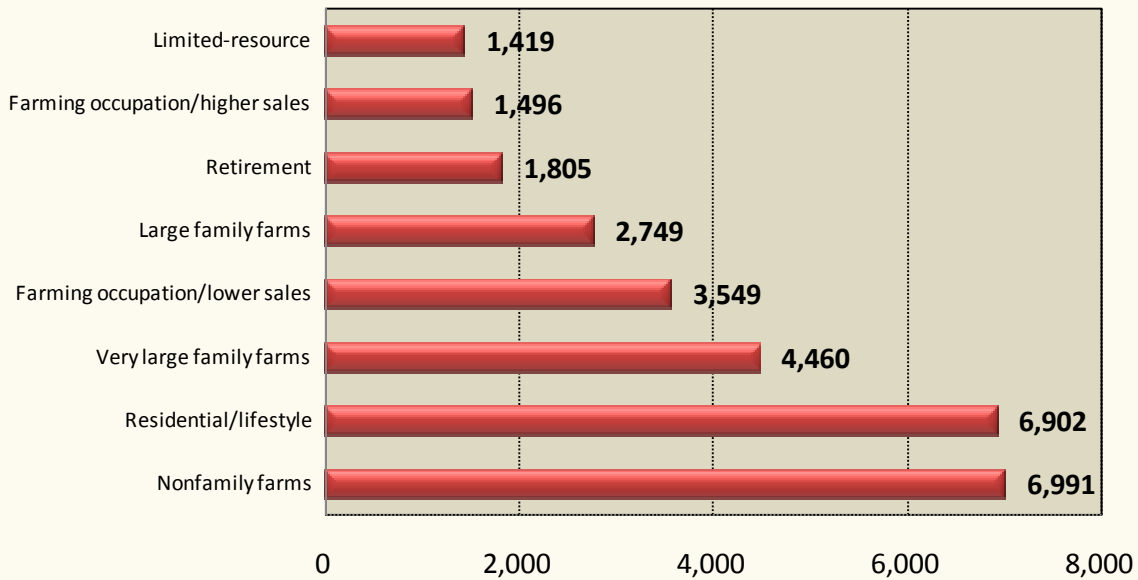
Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture
See text for explanation of typologies.

Howard County Farms, Number by Farm Typology



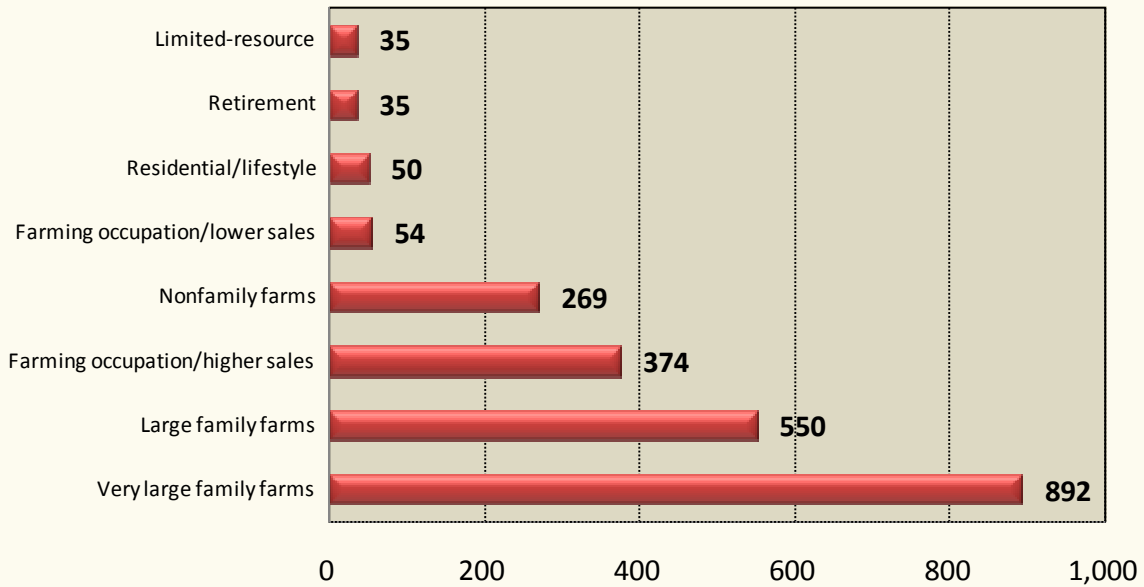
Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Howard County Farms, Acres by Farm Typology



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Howard County Farms, Average Acres per Farm by Farm Typology



Source: derived from U.S. Census of Agriculture

Agriculture in Maryland

There were 12,834 farms in Maryland in 2007. This is an increase from 2002 when there were 12,198 farms. Since 1987, however, there has been a net loss of 1,942 farms in the state, a 13.1% decrease. Frederick County had the most farms in 2007. Frederick also ranked 1st in 1987. Howard was ranked 19th with 335 farms in 2007.

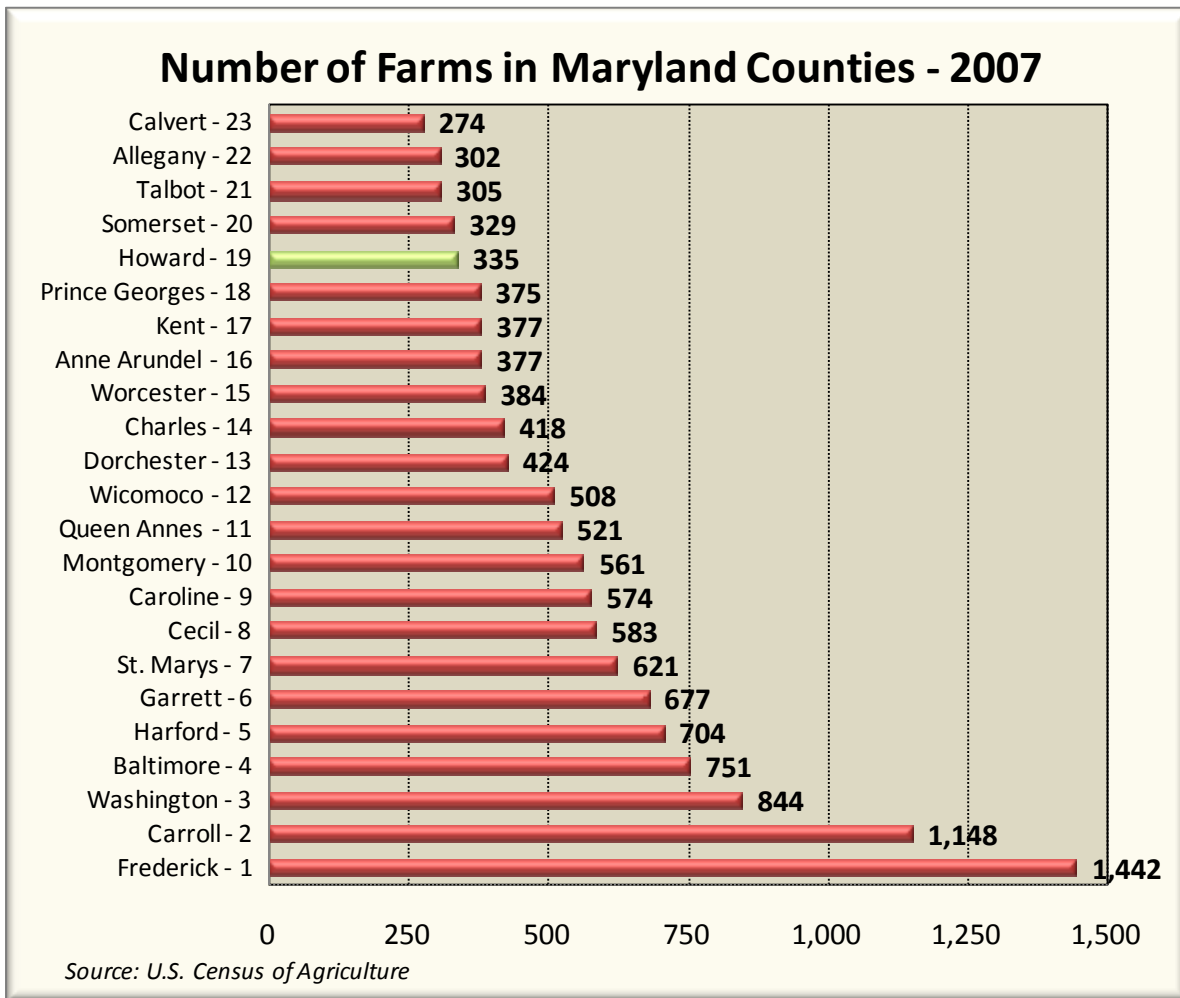
Prince Georges County had the greatest decline with 683 farms in 1987 and only 375 farms in 2007, a loss of 308 farms (a 45% reduction). By contrast Howard County lost 97 farms, which was a 22.5% reduction. Eight counties actually had farm increases over the 20 years. Queen Annes County added the most with 64 farms. The table and chart below summarize this information.

Note that there is further Census of Agriculture information at the statewide level provided by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) at this link: www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc. County comparisons for some data are also available in these reports. In addition, the MPD reports show statewide results for select information as far back as 1959. Comparisons that far back indicate that the loss of farmland has slowed significantly in recent years. A report on sustainability practices, much of which is newly reported in the 2007 Census, is particularly insightful.

Number of Farms - Maryland Counties 1987 to 2007 (ranked by order of 2007 farms)

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2007-1987	% change
Frederick - 1	1,439	1,346	1,429	1,273	1,442	3	0.2%
Carroll - 2	1,238	1,080	1,159	1,058	1,148	(90)	-7.3%
Washington - 3	906	809	823	775	844	(62)	-6.8%
Baltimore - 4	917	840	889	784	751	(166)	-18.1%
Harford - 5	758	695	733	683	704	(54)	-7.1%
Garrett - 6	670	634	718	634	677	7	1.0%
St. Marys - 7	754	673	658	577	621	(133)	-17.6%
Cecil - 8	501	455	510	468	583	82	16.4%
Caroline - 9	636	588	556	506	574	(62)	-9.7%
Montgomery - 10	669	561	596	577	561	(108)	-16.1%
Queen Annes - 11	457	413	440	443	521	64	14.0%
Wicomico - 12	774	684	624	512	508	(266)	-34.4%
Dorchester - 13	392	347	308	351	424	32	8.2%
Charles - 14	601	496	451	418	418	(183)	-30.4%
Worcester - 15	631	474	450	403	384	(247)	-39.1%
Anne Arundel - 16	567	477	465	432	377	(190)	-33.5%
Kent - 17	361	318	325	318	377	16	4.4%
Prince Georges - 18	683	551	526	452	375	(308)	-45.1%
Howard - 19	432	382	369	346	335	(97)	-22.5%
Somerset - 20	406	345	314	301	329	(77)	-19.0%
Talbot - 21	280	250	254	288	305	25	8.9%
Allegany - 22	240	219	274	278	302	62	25.8%
Calvert - 23	464	400	383	321	274	(190)	-40.9%
Total	14,776	13,037	13,254	12,198	12,834	(1,942)	-13.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture



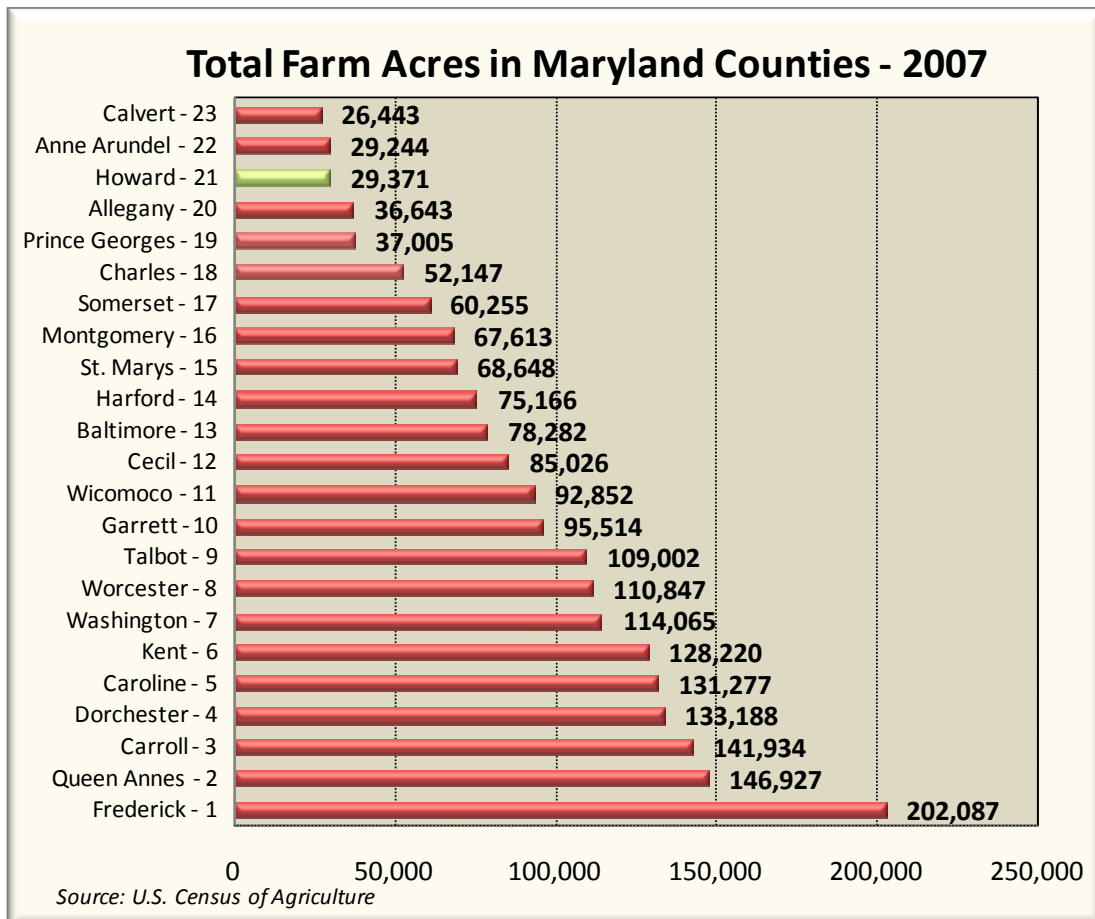
The table and chart below summarize total farm acreage by county from 1987 to 2007. Statewide, there was 2.05 million acres of farm land in 2007, around 345,000 less acres than the almost 2.4 million acres in 1987. All counties but two, Dorchester and St. Mary's, had a net decrease in total farmland between 1987 and 2007. Montgomery County lost the most farmland over the 20 year period, almost 36,000 acres. This was followed by Frederick County which lost around 34,000 acres. However, Frederick County ranks 1st in total farmland with over 200,000 acres in 2007, significantly higher than even second place Queen Anne's with 147,000 acres.

The maps further below depict this information thematically. Map 1 shows the relatively greater amounts of farmland in 2007 on the eastern shore as well as the north central part of the State including Frederick, Carroll, and Washington Counties. Maps 2 and 3 show a thematic comparison of farm acreage loss (and increase) since 1987.

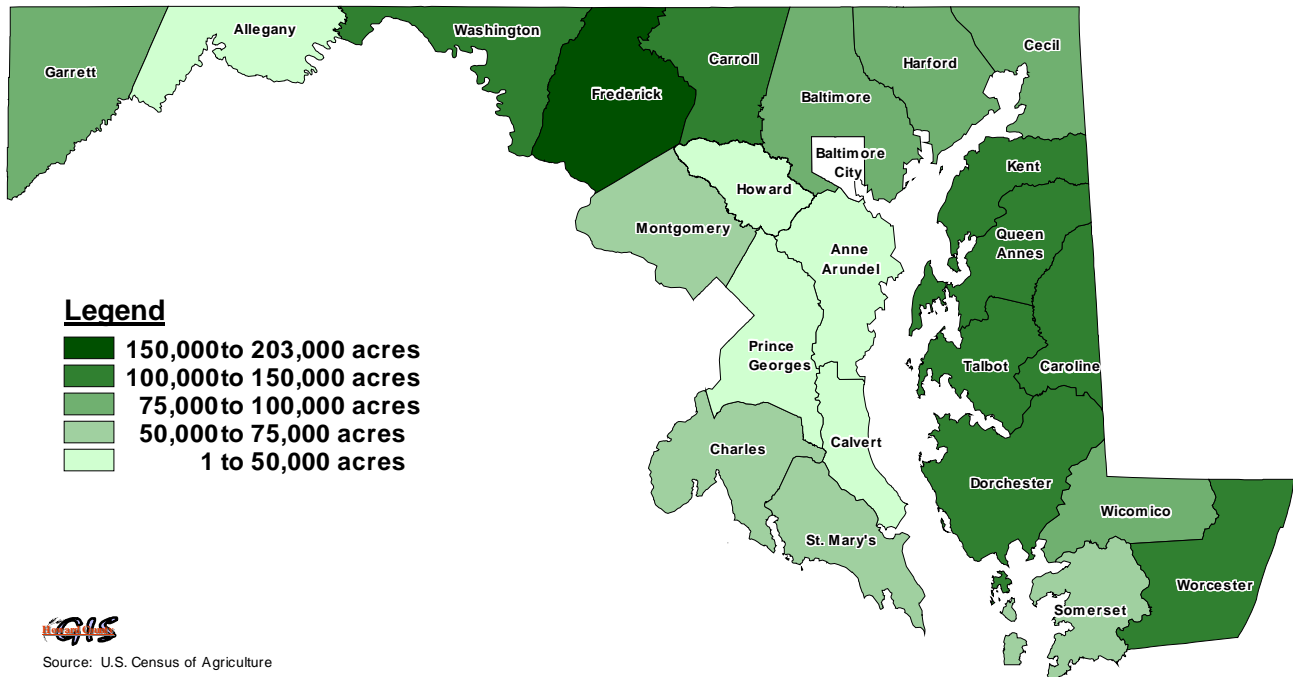
Acres of Farmland - Maryland Counties 1987 to 2007 (ranked by order of 2007 farm acreage)

Year ==>	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2007-1987	% change
Frederick - 1	236,350	222,768	218,044	195,827	202,087	(34,263)	-14.5%
Queen Annes - 2	170,677	165,349	166,756	155,566	146,927	(23,750)	-13.9%
Carroll - 3	166,745	157,505	167,871	147,252	141,934	(24,811)	-14.9%
Dorchester - 4	125,019	123,762	122,443	125,385	133,188	8,169	6.5%
Caroline - 5	132,804	126,981	112,545	114,843	131,277	(1,527)	-1.1%
Kent - 6	133,597	131,283	117,905	117,372	128,220	(5,377)	-4.0%
Washington - 7	137,529	123,932	126,467	125,159	114,065	(23,464)	-17.1%
Worcester - 8	123,406	107,519	114,624	131,249	110,847	(12,559)	-10.2%
Talbot - 9	109,032	109,108	111,144	105,729	109,002	(30)	0.0%
Garrett - 10	121,529	110,699	111,829	101,444	95,514	(26,015)	-21.4%
Wicomoco - 11	95,542	91,254	92,057	88,470	92,852	(2,690)	-2.8%
Cecil - 12	86,861	80,241	86,419	77,089	85,026	(1,835)	-2.1%
Baltimore - 13	92,806	83,232	79,479	71,227	78,282	(14,524)	-15.6%
Harford - 14	99,948	97,312	94,806	81,409	75,166	(24,782)	-24.8%
St. Marys - 15	64,305	55,657	71,920	68,153	68,648	4,343	6.8%
Montgomery - 16	103,377	82,470	79,268	75,077	67,613	(35,764)	-34.6%
Somerset - 17	80,493	77,491	56,424	56,650	60,255	(20,238)	-25.1%
Charles - 18	67,655	59,389	56,648	52,056	52,147	(15,508)	-22.9%
Prince Georges - 19	62,308	54,459	49,257	45,462	37,005	(25,303)	-40.6%
Allegany - 20	48,941	37,802	43,944	39,379	36,643	(12,298)	-25.1%
Howard - 21	54,041	44,623	41,501	37,582	29,371	(24,670)	-45.7%
Anne Arundel - 22	42,413	43,320	36,438	35,218	29,244	(13,169)	-31.0%
Calvert - 23	41,251	37,320	35,274	30,032	26,443	(14,808)	-35.9%
Total	2,396,629	2,223,476	2,193,063	2,077,630	2,051,756	(344,873)	-14.4%

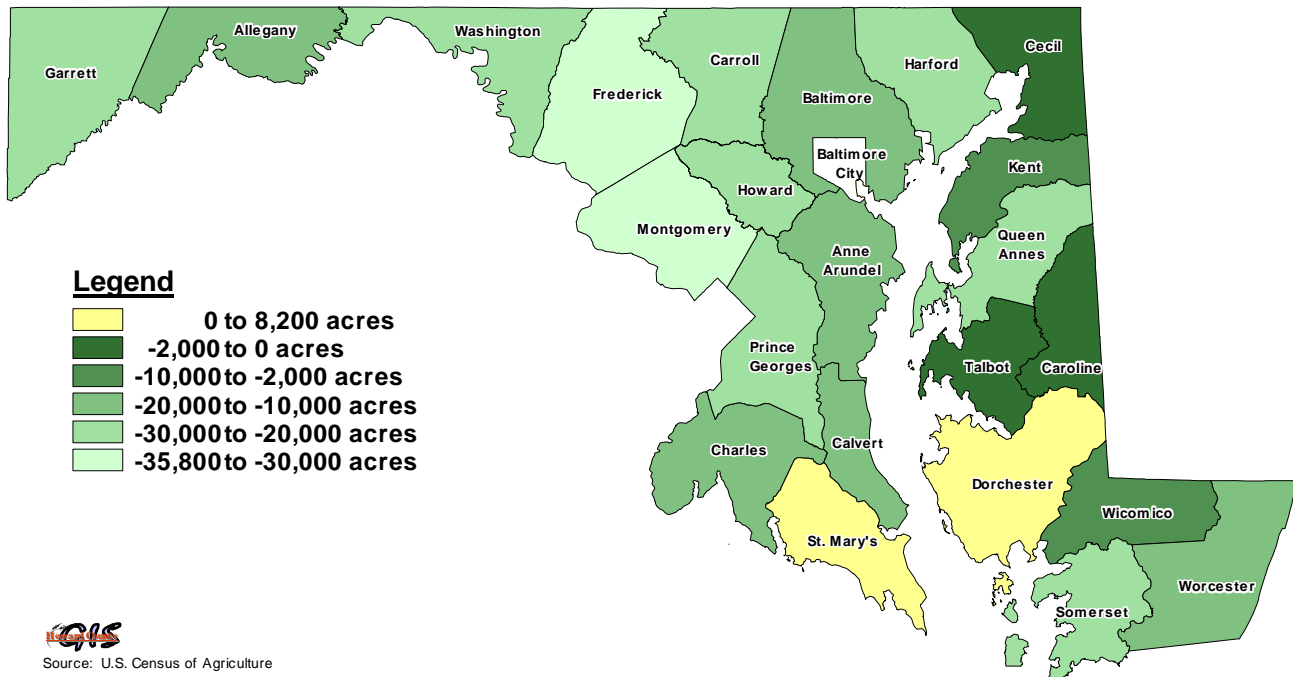
Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture



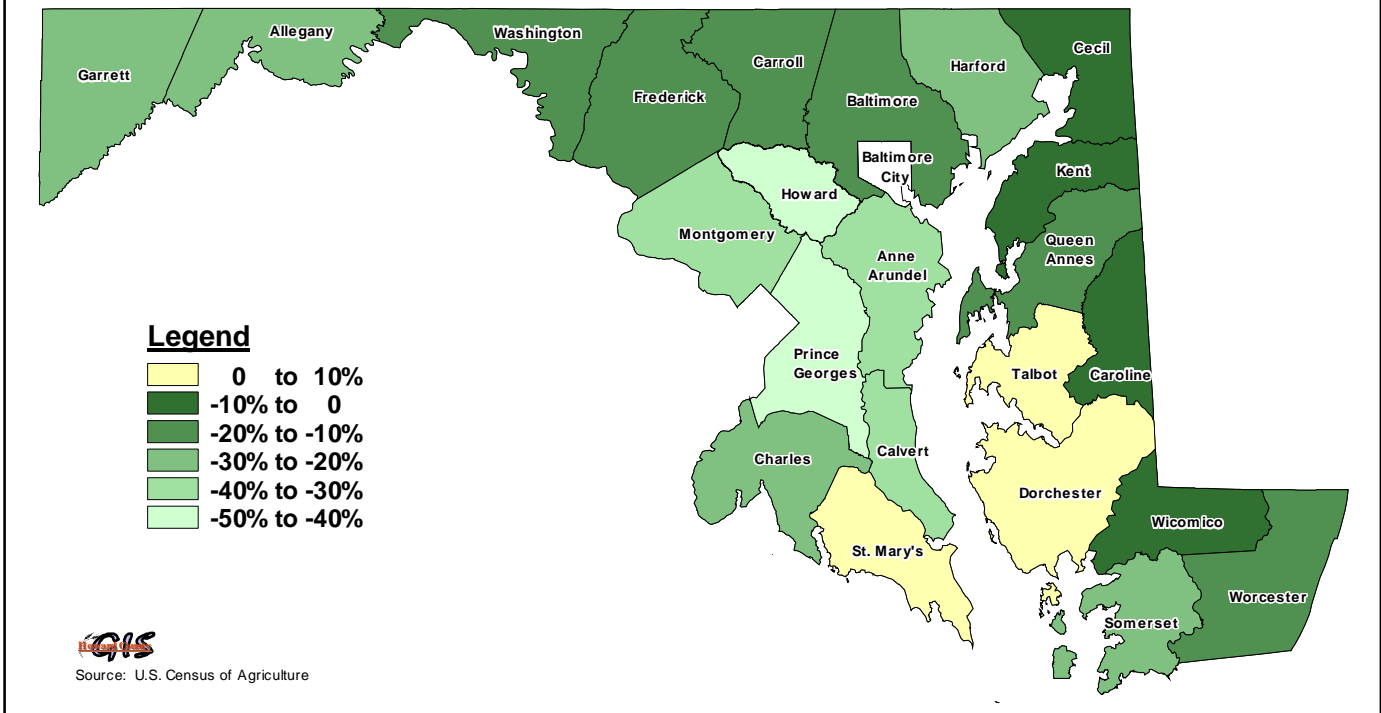
**Map 1
Acres of Farmland in Maryland - 2007**



**Map 2
Change in Farmland - 1987 to 2007**



Map 3
Percent Change in Farmland - 1987 to 2007



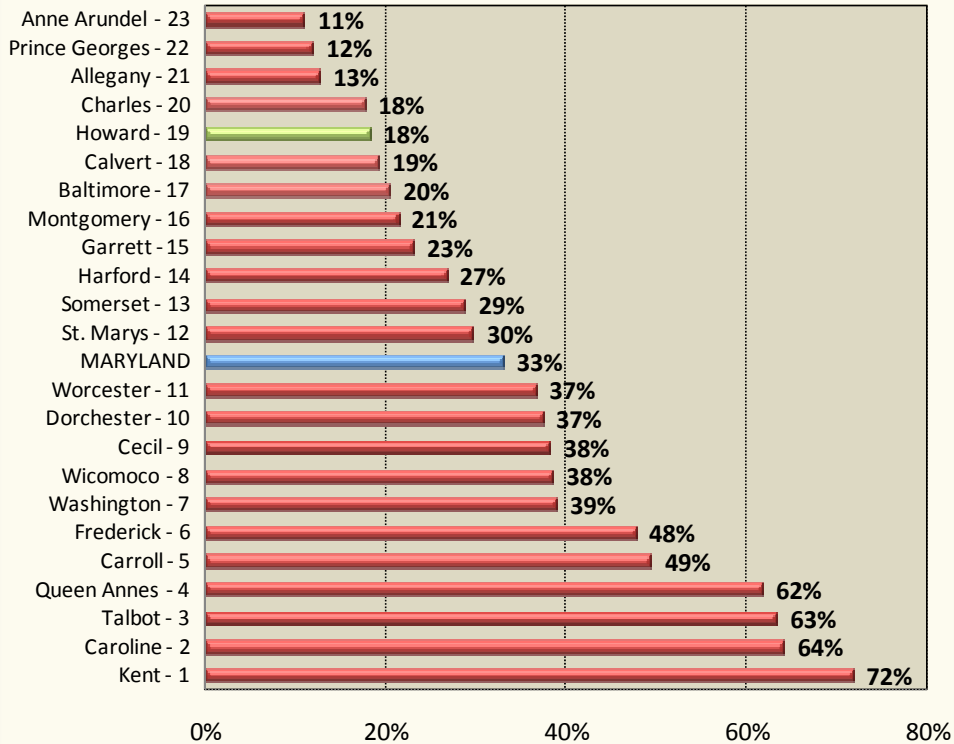
Looking at farmland as a percent of total county land area is a good indicator of relative coverage of farmland per county. For example, as indicated in the tables, charts and maps above, Frederick County has by far the most farmland in Maryland. However, it is also the largest county in Maryland in terms of land area. It ranks 6th in total farmland coverage at 48%. Kent County has the most farmland as a percent of total land area at 72% and Anne Arundel County has the least at 11%. Howard County, which is the second smallest county in Maryland after Calvert, ranks 19th in terms of farmland coverage at 18%. For the State as a whole, one-third of all land in Maryland is farmland. The chart and map on the next page depicts the percent of land in farms for all Maryland counties.

It is clear from the map that many of the eastern shore counties, as well as Frederick and Carroll Counties, have the largest farmland coverage. Anne Arundel, Prince Georges and Allegany have the least.

Conclusion

The Census of Agriculture is a valuable resource to help assess the nature and changing landscape of farmland, farming practices, and farm demographics in states and counties throughout the United States. The intent of this report was to provide some of the major findings of the latest Census and to report trends over the last 20 years for Howard County and, to a smaller extent, other Maryland counties. Further information can be found at MDP's web site – www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc – and also at the USDA's web site – www.agcensus.usda.gov.

Farmland as % of Total Land in Maryland Counties - 2007



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, U.S. Census Bureau

Map 4 Farmland as Percent of Total Land Area

