

COLUMBIA COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY

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Highlights

Columbia County is the #1 ranked county in Florida in layer inventory and the 4th ranked county in value of livestock, poultry, and their products (USDA). Livestock, crop, and poultry production generated industry output of \$99.1 million, and those sectors accounted for 1,109 direct jobs in 2015 (Hodges et al.).

Overall Economy

Indicator	2015 Level	2010-15 Change	Indicator	2015 Level	2010-15 Change
Population ¹	68,286	+1%	Gross Regional Product ⁴	\$1.95 billion	+12%
Total Employment ²	31,886	+12%	Median Household Income ¹	\$43,303	+24%
Employer Establishments ¹	1,321	-2%	Unemployment Rate ³	5.4%	-5.4%
Nonemployer Businesses ¹	3,950	+9%	Persons in Poverty ¹	19.7%	+0.2%

¹U.S. Census Bureau. ²U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. ³U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. ⁴Implan Group, LLC.

Since the Great Recession, Columbia County has experienced considerable economic growth. Between 2010 and 2015, gross regional product and total employment both grew 12%, while the unemployment rate fell by more than 5 percentage points. The poverty rate has remained relatively high however. Although the number of nonemployer businesses increased 9%, the number of employer establishments declined 2%.

Farm Overview

Indicator	2012 Level	2007-12 Change	Indicator	2012 or 2015 Level	5-Year Change
Number of Farms ¹	945	-4%	Cash Receipts from Marketings (2015) ²	\$163,715,000	+97%
Farmland Acres ¹	101,451	+18%	Crop Receipts (2015) ²	\$17,839,000	+6%
Median Size of Farm ¹	26 acres	+30%	Livestock Receipts (2015) ²	\$145,876,000	+120%
Farms, ≥ 1000 Acres ¹	16 (2%)	-16%	Farm Earnings (2015) ²	\$59,999,000	+1,153%
Farms, < 10 Acres ¹	62 (7%)	-38%	Average Net Cash Farm Income (2012) ¹	\$6,207	-89%
Farms, < \$250K Sales ¹	917	-4%	Primary Occupation Farming (2012) ¹	439 (46%)	+7%

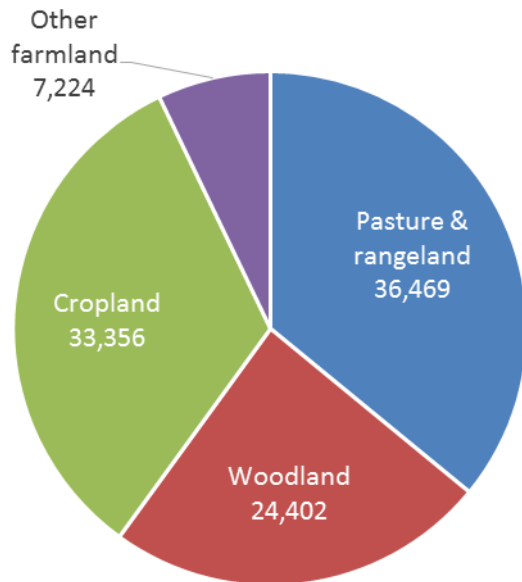
¹USDA Census of Agriculture. ²U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

During the inter-census period, 2007-2012, the number of farms in Columbia County declined 4% to 945 farms, but farmland acreage increased 18% to 101,451 acres. The number of farms with more than 1,000 acres and the number of farms with less than 10 acres both decreased. The median size of farms (26 acres) and the percentage of farm operators reporting farming as their primary occupation (46%) both increased. Livestock receipts more than doubled since 2010 and accounted for 89% of the value of farm receipts in 2015.

Note: All 5-year changes are shown as percent change from starting point, except for unemployment rate and persons in poverty, which are calculated as the absolute difference in percentage.

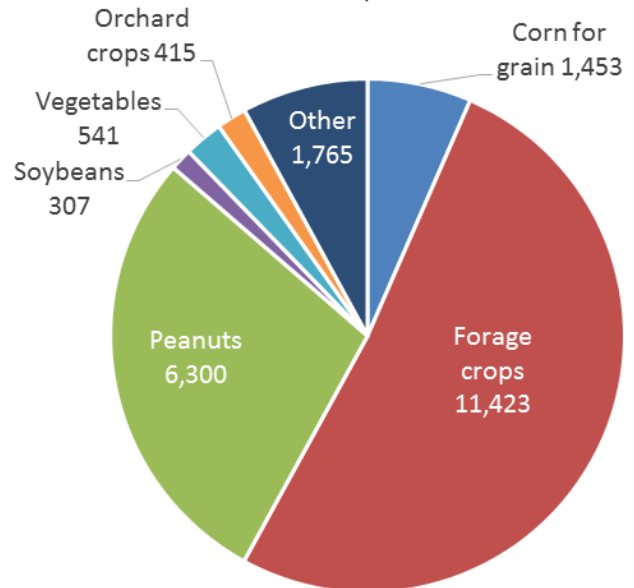
Farmland by Land Use

Acres, 2012



Harvested Cropland by Crop

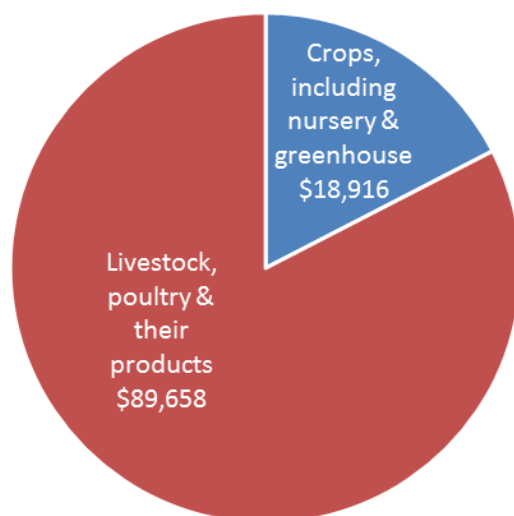
Acres, 2012



The largest portion of farmland in Columbia County is classified as pasture or rangeland, followed by cropland, then woodland. Farm woodland includes natural or planted woodlots and timber tracts associated with a farm, as well as pastured woodland, but does not include non-farm commercial timberland. Of the cropland harvested in 2012, hay and other forage crops accounted for the largest acreage (11,423 acres), followed by peanuts (6,300 acres), then corn for grain (1,453 acres). In 2012, livestock, poultry, and animal products accounted for about 83% of the value of agricultural products sold. Among crops, the other crop category, which includes peanuts and hay, had the highest value, followed closely by the nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod category.

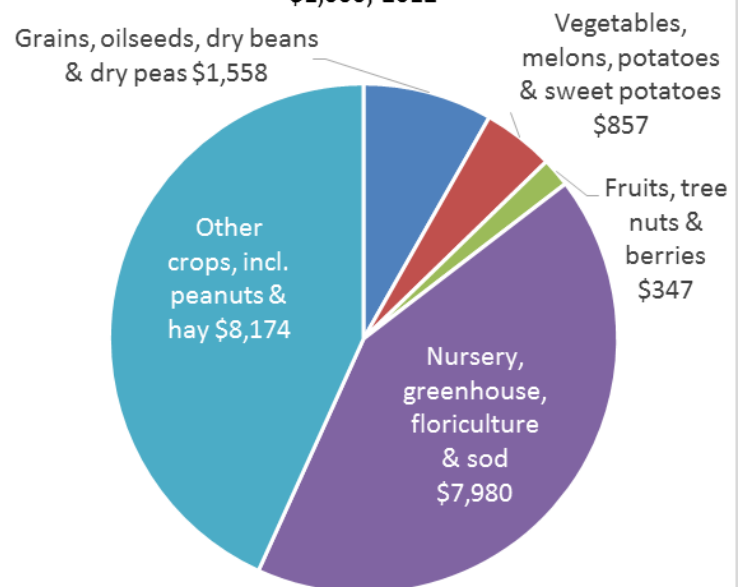
Farm Value of Ag Products Sold

\$1,000; 2012



Farm Value of Selected Crops Sold

\$1,000; 2012



Agricultural Land Use Trends, Acres

Agricultural Classification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	5-Yr Change
Timberland	183,510	183,785	183,926	183,231	182,071	178,254	-3%
Grazing Land	30,603	30,935	30,422	31,432	31,337	30,876	+1%
Orchards or Groves	19	23	13	13	10	10	-46%
Cropland	7,360	7,323	6,960	6,793	7,247	7,601	+3%
Ornamentals	197	197	176	186	166	166	-15%
Poultry, Bees, or Tropical Fish	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
Dairies or Feedlots	0	0	0	0	0	0	n/a
Improved Agricultural	62,836	62,975	63,776	63,415	63,077	63,214	+1%
Total	284,525	285,238	285,274	285,070	283,908	280,122	-2%

Data source: Florida Department of Revenue

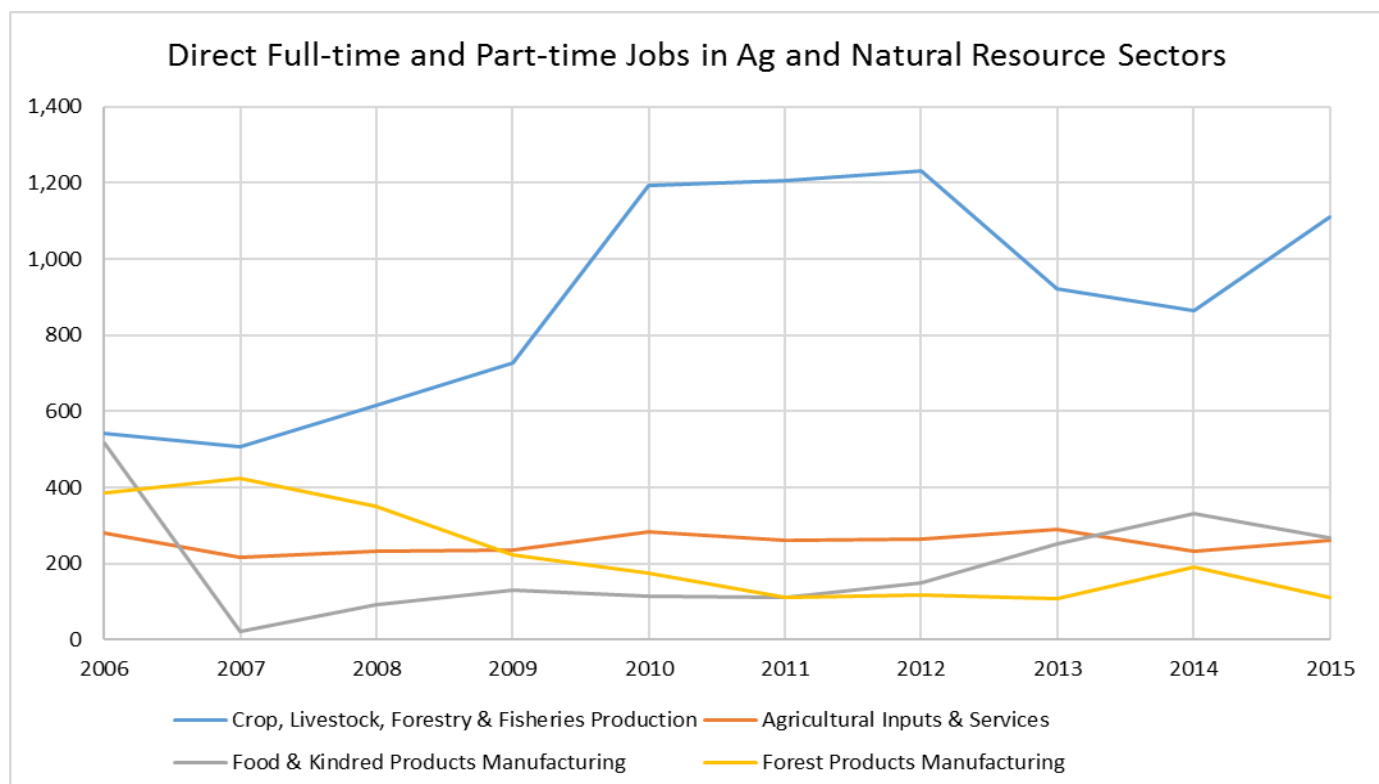
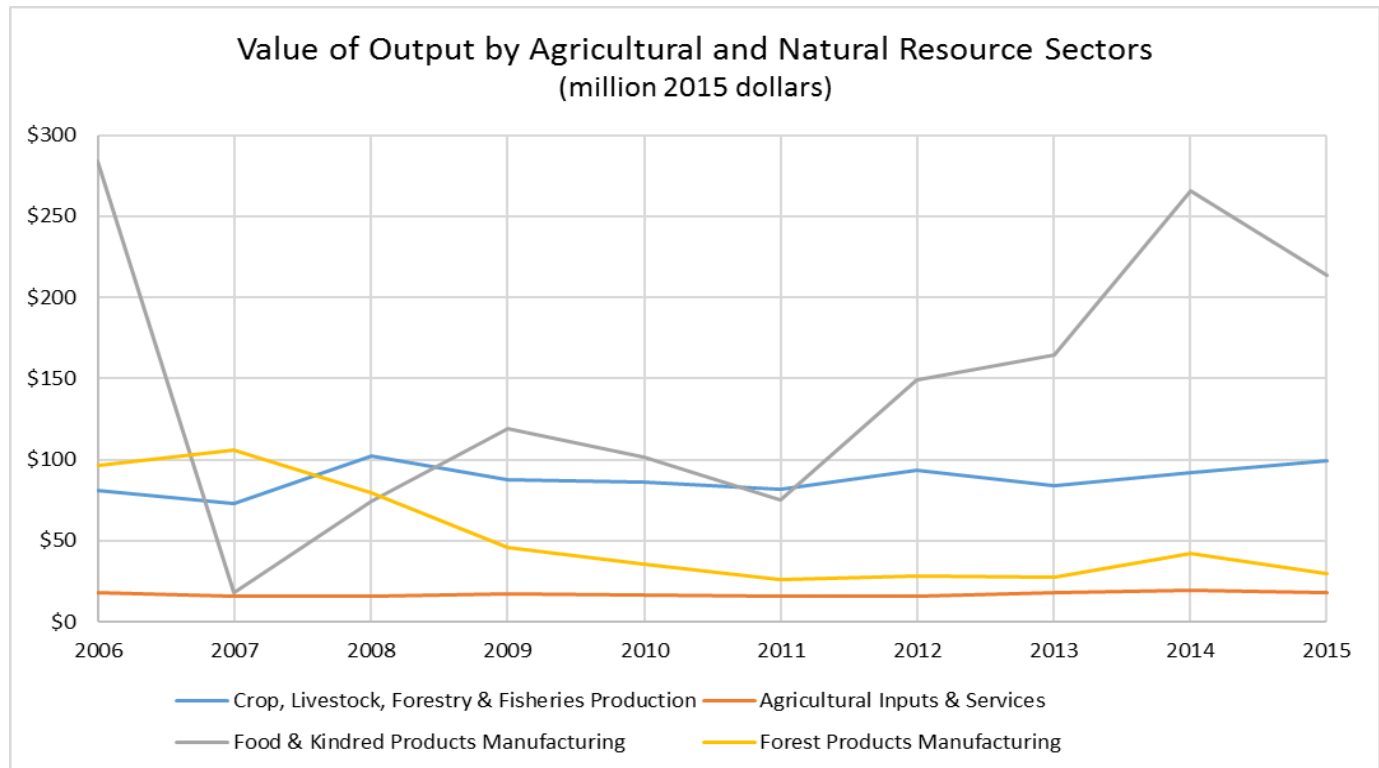
The county property appraiser tracks land-use classifications annually. More than 178,000 acres were in timberland in 2015, but that represents a 3% decline from 2010. Much of the land classified as timberland by the property appraiser is not counted as farmland by the USDA. In Columbia County, poultry and dairy land is classified as grazing land. Both grazing land and cropland increased slightly, but land classified for orchards and ornamentals declined. Improved agricultural land represents farm parcels with a residence on the property. Total land in agricultural classification decreased 2%.

Economic Contribution of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Food Industries, 2015

Sector	Direct Output (\$ million)	Value Added Impacts (\$ million)	Direct Jobs	Total Job Impacts
Poultry and egg production	\$44.9	\$11.5	101	141
Beef cattle ranching & farming	\$18.2	\$5.3	296	314
Other crop farming	\$9.4	\$5.7	362	390
Commercial logging	\$8.3	\$4.4	126	123
Greenhouse, nursery, & floriculture	\$7.6	\$4.9	48	53
Support activities for ag & forestry	\$4.7	\$7.1	107	166
Grain & cotton farming	\$2.1	\$0.9	12	17
Forestry, forest products, and timber production	\$1.2	\$1.9	18	44
Fruit farming	\$1.1	\$0.8	22	22
Vegetable & melon farming	\$0.8	\$0.6	6	6
Other animal production	\$0.6	\$0.6	9	13
Commercial hunting & trapping	\$0.2	\$0.2	2	3
Total Farm, Forestry, & Fisheries Production	\$99.1	\$43.9	1,109	1,292
Food & kindred products distribution	\$226.0	\$161.1	3,170	3,640
Food & kindred products manufacturing	\$213.8	\$43.4	267	503
Forest products manufacturing	\$29.7	\$16.6	110	248
Agricultural inputs & services	\$18.2	\$12.3	262	278
Mining	\$10.4	\$3.9	99	96
Nature-based recreation	\$1.0	\$0.6	20	22
Total Agriculture, Natural Resources, & Food	\$598.2	\$281.8	5,037	6,079

Data source: Hodges, A.W., M. Rahmani, & C.D. Court. 2017. Economic Contributions of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Food Industries in Florida in 2015.

Poultry and egg production and beef cattle ranching are the top two primary production sectors by economic output. Total crop, livestock, and forestry production generated economic output of \$99.1 million, total value-added impacts of \$43.9 million, and total job impacts of 1,292 in 2015. When other food, forestry, and natural resource-related sectors are added, the total value-added impacts rise to \$281.8 million and total job impacts amount to 6,079. The crop, livestock, and forestry production sector, as well as the food and kindred product manufacturing sector, have increased since 2007, both in terms of value and number of jobs. The forest products manufacturing sector has declined over the past 10 years.



Data source: Hodges, A.W., M. Rahmani, & C.D. Court. 2017. Economic Contributions of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Food Industries in Florida in 2015.