

North Dakota Farms and Farm Size: 1997 and 2002

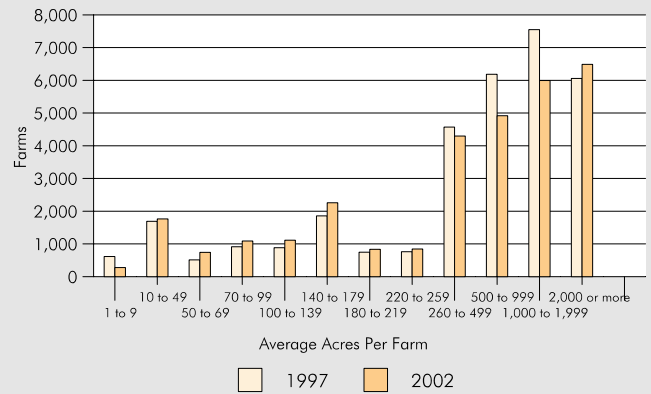
According to the 2002 Census of Agriculture, the number of farms in North Dakota fell to 30,619 in 2002, a 5.3 percent decline from 32,348 in 1997. During the same time, average farm size rose from 1,227 acres to 1,283 acres in North Dakota, a 4.6 percent increase (Table 1).

Between 1997 and 2002, North Dakota saw the largest decline in farms among those averaging 1,000 to 1,999 acres. The second largest loss was among those farms averaging 500 to 999 acres (Figure 1). The number of larger farms, those with 2,000 acres or more, grew by 427 farms. The number of farms averaging less than 260 acres grew by 938 farms.

While many North Dakota counties showed sizeable losses in the number of farms over the last five years, 16 of North Dakota's 53 counties showed an increase in the number of farms. The largest increase was in Walsh County with a gain of 100 farms, followed by Nelson County with a gain of 92 farms (Table 1).

The 2002 Census of Agriculture contains the first census data set on a coverage-adjusted basis representing all farms to the county level. The 1997 Census of Agriculture files were reprocessed, using the new procedures, to provide comparable data for 1997 and 2002. For more information, go to <http://www.usda.gov/nass/events/news/methodology.htm>.

Figure 1. Number of North Dakota Farms by Average Size 1997 to 2002



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), <http://www.usda.gov/nass>.

Figure 2. Change in Number of Farms and Average Farm Size in North Dakota by County: 1997 to 2002

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), <http://www.usda.gov/nass>

