

# Section L: Personal Characteristics and Farm Management



**United States Department of Agriculture**  
National Agricultural Statistics Service



# Who are the farmers?

## Personal Characteristics...

Goals of this section:

- To gather information on age, gender, education, ethnicity, race, major occupation, and other characteristics of **the individuals involved in agriculture.**



# Demographics

- Collect information for up to four people who are involved in decisions for this operation.

SECTION L		PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS and FARM MANAGEMENT			
1. In 2023, how many men and women were involved in decisions for this operation (include family members and hired managers)? Exclude hired workers unless they were a hired manager or family member. ....		1571	Men	1574	Women
2. Answer the following questions for up to four individuals who were involved in the decisions for this operation as of December 31, 2023.					
	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	
	1836	4608	4609	1873	
a. Full name .....					

- For operations with more than four operators, identify the four most senior operators.



# Principal Producer

- ERS produces estimates of farm household income from the principal operator's household.

3. From the persons listed above, please select the individual who is most responsible for decisions on this operation. This person will now be referred to as the "principal producer" in this and the remaining sections.

Enter the number of the column (either 1, 2, 3, or 4) that contains the "principal producer" you selected. .... 1855

Person Number

- If you enter the spouse into a column, you do not need to do Questions 6 -10
- Principal producer does not need to be the target from the label.



# Farm Management

## Why?

- Value of labor is an important element in the cost of agricultural production.
- How does on-farm labor compare to off-farm labor financially?
- What kind of labor do different farms depend on?
- Why do farm operators work off the farm and *where* do they work?



# Time spent working on the farm

- The respondent should be able to approximate the average number of **hours per week** in each quarter because the quarters roughly correspond to the four seasons.

11. On average, for each of the three-month periods during 2023, about how many hours per week (work and management time) did —

None	Jan - Mar Hours / Week	April - June Hours / Week	July - Sept Hours / Week	Oct - Dec Hours / Week
a. you ( <i>the principal producer</i> ) work for this farm/ranch? ( <b>Include both paid and unpaid hours</b> ) . . . . .	0828	0829	0830	0831
	0480	0481	0482	0483
(i) of the hours in (a), how many were unpaid?				
b. your spouse ( <i>the principal producer's</i> ) work for this farm/ranch? ( <i>Even if your spouse is a producer, include his/her hours here. Include both paid and unpaid hours</i> ) . . . . .	0832	0833	0834	0835
	0580	0581	0582	0583
(i) of the hours in (b), how many were unpaid?				
c. all other producers and household members work for this farm/ranch? Enter TOTAL average hours worked by all other producers and household members. ( <b>Exclude the principal producer and spouse. Include both paid and unpaid hours</b> ) . . . . .	0836	0837	0838	0839



# Time spent working outside the farm

- The next few questions ask about off-farm work for the principal producer, spouse, or any other member of the household

12. Did the principal producer, principal producer's spouse, or any other member of the household work off the farm in 2023?

2670 <sup>1</sup>  **Yes - Continue**                      <sup>3</sup>  **No - Go to Section M**

13. Over the past year, how many hours per week did each of the following people spend working outside of this farm or ranch? (**Include** time spent working for a wage or salary, or for a non-farm business. **Exclude** time spent commuting.) —

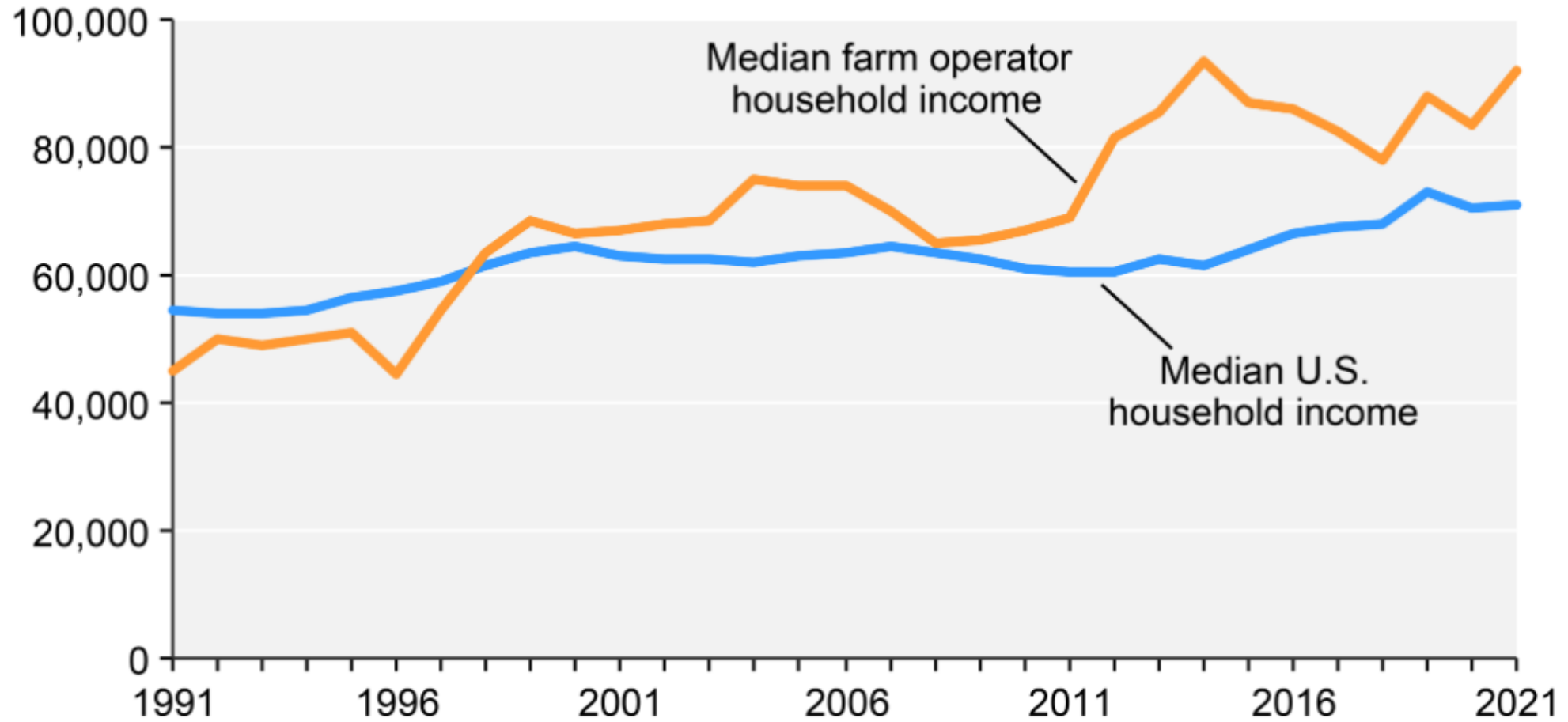
	None	Jan - Mar Hours / Week	April - June Hours / Week	July - Sept Hours / Week	Oct - Dec Hours / Week
		0488	0489	0490	0491
a. You (the principal producer) . . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		0588	0589	0590	0591
b. Your spouse (the principal producer's spouse)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
		1069	1070	1071	1072
c. All other members of the household. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>				

(Example: If two adult children live in the household and work off-farm, one for 40 hours/week and one for 20 hours/week, report 60 hours/week total.)



# Median farm household income and median U.S. household income, 1991–2021

Dollars (2021)



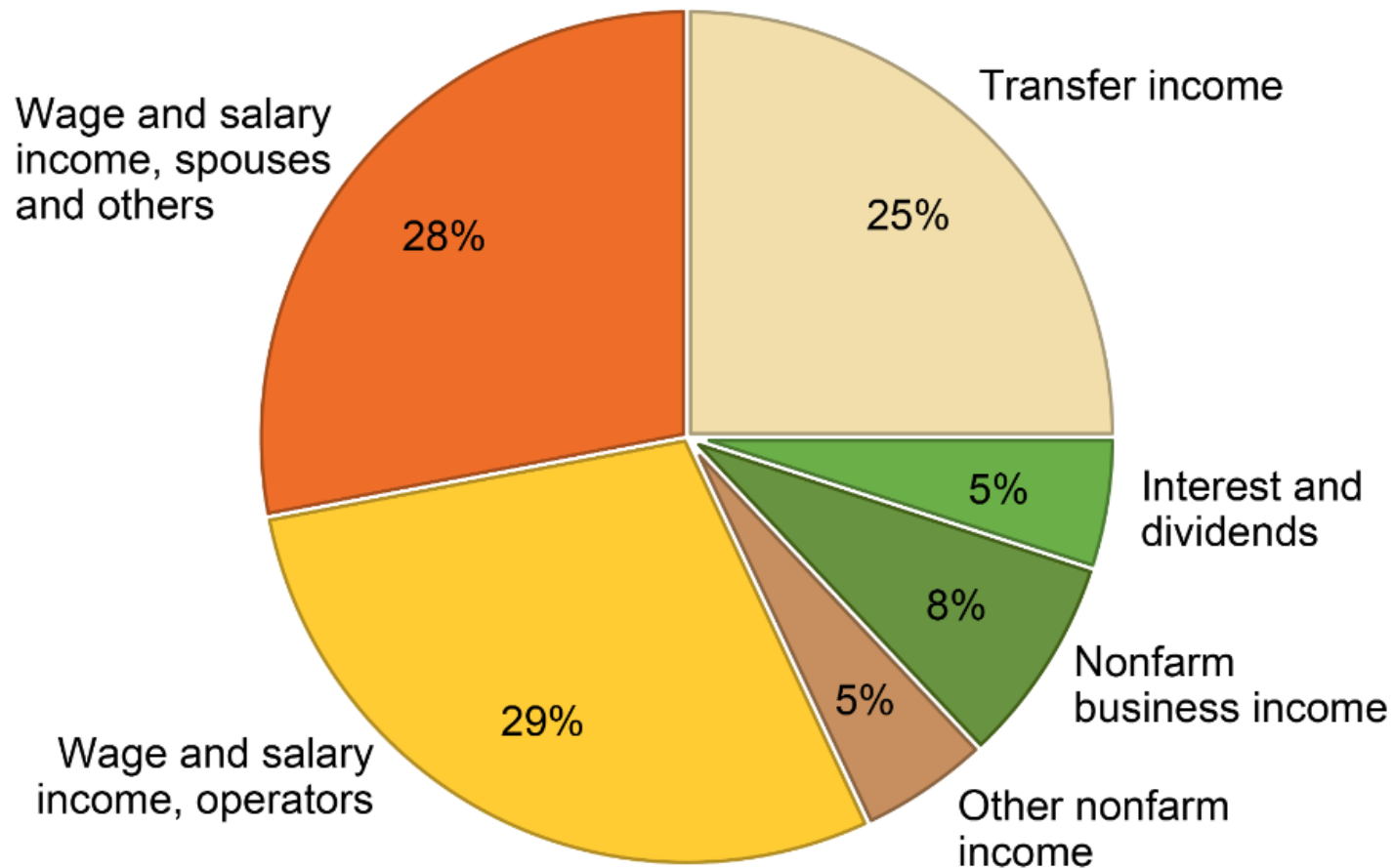
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## Farm household sources of off-farm income, 2021

Average off-farm income of all farm households  
\$104,460



### Farm operator income per household by source and farm type, 2021

Farm type	Mean wealth (dollars)	Mean total income (dollars)	Income from farming		Mean income from off-farm sources (dollars)		
			Mean (dollars)	Percent of households with negative income	Total	Earned	Unearned
<b>Small family farms</b>							
Retirement	1,814,986	74,877	5,052	45	69,825	25,942	43,883
Off-farm occupation	1,781,636	141,761	-315	57	142,075	110,261	31,814
Low sales	1,651,265	83,584	-334	56	83,917	41,869	42,048
Moderate sales	2,792,306	128,255	62,354	17	65,901	35,599	30,302
Midsized family farms	3,975,636	239,971	152,442	14	87,529	58,790	28,740
<b>Large-scale family farms</b>							
Large	6,692,775	556,974	461,413	11	95,561	63,160	32,401
Very large	15,201,685	1,744,401	1,662,892	7	81,508	49,113	32,395
All family farms	2,100,879	135,281	30,821	48	104,460	67,838	36,622

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service and USDA, Economic Research Service, 2021 Agricultural Resource Management Survey.



## Farm households with income or wealth below the median for all U.S. households, 2021

	Farm households with...	
	Income below U.S. median (\$70,784)	Wealth below U.S. median (\$132,037)
Percent of farm households		
Small family farms		
Retirement	56.2	2.3
Off-farm occupation	24.0	1.8
Low sales	53.9	2.4
Moderate sales	25.9	3.4
Midsize family farms	16.9	4.1
Large-scale family farms		
Large	12.1	3.4
Very large	7.9	2.5
All family farms	37.7	2.4

Source: USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service and USDA, Economic Research Service, 2021 Agricultural Resource Management Survey. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2021 Current Population Survey data; and the Federal Reserve Board, Board of Governors in cooperation within the U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances.



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