



A Look at *Maine* Agriculture

Capital: Augusta

Population: 1,329,000

Founded: March 15, 1820 (23rd)

State Bird: Chickadee

State Tree: White Pine

State Flower: White Pine Cone and Tassel

Number of Counties: 16

Largest City: Portland - 66,363

Nickname: Pine Tree State

Number of Farms: 8,100

Average Size of Farms: 166 acres

Total Farmland: 1.3 million acres

Maine Farms (leased): 1,328 acres



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Climate & Soil

- Maine's weather is characterized by rapidly changing conditions. The normal daily mean temperature ranges from 38.8°F in northern Maine to 45.4°F in southern Maine.
- The average number of days in which the temperature reaches 90° F or above ranges from one in northern Maine to five in southern Maine, while the average number of days in which the temperature is 32°F or below ranges from 187 days in northern Maine to 156 days in southern Maine.
- The cumulative annual precipitation is 45.4", the growing season is about 135 days.
- The soils of most of central and northern Maine are characterized as glacial till. The soils of this region are somewhat acidic but treated with lime they are highly productive for farming.
- Much of the soil in southern and central Maine are lake and ocean bottom soils which are free of stones and are excellent for farming.

Crops & Livestock

- Maine leads the world in production of wild blueberries.
- Maine is 2nd in the nation in the production of maple syrup and Maine's Somerset County produces more maple syrup than any other county in the country.
- Maine ranks 8th in the nation among producers of fall potatoes.
- Many Maine farmers are producing fresh fruit and vegetable crops and value-added agricultural products for direct sale to consumers.
- Maine boasts a vibrant and diverse organic farming community and many Maine farmers are involved in sustainable agricultural production.
- Maine's top agricultural commodities include potatoes, dairy, wild blueberries, greenhouse/fresh produce and brown eggs.
- Sheep, goats, hogs, equine and poultry have always been important on Maine farms; new livestock ventures such as elk and deer herds, as well as camelids (llama and alpaca) and ratiities (emu) are becoming more common on Maine farms.

Aquaculture

- With over 5,300 miles of coastline and cool, clean waters, Maine has ideal conditions for growing animals and plants in the water.
- Maine water farmers grow salmon, trout, baitfish, halibut, oyster, scallops, mussels, clams, aquarium ornamentals, kelp and other aquatic plants.
- Maine has 187 marine grow-out farms, 6 marine hatcheries, and 18 freshwater hatcheries.
- Maine water farmers grow products in both salt and fresh water.
- Maine has more freshwater than any other state east of the Mississippi.

General

- Natural resource and agricultural tourism is highly important to Maine's economy.