



U.S. Hog Breeding Herd Structure

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Larger Operations Account for Three Fourths of U.S. Pig Crop

The makeup of the U.S. hog breeding herd by size of operation has changed dramatically over the last 7 years. A brief summary of the changes in the makeup of the hog breeding herd and trends in its efficiency will follow. This information is being provided based on recent inquiries by the hog industry to the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The average number of pigs per year per breeding herd animal (includes sows, gilts, and boars) has increased from 10.3 in 1979 to 16.2 in 2001, a 57 percent increase. Only 29 percent of the increase was due to increased litter rates while 71 percent was attributed to the increase in the number of litters per sow per year and consequently, smaller breeding herd (Charts 1 and 2). The size of the U.S. breeding herd has declined 38 percent since 1979 while the pig crop has decreased only 2 percent

Operations with more than 5,000 head accounted for 75 percent of the pig crop in 2001 compared with only 27 percent in 1994, (the first year of data for operations with more than 5,000 head). Conversely, operations with less than 5,000 head, accounted for 73 percent of the U.S. pig crop in 1994 and only 25 percent in 2001 (Chart 3). Meanwhile, the number of hog operations with more than 5,000 head has grown from just under 1,000 in 1993 to slightly over 2,200 in 2001 (Chart 4). The number of operations with less than 5,000 head has declined from 217,000 to below 79,000 during the same period (Chart 5).

The litter rate for operations with less than 5,000 head increased from 8.00 pigs to 8.49 pigs from 1994 to 2001, a six percent increase (Chart 6). The litter rate of operations with more than 5,000 head was 8.94 pigs in 2001 compared with 8.74 in 1994, a 2 percent increase. The relatively larger increase in litter rate for herds with less than 5,000 head is attributed to smaller, less efficient operations going out of business and a larger proportion of the pig crop coming from herds with 1,000 to 5,000 head.

The number of pigs per breeding animal per year for operations with less than 5,000 head increased from 13.43 pigs in 1997 to 15.05 in 2001, an increase of 1.6 pigs or 12 percent (Chart 7). Operations with more than 5,000 head increased from 16.08 pigs to 16.59 pigs over the same period, an increase of .51 pigs or 3 percent (The first year of available data was 1997). Again, the greater increase in pigs per breeding animal for operations with less than 5,000 head is largely attributed to the loss of smaller, less efficient operations and an increase in the proportion of operations with 1,000 to 5,000 head.

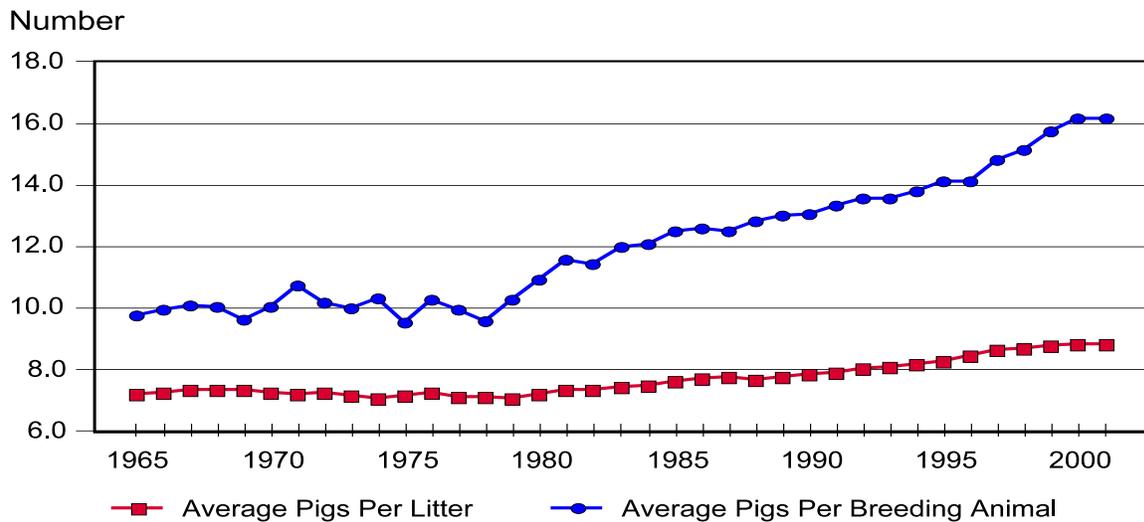
In conclusion, much of the increase in the efficiency of the U.S. hog breeding herd over the last 5 to 10 years can be attributed to the shift in size of operations to larger, more efficient operations and the decline in smaller, less efficient operations. For the future, it now appears that the increase in the efficiency of the U.S. breeding herd could slow some since larger, more efficient operations, those with more than 5,000 head, now account for three-fourths of the U.S. pig crop. Also, the average annual number of pigs per breeding animal for the U.S. is now just 0.41 pigs below operations with more than 5,000 head compared with 1.26 pigs less in 1997. Likewise, the U.S. average pigs per litter is now just 0.11 pigs below operations with over 5,000 head compared with 0.31 less pigs in 1997.

Note

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Chart 1

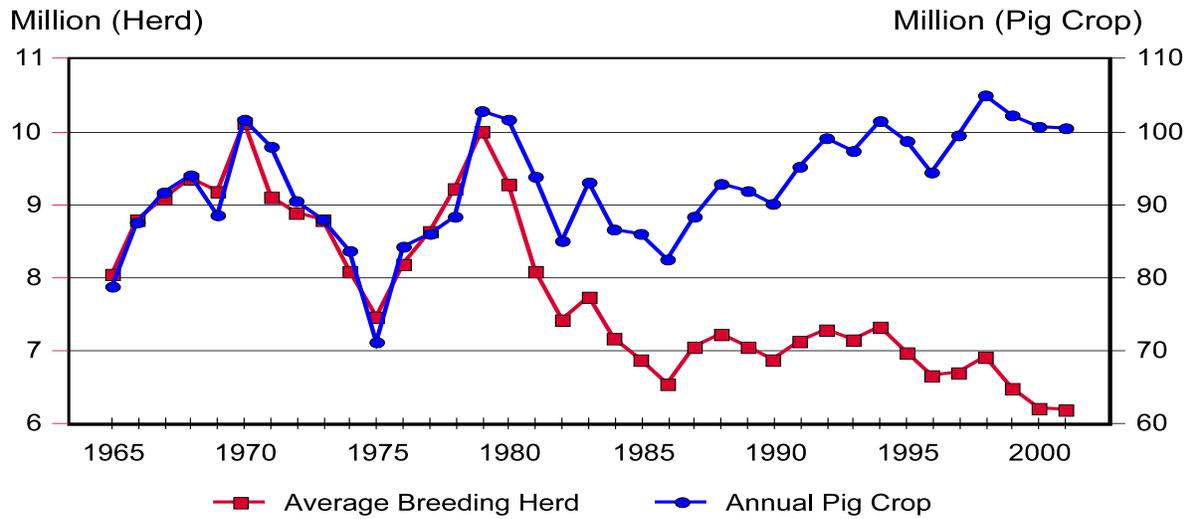
U.S. Hogs and Pigs



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Chart 2

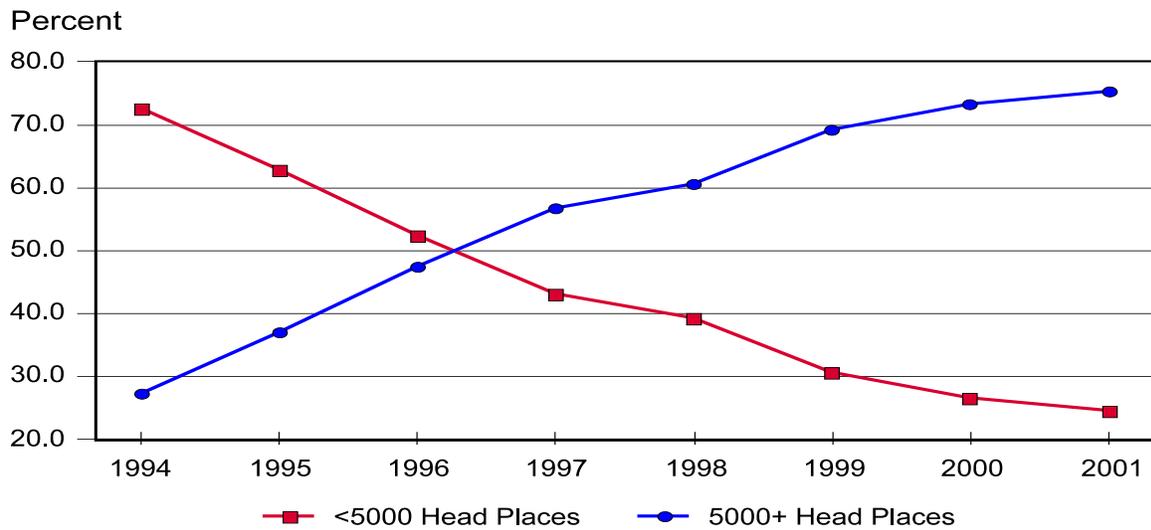
U.S. Hogs and Pigs



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Chart 3

U.S. Annual Pig Crop Distribution

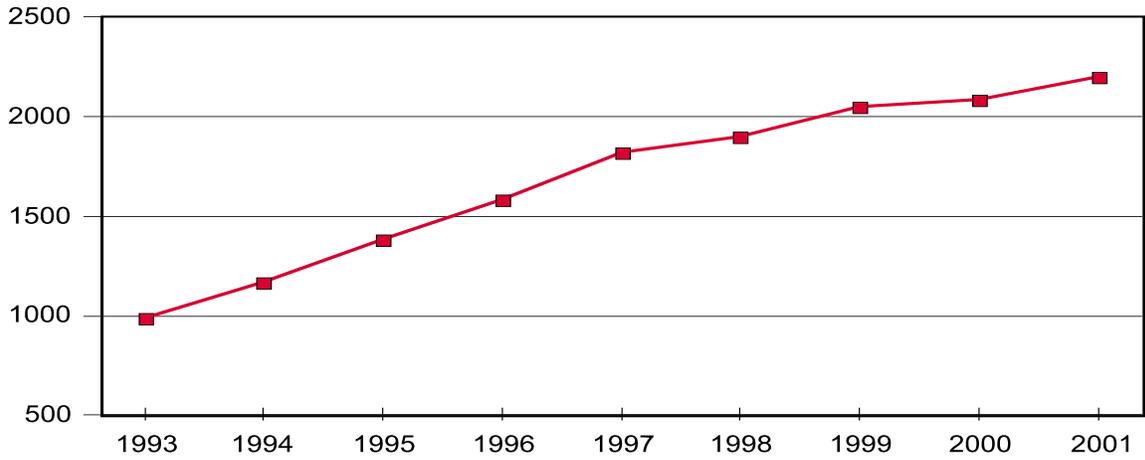


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Chart 4

U.S. Hog Operations 5000+ Head

Number

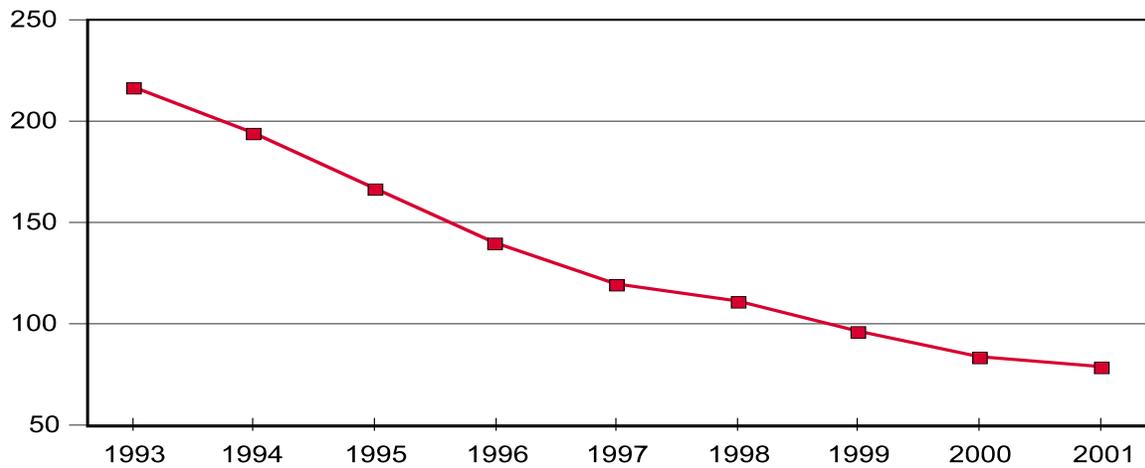


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Chart 5

U.S. Hog Operations <5000 Head

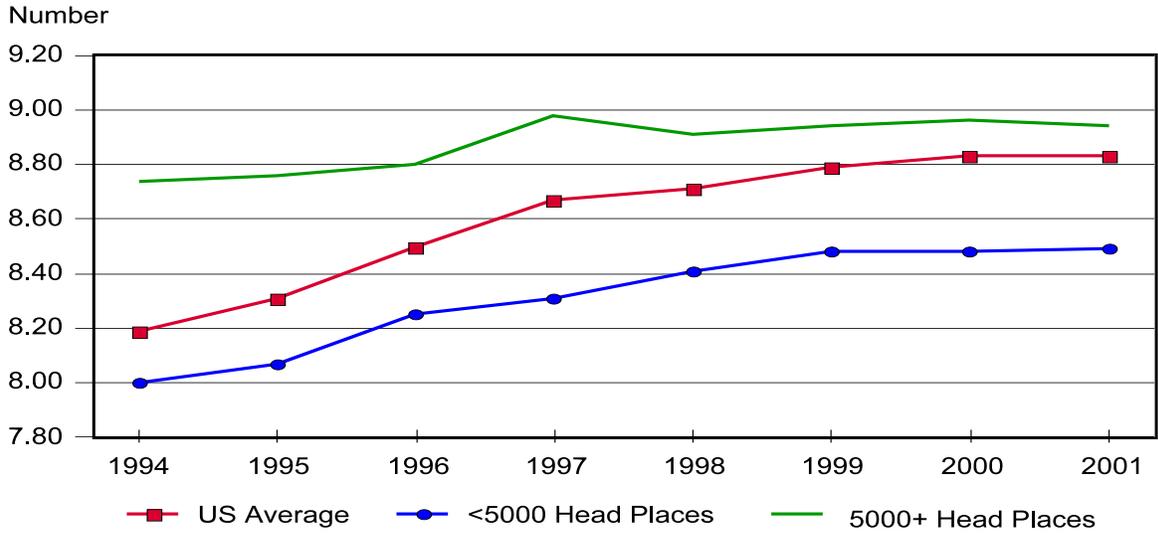
Thousands



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Chart 6

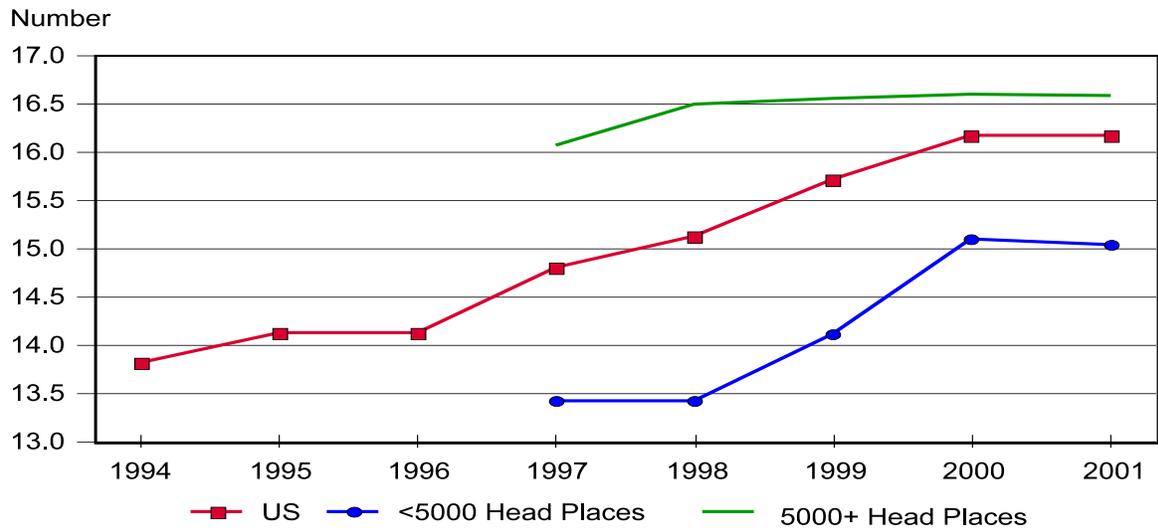
U.S. Annual Litter Rate



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Chart 7

U.S. Annual Pigs Per Breeding Animal



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October 21, 2002
Holiday Inn Mart Plaza
Chicago, Illinois**

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service will hold a public forum for open exchange between Federal agricultural statistics agencies and data users on October 21, 2002. Agency representatives will provide updates on pending changes in the various statistical and information programs and will seek comments from data users. The USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, Economic Research Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, and World Agricultural Outlook Board, as well as the U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division, will also participate in the forum.

For registration details or additional information about the Data Users' Forum, see the NASS homepage at www.usda.gov/nass/ or contact Karlyn McCutcheon of NASS at (202) 690-8141 or at karlyn_mccutcheon@nass.usda.gov.

This Data Users' Forum precedes an Industry Outlook Meeting that will be held at the same location on October 22, 2002. The outlook meeting brings together analysts from various commodity sectors to discuss the outlook situation. For more information about the outlook meeting and to register for it, contact Terry Francl of the American Farm Bureau Federation at (847) 685-8769 or at terry@fb.org.