

The following excellent list of agricultural related web links is provided by:

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* Peruse the vast story database at www.loe.org. This is the internet home of weekly environmental radio show, Living On Earth. Many of their stories have both a "green" perspective and an "agriculture community" perspective to them. This site is highly valuable because the information is already in story form, the content is searchable, and you can either listen (via downloadable MP3s) or read (via downloadable transcripts) their content.

* www.Wikipedia.com is a great spot to do topical research. However, remember to always double check any facts or figures you discover there. And it might help to reference the secondary fact-check site instead of Wikipedia. It does have a reputation of being a site laced with misinformation and non-expert fact generation.

* A list of agriculture related web sites:

o <http://delicious.com/pliblog/Ag%2BCom%2BCurriculum> - A list of 40 ag related links on the Delicious social bookmarking site.

o www.usda.gov - United States Department of Agriculture's web site. General portal for everything ag related.

o www.fao.org - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation's web site. General portal for international food and agriculture information.

o www.farms.com - General agriculture content indexed by topic area.

o www.agweb.com - A useful ag related portal produced by Farm Journal.

o agricola.nal.usda.gov <<http://agricola.nal.usda.gov/>> - The USDA's National Agricultural Library search engine.

o www.fns.usda.gov - The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service's web site.

o www.dtnprogressivefarmer.com - DTN and Progressive Farmer magazine's joint online venture.

o www.ars.usda.gov/is/AR - The USDA's online version of its magazine Agricultural Research. Great site for finding stories and topics.

o www.ers.usda.gov - The USDA's Economic Research Service's web site. Click on Agencies & Offices from the www.usda.gov home page to view links to more agencies.

- o www.agriculture.com - From the editors of Successful Farming magazine, a useful non-government portal.
 - o www.science.gov/browse/w_105.htm - A list of hundreds of useful agriculture science related links. The list allows you to narrow by general topic area.
 - o www.okstate.edu/OSU_Ag/agedcm4h/bobslist.htm - A comprehensive list of ag related web sites.
 - o www.hpj.com - The High Plains Journal
 - o www.agmrc.org - The Agricultural Marketing Resource Center is an electronic, national resource for producers interested in value-added agriculture.
 - o www.cmegroup.com - A combined web site of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the Chicago Board of Trade and the New York Mercantile Exchange.
 - o www.kcbt.com - Kansas City Board of Trade
 - o www.okagpolicy.org - Oklahoma Farm Bureau's online policy site
 - o www.oklahomafarmreport.com - From Ron Hays of Oklahoma Radio Network
 - o www.farmpolicy.com - Farm Bill, Ag Economy and Trade Issues
 - o aphg.jhsph.edu - Agriculture and Public Health Gateway
 - o www.iatp.org - Institute for Agriculture and Food Policy
 - o www.cfra.org/blog - The Center for Rural Affairs' Blog
 - o aglaw.blogspot.com <<http://aglaw.blogspot.com/>> - The Official Blog of the AALS (Association of American Law Schools) Section of Agricultural Law
- * If your topic is related to a livestock type (beef, swine, etc.) or a commodity (corn, wheat, etc.), conduct a search for the state, regional and national association. I.e. - if your topic is equine management and you searched for horse association, you would find links to every breed associations.

Actual Topic Ideas -

If you need a list of topics to get you started, try one of these:

- * The GAO (US Government Accountability Office) Placing Food Safety on its top 13 urgent policy concerns
- * Conversations on Care (a program encouraging livestock producers to tell their story to the public)
- * Equine Therapy

- * Agri-Tourism
- * Agriculture and Green Energy
- * Avian Influenza
- * Farm Bill
- * Food Safety
- * Farming in a Recession
- * Animal Welfare
- * BSE
- * Ethanol
- * On-Farm Food Safety Programs
- * Biotechnology & Agriculture
- * Labor Issues in Agriculture
- * Urban Sprawl
- * How are prices set in the supermarket?
- * Who controls commodity prices?
- * World food prices
- * Obesity and agriculture
- * Country of Origin Labeling
- * Organic Farming
- * Localized Farming
- * World Hunger
- * ACRE Farm Program of 08 Farm Bill
- * The Fast Food Industry's Impact on Modern Agriculture
- * Food Labeling
- * Livestock Market Reform

* From the USDA's Economic Research Service's web site's FAQ

Q: Which are the top 10 agricultural producing States?

A: The top 10 agricultural producing States, in terms of cash receipts are (in descending order): California, Texas, Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Indiana. These and related statistics can be found among ERS's Farm Income Data <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/firkdmuXLS.htm>> (scroll down to "Other Tables With Rankings").

Q: What are the leading farm commodities in the United States, in terms of cash receipts?

A: Cattle and calf producers earned the largest receipts, followed by producers of dairy products, corn, broilers, and soybeans. These and related statistics can be found among ERS's Farm Income Data <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/firkdmuxls.htm>> (see "Leading Commodities by State, 2007").

Q: Are family farms disappearing?

A: No. In fact, family farms <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/EIB24/> have accounted for a large majority of farm numbers and agricultural sales since the 1970s. But as production shifts to larger farms, family-owned farm businesses often become incorporated. Family corporations (having more than half the voting stock held by individuals related by blood or marriage) account for about a fifth of farm sales.

Q: How does farm household income compare with the income of other U.S. households?

A: Since the mid-1990s, the income <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/WellBeing/farmhouseincome.htm#income> of the average farm household has surpassed that of nonfarm households, and farm household income today derives from a number of income sources. The financial well-being of farm households today depends less on the income from the farm business and more on the availability of remunerative off-farm employment.

Q: Which States have the largest number of food processing plants?

A: California has the largest number of food manufacturing plants <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodMarketingSystem/processing.htm>> , followed by New York and Texas (see text under second pie chart).

Q: How does U.S. beef consumption today compare with consumption in the 1970s?

A: Americans are consuming less beef per capita than in the 1970s, or in the 1980s. We're also, per capita, consuming more food overall. The ERS Food Consumption (per capita) Data System

<<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FoodConsumption/>> provides data on the wide variety of foods in the American diet, and explains how the data are derived.

Q: How prevalent is hunger in the United States?

A: Resource-constrained hunger refers to a potential consequence of food insecurity that, because of prolonged, involuntary lack of food, results in discomfort, illness, weakness, or pain that goes beyond the usual uneasy sensation. While USDA's measurement of food insecurity <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/measurement.htm>> provides some information about the economic and social contexts that may lead to hunger, it does not measure hunger or the number of hungry people.

In 2007, 89 percent of U.S. households were food secure; i.e., they had consistent access to enough food for active healthy lives. The remaining households (11.1 percent) were food insecure at least some time during the year, about the same rate as 2006 (10.9 percent). The prevalence of very low food security, with food intake of some members reduced and normal eating patterns disrupted at times during the year because of food insecurity, was essentially unchanged from 2006, at 4.1 percent of households.

Q: What are the main reasons that eligible households don't apply for food stamps?

A: According to ERS research <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/efan03013/efan03013-2/>> , most households that are eligible but don't participate in the Food Stamp Program said they would apply for benefits if they were sure they were eligible. However, about a quarter of the eligible households not participating reported that they would not apply in any case, mainly because of a desire for personal independence.

Q: What is the value of U.S. agricultural exports and U.S. agricultural imports?

A: U.S. agriculture enjoys a trade surplus, with the value of exports exceeding imports. The level of the surplus has changed over time, with increasing agricultural imports. ERS publishes monthly trade updates <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/fatus/monthlysummary.htm>> .

Q: How important are exports to the U.S. agricultural sector?

A: Trade is essential to the U.S. agricultural sector, with agricultural exports <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/February07/Indicators/indicators.htm>> accounting for more than 20 percent of the volume of U.S. agricultural production. (Scroll down to "Food and Fiber Sector Indicators."). The export share of food grains is among the highest of specific commodity groups <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/November03/Indicators/behinddata.htm>> .

Q: How important are imports to U.S. food and agricultural markets?

A: In recent years, the import share <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/February08/DataFeature/>> of food consumed in the

United States has climbed to more than 10 percent. The aggregate share of fruit and vegetable imports is at least twice as large as that of animal products.

Q: What types of farm operations receive government payments?

A: Diversity within the farm sector results in an unbalanced distribution of all government payments (including commodity and conservation programs). Farm size (acreage), location, types of commodities produced, and operator and household characteristics are among the factors associated with allocation of government payments. ERS provides a wide range of data on government payments and the farm sector

<<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FarmPolicy/gov-pay.htm>> . Use ERS's Farm Business and Household Survey Data <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/ARMS/app/Farm.aspx>> to create customized summaries of payments for diverse types of farm operations. Note: In step 1 select "Farm Business Income Statement," and then "Government Payments." In steps 3 and 4, select the category of farms or farm households.

Q: How does U.S. agricultural policy address agricultural-environmental issues?

A: U.S. agricultural-environmental policy

<<http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/ConservationPolicy/>> addresses a range of environmental concerns including soil quality, water quality, wildlife habitat, air quality, and other issues of concern. The United States uses a number of policy instruments, notably land retirement programs, but relies most heavily on financial incentives and technical assistance to agricultural producers who agree to adopt practices designed to improve their environmental performance.

Q: Is population in nonmetropolitan areas increasing, or decreasing?

A: The population of nonmetro counties <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/population/>> has been trending upward, the result of in-migration from metropolitan areas and from abroad. ERS provides data on demographic trends in nonmetro areas, including how "nonmetro" is defined.