



A SNAPSHOT OF MISSOURI AND NEBRASKA LATINO FARMERS AND RANCHERS



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This report will highlight selected data from the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture on several aspects of Latino farmers and ranchers in Missouri and Nebraska. These data will provide a broader view of the current status of Latino farmers and ranchers in both states.

All data below is from the 2007 USDA Census of Agriculture (the most recent USDA Census of Agriculture) and some comparisons are made to similar data contained in the 2002 USDA Census of Agriculture.

It should also be noted that the term “farms” as used in the USDA Census of Agriculture includes all types of agricultural operations—farms, ranches, mixed operations, crop operations, livestock operations, etc.

As defined in the Census of Agriculture, a “principal operator” is the “person primarily responsible for the onsite day to day operations of the farm or ranch business.

Summary of Data

- Both states are experiencing a decline in the number of farms operated by Latinos.
- Farms with a Latino principal operator in Missouri are generally smaller than in Nebraska, however, more Nebraska Latino principal operators farm in the smallest category of farm size. In both states, small farms are more likely to be operated by Latinos.
- Latino principal operators in Missouri are in greater numbers in the lower farm economic classifications, while Latino principal operators in Nebraska are in far greater numbers in the highest farm economic classification, likely as a result of farm size.
- Missouri farms with Latino principal operators also have higher rates of USDA “small family farm” typologies than do Nebraska farms as well as higher rates of so-called “lifestyle” and “retirement” farms. Nebraska farms with Latino principal operators, on the other hand, have significantly higher rates of farms with higher sales (so-called “commercial” or primary occupation farms), large and very large family farms and non-family farms. Again, this corresponds to the differences in farm size and farm economic classifications between farms with Latino principal operators in both states.
- A significantly higher percentage of Missouri Latino principal operators are full owners of their farms than in Nebraska. This may also be connected with farm size, i.e., it is relatively easier to be the full owner of a small farm than a farm of several hundred acres.
- Most Latino farm households in Missouri and Nebraska do not make most of their income from farming or ranching. However, a significantly larger number of Nebraska farm households make 75 percent or more of their income from farming.
- A primary occupation other than farming is more common among Missouri Latino principal operators. As such, more Missouri Latino principal operators work more days off the farm.
- Nebraska Latino principal operators are slightly older than Missouri Latino farmers, but Nebraska also has more young (under 25 years of age) Latino principal operators.
- Latino farmers who are the principal operators of farms are almost exclusively male. However, both states have a relatively high rate of female farmers who are not principal

operators.

- Latino farmers in both states are involved in traditional agricultural activities—crop and grain farming and beef cattle ranching, with crop and grain farming more popular in Missouri and beef cattle ranching more popular in Nebraska. However, significant portions of Latino farmers in both states are involved in non-traditional agricultural pursuits.
- A small number of Latino farmers in both states receive USDA agricultural loans, with more Latino farmers receiving payments from USDA conservation programs and other USDA agricultural programs than from USDA loan programs.

Number of Operators and Farms

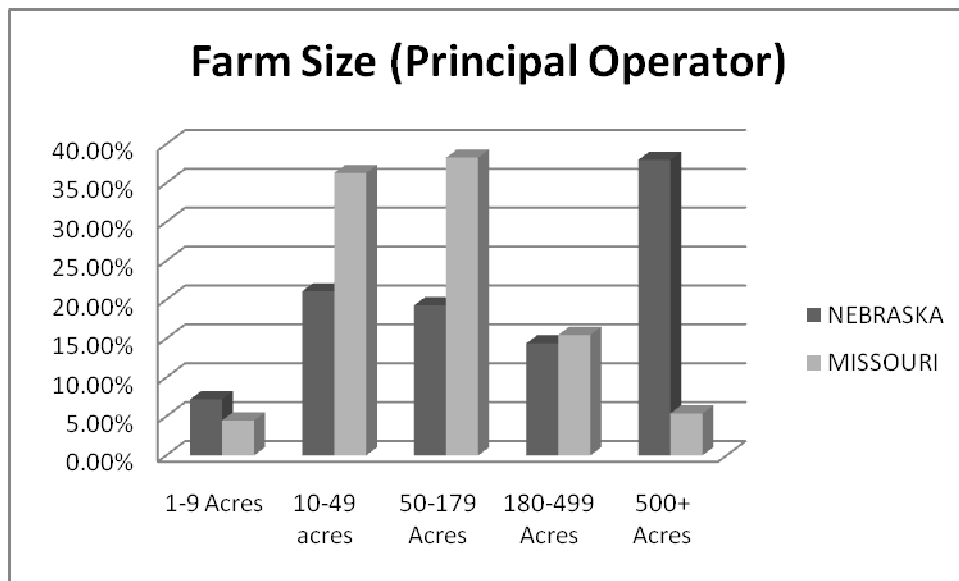
Missouri has a total of 444 farms with a Latino principal operator. Nebraska has a total of 166 farms with a Latino principal operator. Both states had significant reductions in farms with a Latino principal operator from 2002 to 2007 – Missouri witnessed nearly a 37 percent decline and Nebraska nearly a 44 percent decline.

USDA methodology in its Census of Agriculture allows for principal and secondary operators for farming operations (for example, fathers and sons, or multiple family members operating the same farm). Viewed this way, USDA shows a total of 703 Latino operators in Missouri (down about 32 percent from 2002) and 288 operators in Nebraska (down by 34 percent from 2002).

The number of farms with a Latino principal operator is quite different in both states compared to changes in total farms in the state. From 2002 to 2007, Missouri witnessed an overall increase of about one percent in the total number of farms in the state; Nebraska saw a three percent decrease.

Farm Size

The table below shows percentage of farms in acreage categories for Latino principal operators for each state.



Both states witnessed significant increases in the number of farms operated by Latinos in the smallest acreage category. From 2002 to 2007, the number of farms of 1 to 9 acres with Latino principal operators increased by nearly 18 percent in Missouri and doubled in Nebraska.

On average, farms operated by Latinos are getting smaller in both states. The average farm size for Latino principal operators declined in Missouri from 2002 to 2007 from 248 acres to 172, and in Nebraska from 1,215 acres to 946 acres.

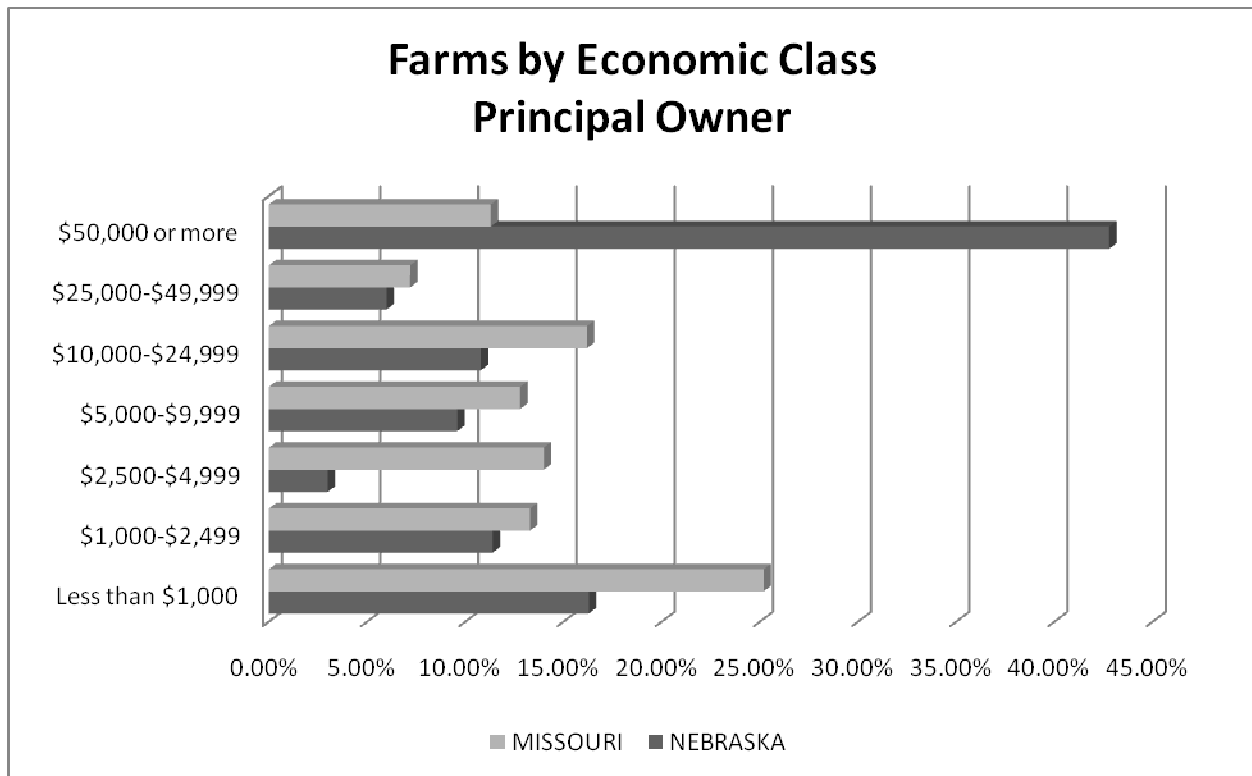
The average size of all farms in each state is comparable to farms with Latino principal operators. In Missouri, the average farm size for all farms in 2007 was 269 acres (down from 280 acres in 2002). In Nebraska, the average farm size for all farms in 2007 was 953 acres (up from 930 acres in 2002).

Overall, Missouri farms had significantly higher rates of large farms than did Latino farms. Of all farms in Missouri, 13 percent are 500 acres or larger. Small farms are more likely to be operated by Latino farmers—almost 41 percent of farms operated by Latinos are less than 50 acres compared to 27 percent of all Missouri farms.

The number of large farms and ranches overall in Nebraska are comparable to Latino farms and ranches. Forty percent of all Nebraska farms and ranches are 500 acres or larger. Again, farms operated by Latinos are more likely to be smaller in Nebraska—28 percent of farms operated by Latinos are less than 50 acres compared to about 18 percent of all Nebraska farms.

Farms by Economic Class

The table below shows the percentage of farms in economic classes (as represented by farm sales) for Latino principal operators for each state.



Farm Typology

The table on the following page shows the percentage of farms in each of USDA farm typology classifications for Latino principal operators for each state. The first five categories are lumped together in USDA’s larger category of “Small Family Farms.”

Typology	Missouri Latino Farms (Missouri all farms)	Nebraska Latino Farms (Nebraska all farms)
Limited Resource	15.3 (14.6)	5.4 (8.9)
Retirement	16.2 (21.8)	12.0 (11.2)
Residential/Lifestyle	48.4 (39.9)	31.3 (27.1)
Farm Occupation/ Lower Sales	1.0 (11.4)	15.1 (12.3)
Farm Occupation/ Higher Sales	1.1 (3.6)	6.6 (12.1)
Large Family Farms	0.7 (2.6)	7.8 (11.2)
Very Large Family Farms	2.3 (2.7)	9.6 (11.0)
Non-family Farms	6.1 (3.4)	12.0 (6.2)

The vast majority of Latino principal operators in both states operate “small family farms”—82 percent in Missouri and over 70 percent in Nebraska. Missouri farmers as a whole are more likely to be classified as “small family farms” than are Latino principal operators—over 91 percent of all Missouri farms are so classified. In Nebraska about 72 percent of all farms are classified as “small family farms,” a number similar to Latino principal operators.

In Missouri, compared to Latino farms, more farms are classified as “retirement” farms, fewer as “residential/lifestyle,” and significantly more as “farm occupation/lower sales.” In Nebraska, classifications dependent on higher sales are more numerous for farms in general than for Latino farms. Both states have significantly more Latino principal operators classified as “non-family farms” than all farms in the states.

Ownership Tenure

In both states, Latino principal operators are predominately owners of their farming operation. In Missouri, over 82 percent are full owners and nearly 17 percent are part owners. The remainder (about three percent) are tenants. In Nebraska, 55 percent are full owners and about 36 percent are part owners. The remainder (about 10 percent) are tenants.

Farming Income and Household Income and Primary Occupation

Most Latino farm households in Missouri and Nebraska do not make most of their income from farming or ranching. Among Missouri Latino principal operators, 80 percent have less than a quarter of their total household income from farming. Only three percent have all of their total household income from farming.

In Nebraska, 51 percent of Latino principal operators have less than a quarter of total household

income from farming. Nearly 28 percent have 75 percent or more of total household income from farming.

Among Missouri Latino principal operators, 24 percent have two or more households share in the net income of the farm. In Nebraska, 22 percent have two or more households share in the net income of the farm.

The differences between the states in the amount of household income that comes from farming can also be seen in data regarding the self-selected primary occupation of principal Latino farm operators. In Missouri, over 66 percent of Latino principal operators say something other than farming is their primary occupation. In Nebraska, 59 percent of Latino principal operators say farming is their primary occupation.

As such, in Nebraska nearly half of Latino principal operators work no days off the farm (37 percent work 200 or more days off the farm). Conversely, in Missouri, 42 percent of Latino principal operators work 200 or more days off the farm, and about 30 percent work no days off the farm.

In Missouri, 58 percent of all principal operators say something other than farming is their primary occupation (a bit lower than Latino principal operators). As with Latino principal operators in Nebraska, most of all principal operators say farming is their primary occupation—60 percent, nearly identical to Latino principal operators.

Days worked off the farm are comparable between all principal operators and Latino principal operators. In Missouri, 35 percent of all principal operators work no days off the farm and 42 percent work 200 or more days off the farm. In Nebraska, 42 percent of all principal operators work no days off the farm, and 36 percent work 200 or more days off the farm.

Age and Gender

The average age of Missouri Latino principal operators is 54 years of age (down from 56.5 years of age in 2002). The largest age category for principal operators whose primary occupation is farming is 65 or older (nearly 33 percent) and no principal operators are under 25. In Nebraska, the average age of Latino principal operators is slightly older—56.8 years of age (down from 57.7 in 2002). The largest age category in Nebraska for principal operators whose primary occupation is farming is also those 65 or older (nearly 34 percent), with three percent of under 25 years of age.

Latino principal operators with a primary occupation other than farming are younger. In Missouri, the largest age category of this group is 45 to 54 years of age (33 percent), with nearly nine percent under 34. In Nebraska, the largest age category of this group is also 45 to 54 (37 percent), with six percent under 34.

In Missouri, 85 percent of Latino principal operators are male. However, 35 percent of all Latino farm operators are female. In Nebraska, 95 percent of Latino principal operators are male. About 30 percent of all Latino farm operators are female.

The average age of all principal operators in Missouri is 57 years of age, 56 years of age in Nebraska.

Farms by Industry Classification

The USDA Census of Agriculture contains data about how many farms are in particular “industry classification”—essentially what is grown or raised on the farm.

In Missouri, among Latino principal operators oilseed and grain farming is the most popular type of farming operation (just over 25 percent). Other crop farming (sugar, hay, other) (at 21 percent) and beef cattle ranching (20 percent) are the next most popular.

In Nebraska, among Latino principal operators beef cattle ranching is the most popular type of farming operation (nearly 33 percent). Other crop farming (sugar, hay, other) (at 21 percent) and oilseed and grain farming (six percent) are the next most popular.

A significant number of Latino principal operators in both states are involved in what would be considered “non-traditional” farming operations. For example, 11 percent of Latino principal operators in Nebraska had farming operations classified as sheep/goat farming, animal aquaculture and other animal production, vegetable and melon farming, fruit and tree nut farming and greenhouse and nursing farming. In Missouri, those categories represent nine percent of Latino principal operators.

The farming operations of all farms in Nebraska are different in some respects from Latino farms. Forty-five percent of all Nebraska farms are involved in oilseed and grain farming (primarily traditional corn and soybean operations), and 26 percent are involved in cattle ranching and farming. Thus, significantly more Nebraska farms as a whole are involved in the traditional, and often capital intensive forms of grain farming than are Latino farmers.

The Missouri comparison is nearly the opposite. Among all Missouri farms, 44 percent are involved in cattle ranching and farming, 25 percent in other crop farming (hay primarily) and only 16 percent in oilseed and grain farming.

Government Farm Program Payments and Loans

Few Latino principal operators in either state receive federal government loans or payments from federal agricultural programs. In Missouri, only two percent of Latino principal operators receive CCC loans (the traditional farm operating loans), with such loans averaging \$89,000. In Nebraska, five percent of Latino principal operators receive CCC loans, with such loans averaging \$343,444.

Missouri’s Latino farmers are more likely to receive benefits from other government farm programs. Fourteen percent of Latino principal operators receive payments from USDA conservation programs and about a quarter of Latino principal operators receive payments from other USDA agricultural programs.

The numbers are similar in Nebraska. Nineteen percent of Latino principal operators in Nebraska receive payments from USDA conservation programs and 53 percent of Latino principal operators receive payments from other USDA agricultural programs.

Among all Missouri farmers, figures are similar. About two percent of all farmers receive CCC loans averaging about \$87,000. Nineteen percent of all farms receive payments from USDA conservation programs and 34 percent receive payments from other USDA agricultural programs.

Nebraska farmers in general have recipient rates much higher than do Latino farmers. Seven

percent of all Nebraska farmers receive CCC loans, with an average loan of \$86,000. Twenty-six percent of all Nebraska farms receive payments from USDA conservation programs, and two-thirds of all Nebraska farms receive payments from other USDA agricultural programs.

THIS SERIES

This is the first in a series of reports on Latino farmers and ranchers in Missouri and Nebraska. Future reports will summarize interviews with Latino farmers and ranchers in both states, and, using the data in this report and interviews with farmers, ranchers and others, outline implications for USDA, its programs and how they relate to Latino farmers and ranchers. Partners in the project include the Center for Rural Affairs, the Latino Research Initiative of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the Cambio Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia, and the Alianzas Program of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jon Bailey is Director of the Rural Research and Analysis Program at the Center for Rural Affairs. Jon has undergraduate and law degrees from Creighton University and a Masters in Public Policy from the College of William and Mary. Jon served as Legislative Fellow with U.S. Senator Kent Conrad and Special Assistant to the Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning in the Social Security Administration. Jon has authored publications on rural health care policy, rural development policy and contributed to the Wealth Building in Rural America project sponsored by the Center for Social Development at Washington University.

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