

## Historical outline

An agricultural census is annually conducted in the United Kingdom since 1866. The United Kingdom is participating in the ten yearly rounds of the World Census of Agriculture Programme since 1930 with a selected year. Data here presented refer to the June 2002 Agricultural Census.

## Organization

Parallel Censuses of Agriculture and Horticulture are carried out annually, at the beginning of June, by the Agricultural Departments of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In the past, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) was responsible for the aggregation and production of results referred to the United Kingdom as a whole. At present, the functions of MAFF have been taken over by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Information is collected under the authority of the Agricultural Statistics Act 1979 as amended by the Agriculture Amendment Act 1984, requesting farmers for information on agricultural activity as of June each year.

## Enumeration period

The census day was 5 June 2002.

## Reference date/period

- Data on land use, land tenure and livestock movements refer to the 12 months preceding the census day.
- Data on area cropped, area sown, greenhouses in use, livestock numbers and employment are reported as at 5 June 2002.

## Definition

### *Measure of economic size of holding*

The farm size unit presently in use is the European Size Unit (ESU) defined as 1 200 Euros of Standard Gross Margin (SGM) calculated by multiplying the farm crop area and livestock numbers by appropriate SGM coefficients and then summing the results for all farm enterprises.

The size classification in ESU, as applied to the June Census, originated (in line with Eurostat methodologies) the following groups of holdings to be used for sample selection purposes.

- very small holdings- under 8 ESU
- small holdings- 8 and under 40 ESU
- medium holdings- 40 and under 100 ESU
- large holdings- 100 and under 200 ESU
- very large holdings - 200 ESU and over

## Coverage

The census covers England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## Frame

A central list of names and addresses of agricultural holdings is maintained and kept up-to-date using information from various sources like the operations of the census itself, the census-based sample surveys and the Agriculture Departments' administrative dealings with farmers.

## Method

Information is collected by postal questionnaire. Census forms are sent to approximately 60 percent of registered farms. In the recent years both data collection and presentation methods have undergone significant changes. For the first time in 1995 an element of sampling was introduced in the census. In 1998 a geographical information system was developed, which has enabled more accurate and flexible data presentation. Alterations to geographical boundaries began to be introduced in 2000, to bring data in line with European Union requirements.

## Data source

Agricultural and Horticultural Census 5 June 2002. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) National Statistics, London the United Kingdom.

## Contact

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## Website

<http://farmstats.defra.gov.uk>