

Oldham County  
Agricultural Development Council

Update of  
**COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

June 4, 2015

**Submitted by:**

List County Council Members

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# Oldham County

## Comprehensive Plan Update

County Agricultural Development Councils have the responsibility to evaluate the needs of the local agricultural economy. The updated County Comprehensive Plan should identify programs and projects best suited for agricultural development fund investments in the County.

The Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy staff may provide guidance to county councils throughout this evaluation.

### 1. Overview of County

Despite the 'bedroom community' nature of Oldham County, about half of the land here is still in farms, which includes woodlands. Total land in farms was 62,561 acres in 2002; 60,024 acres in 2007; with a slight increase reported in 2012 of 60,354 acres.

Even though farm acres are relatively unchanged, the number of farms has decreased from 481 in 2002 to 419 in 2012. The average farm size has increased from 130 acres to 144 acres during this time. The number of farms less than 50 acres in size has decreased from 255 to 225 since 2002.

#### a. Agricultural statistics, trends, & projections (i.e. Census Data)

- Traditional agricultural production

Horses and other equine remain at the top of Oldham County's list of agriculture sales, followed by grain crops, nursery/greenhouse, and cattle/calves. Other crops/hay sales value has quadrupled since 2002.

- Non-traditional agricultural production

The value of vegetables sold has more than doubled since 2002; Sheep/goat sales value increased 7 times what it was in 2002; and poultry/eggs sales values have doubled. This is in part due to the increased production for farmers markets and CSA's. The use of guard dogs and ease of small animal handling may also have helped increase production of sheep & goats.

- New & emerging agricultural production

There are 3 farmers markets and 6 CSA farm locations here. Two farmers markets were started within the last 3 years, and the majority of CSA's started within the last 5 years. High tunnel production is increasing.

- Tobacco dependency

There is very little tobacco being produced in Oldham County, and the majority of that is on land being leased from producers in adjoining counties.

## b. Demographic Data

- Social data

2012 population estimate was 61,412. This reflects a 1.8% population increase since 2000. 60% of residents work outside Oldham County. 168 of farm owners (or 40%) list farming as their primary occupation, compared to 60% in 2002. The number of farms operated by women has increased from 15% to 24%. The number of farms operated by minorities is relatively unchanged at a little over 2%.

- Economic data

Oldham County's median household income in 2013 was \$83,391. The per capita income was \$33,591. Percent of persons living in poverty is 6.7%. Cash receipts from farm marketings was over 14.8 million in 2012. See attached Supplemental Information for details.

## 2. Assessments of the County

### a. Strengths

Oldham County's strengths include:

- Proximity to Louisville metro area and a population with desire and ability to afford locally produced food. This proximity also provides niche marketing opportunities.
- Good location for access to several markets/opportunities
- Income levels of consumers
- Wealth of some farm owners gives them the ability to experiment with new enterprises and recover from any losses or changes in markets.
- Extension educational programs and services

b. Weaknesses

Oldham County's weaknesses include:

- No distribution system for products
- Limited land available for farming and high land values
- Consumers don't always understand food production (GMO, Organic, Animal Welfare, Seasonal Availability of Products, etc.)
- Need for stronger Agriculture voice
- Average age of farmer

c. Opportunities

- Create a cooperative of farmers to supply the metro area
- Sales into niche markets; - Hay sales to equine producers
- Produce more value added foods for consumers looking for quick, easy meals
- Large push for farmers markets by consumers & agencies that support ag
- Proximity to Louisville metro area/consumers looking for locally produced food
- Livestock processing facility being built in Henry Co. will help producers (shorter travel time to processing; potential new customers/increase in sales)
- Educate consumers about agriculture, farming, food production, local markets

d. Challenges

- No local processing facilities/sites for collecting and distributing products on a large scale
- Increasing production to provide amount of food or commodity needed
- Cannot meet consumer needs in winter/off-season months
- Overcoming the 'big box store' dominance of food supply
- Consumers need more education about agriculture and food

### 3. County Council Objectives

a. Mission/Vision Statement

The mission of the Oldham County Agriculture Development Council is to maintain a viable agriculture presence in the county through support and enhancement of traditional enterprises while encouraging the development of alternative production and marketing opportunities.

b. Short term goals

- Encourage producers to expand and improve existing enterprises
- Encourage producers to explore new production and marketing opportunities
- Provide cost-share opportunities that encourage these
- Council will consider individual and group applications
- Council encourages/accepts project proposals for new or alternative enterprises which show potential for improving ag economy through broader adoption by the farming community.

c. Long term goals

- Protect soil & water resources; Encourage best management practices to conserve natural resources; Encourage farmers to have Ag Water Quality Plans
- Support education programs that help producers improve management, production and marketing practices that in turn improve farm incomes
- Increase public awareness of agriculture's importance and economic impact in Oldham County and in Kentucky
- Increase public knowledge of facts about agriculture and food production.
- Work jointly with Oldham County Extension to accomplish these goals.

d. Tactics for leveraging funds

▪ Regional partnerships

Work with other entities like Cattlemen's Associations and Conservation Districts to collectively fund projects that benefit farmers in multiple counties. An example of past regional partnerships is the support and funding of the Livestock Processing Facility being built in Henry County.

▪ State Agricultural Development Board resources

Provide county matching funds for projects seeking state-level financial assistance from the Kentucky Ag Development Fund. An example of past funding for this is the Livestock Processing Facility being built in Henry County. Inform applicants of loans available through Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation.

- Other local/state/federal resources

Council recognizes and makes itself aware of other funding opportunities that can complement Kentucky Ag Development Fund impact in Oldham County. Examples include funding from organizations like Kentucky Division of Conservation for dead animal removal and Natural Resources Conservation Service for water access and organic programs.

### 3. Evaluation & Review

- a. How are proposals evaluated and does this process need modified?

Proposals are evaluated in a manner consistent with criteria listed on the State Ag Development Board approved application. Proposals are evaluated on perceived potential to enhance Oldham County's agriculture economy through improved management, production and marketing or the adoption of alternative enterprises. Priority is given to funding proposals from organizations or individual farmers for a specific economic activity. While individuals may apply for funds, every applicant should demonstrate commercial viability with significant potential positive impact on farm income and broader application in the agriculture community.

- b. How is success and failure measured?

Success and failure will be measured by:

- Eventual success of projects funded
- Number of producers able to increase production
- Number of producers able to increase farm income

- c. How will the county comprehensive plan be revised?

The plan will be revised based on review by the Oldham County Agricultural Development Council, with input from other agricultural leaders in the county. This includes representatives of Extension-sponsored groups, Farm Bureau, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fiscal Court, Chamber of Commerce and others. Census data, participation/interest in certain Extension agriculture programs or areas of production, number of farmers markets and CSA's, other identifiable needs, etc. are factors that will be considered in revising the plan.

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# Oldham County Comprehensive Plan for Agriculture

Supplemental Information  
June 4, 2015

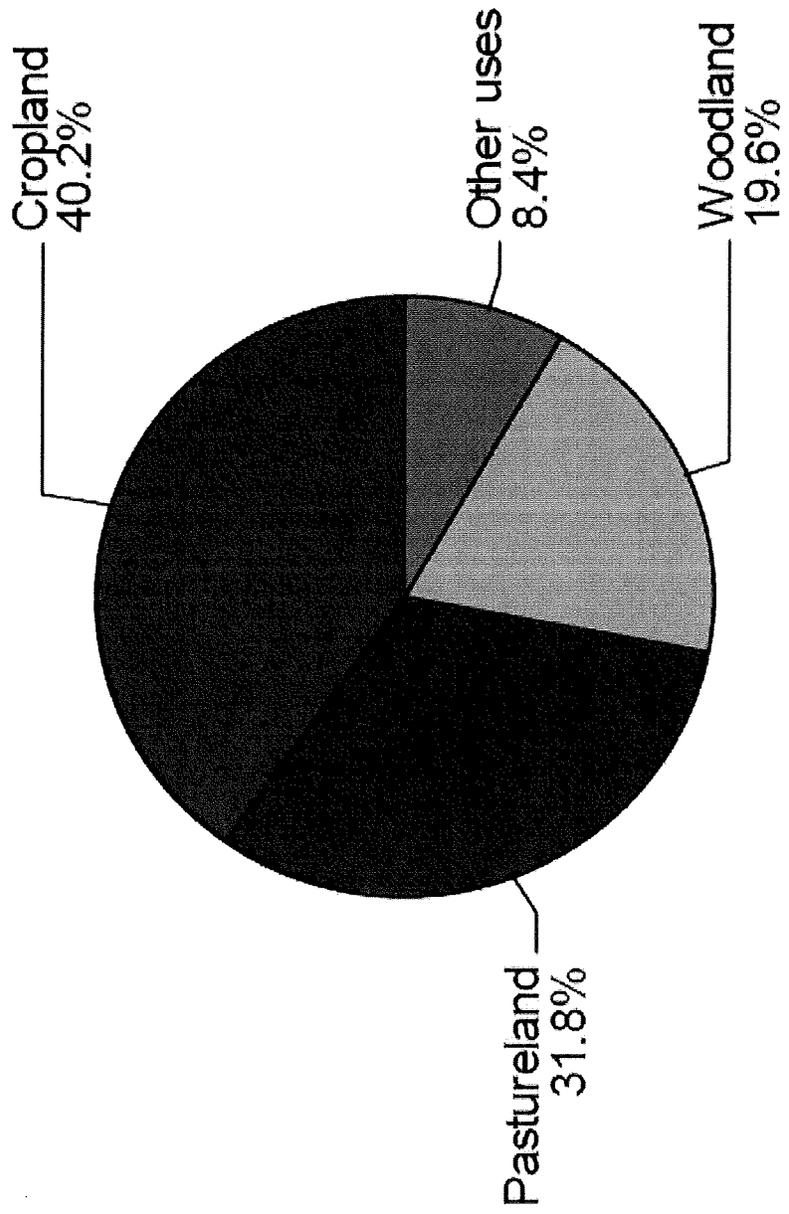
# What does Oldham County Ag look like?

	2012	2007	2002
<b>Number of Farms</b>	419	461	481
<b>Land in Farms</b>	60,354 acres	60,024 acres	62,561 acres
<b>Average Size of Farm</b>	144 acres	130 acres	130 acres
<b>Market Value of Products Sold</b>	\$14,849,000	\$19,269,000	\$21,267,000
Crop Sales \$9,117,000 (61 percent)			
Livestock Sales \$5,732,000 (39 percent)			
<b>Average Per Farm</b>	\$35,439	\$41,799	\$44,214

**Total Acreage/Size of Oldham County = 121,082 Acres**  
**Farms Make up One-Half of Oldham County**

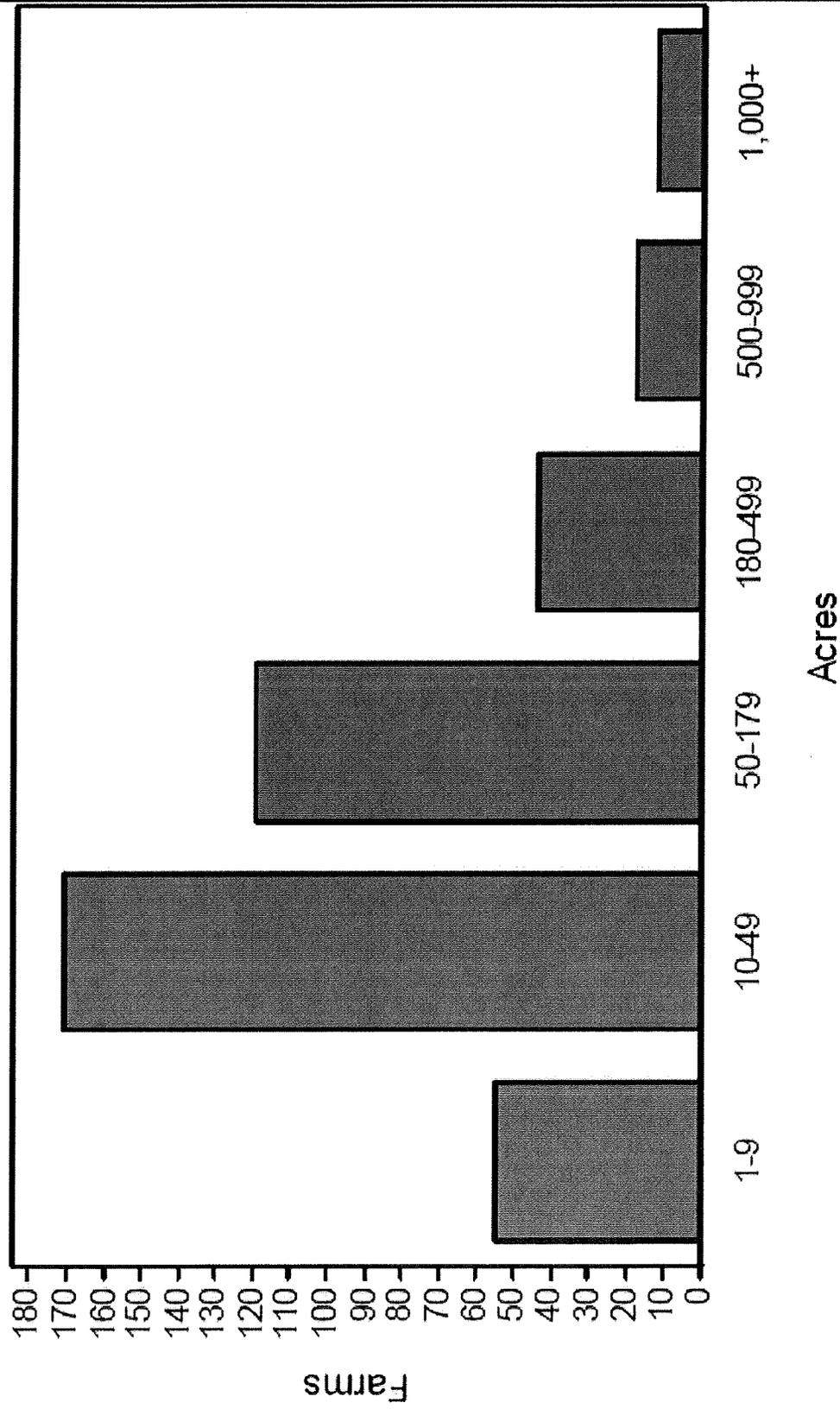
# Land in Farms

Land in Farms, 2012  
by Land Use



# Farms by Size

Farms by Size, 2012



# Market Value – Crops vs. Livestock

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2012</u>
Total	\$ 21,267,000	\$ 19,269,000	\$ 14,849,000
Crops	\$ 8,957,000	\$ 7,569,000	\$ 9,117,000
Livestock (includes horses)	\$ 12,310,000	\$ 11,700,000	\$ 5,732,000

*Kentucky Equine Survey shows the value of Oldham County  
Equine Sold in 2012 as \$7,179,000*

<u>\$ Value of Sales by Commodity</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2002</u>
Horses, Ponies, other *	7,179,000	8,261,000	8,898,000
Grains, Oilseeds, Dry Beans & Peas	4,619,000	2,673,000	1,790,000
Nursery, Greenhouse, Flowers, Sod	2,653,000	3,672,000	5,836,000
Cattle & Calves	2,429,000	2,108,000	1,844,000
Other Crops & Hay	1,342,000	654,000	332,000
Vegetables, Melons, Potatoes	337,000	151,000	(D)
Sheep, Goats, Wool, Mohair, Milk	42,000	3,000	6,000
Poultry & Eggs	20,000	17,000	9,000
Tobacco	(D)	340,000	727,000
Fruits, Nuts, Berries	(D)	17,000	(D)
Cut Christmas Trees, Short Rotation			
Woody Crops	(D)	63,000	(D)
Milk from Cows	(D)	1,062,000	(D)
Hogs and Pigs	(D)	(D)	(D)
Aquaculture	(D)	(D)	(D)
Other Animals & Other Animal Products			
(Includes Stud Fees and A.I.)	(D)	228,000	(D)

\* \$ Figure from 2012 Kentucky Equine Survey

2012 Ag Census reports Value of Equine Sold - \$2,230,000