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Developed in: July 2024

Outagamie County Agricultural Profile Update through 2022



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INTRODUCTION

Outagamie County adopted its Farmland Preservation Plan, “[Preserving our Roots, Securing our Future](#),” in 2023. Development of the Plan allowed the County to take stock of existing agricultural resources and trends. It also allowed the County to evaluate and improve its policies to ensure Outagamie County continues to support farmers and preserve farmland for future generations.

Amongst other content, the County’s Farmland Preservation Plan relied on 2012 and 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture data to assess agricultural trends. Since the preparation and adoption of that Plan, the U.S. Census of Agriculture published 2022 agricultural data. This document updates the “County Agricultural Profile” section of the County’s existing Farmland Preservation Plan using new 2022 data for Outagamie County. This update allows the County to assess whether previously documented trends persist. It is supplementary information to the County’s Farmland Preservation Plan.

Exhibit 1. Farm in the Town of Center, WI



COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PROFILE

This analysis examines farm operations, farm labor, agricultural uses of land, commodity sales, value of agricultural assets, and agricultural land transactions from 2012 to 2022.

Farm Operations

As of 2022, Outagamie County contained 1,000 farm operations, operating on 241,653 farm acres. The average farm operation in the County was 242 acres in size, six acres larger than the state of Wisconsin's average farm size of 236 acres.

Exhibit 2 shows that over a 10-year period (2012–2022), the County lost 170 farm operations (15%) and 9,095 farm acres (4%).

From 2012 to 2022, the average farm size in the County grew by 27 acres. In this time, the average farm size in Wisconsin also grew by 27 acres.

Exhibit 2. Change in Total Farm Operations and Farmland Acreage in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012, 2017, and 2022 (Table 8).

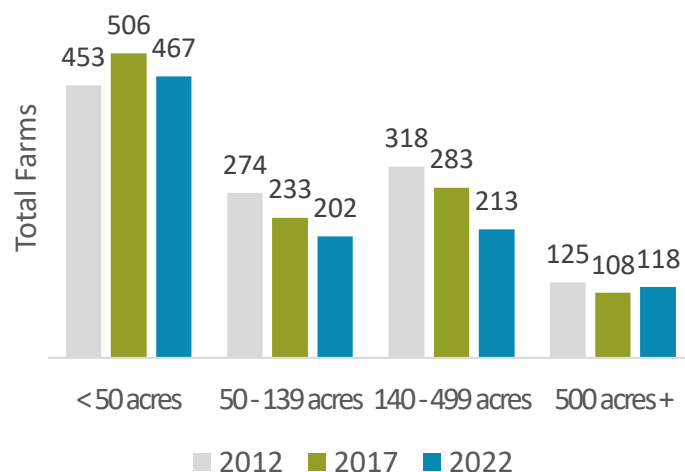
	Total Farm Acres	Total Farm Operations	Average Farm Size
2012	250,748	1,170	214.3
2017	236,963	1,130	209.7
2022	241,653	1,000	241.7
Change (2012 to 2022)			
Number	(9,095)	(170)	27.3
Percent	-4%	-15%	13%

Although the average farm size in Outagamie County is growing, there are still over 450 farm operations smaller than 50 acres.

Between 2012 and 2022, farm operations smaller than 50 acres grew by three percent (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3. Change in Farm Operations by Farm Size (Acres) in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012, 2017, and 2022 (Table 8).



Farm Labor

Farm workers are a critical resource for farming operations. As of 2022, 243 of the County's 1,000 farm operations (24%) relied on hired farm labor.

The number of farm laborers in the County decreased by 12% from 1,652 farm laborers in 2012 to 1,452 farm laborers in 2022 (Exhibit 4).

Of the county's 1,452 farm laborers (2022), 52% worked more than 150 days per year and 48% worked less than 150 days per year.

Exhibit 4. Change in Farm Workers in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012, 2017, and 2022 (Table 7).

	Farm Workers
2012	1,652
2017	1,328
2022	1,452
Change (2012 to 2022)	
Number	(200)
Percent	-12%

Agricultural Uses of Land

The primary use of agricultural land in the County is for crops (Exhibit 5). As of 2022, cropland accounted for 84% of all agricultural land. Cropland acreage declined by 6,615 acres (three percent) from 2012 to 2022.

Among the categories of agricultural land use documented in Exhibit 5, pastureland increased by 1,748 acres (34%) from 2012 to 2022, contrasting with losses observed in all other categories.

Exhibit 5. Changes in Agricultural Uses of Land in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012, 2017, and 2022 (Table 8).

	Acres (2012)	Acres (2017)	Acres (2022)	Change (2012 to 2022)	
				Number	Percent
Cropland	210,085	206,163	203,470	(6,615)	-3%
Woodland	20,718	16,029	17,559	(3,159)	-15%
Pastureland	5,194	5,060	6,942	1,748	34%
Other	14,751	9,711	13,682	(1,069)	-7%
Total	250,748	236,963	241,653	(9,095)	-4%

Commodity Sales

In 2022, farms in Outagamie County generated \$381.8 million in total sales, up from \$302.2 million in 2012 (Exhibit 6).

The average farm generated \$381,801 in total sales, about \$123,000 more than in 2012.

Exhibit 6. Change in Nominal Commodity Sales in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012, 2017, and 2022 (Table 2).

	Commodity Total Sales	Average Sales per Farm Operation with Sales
2012	\$302.2m	\$258,319
2017	\$263.7m	\$233,388
2022	\$381.8m	\$381,801
Change (2012 to 2022)		
Number	\$79.6m	\$123,482
Percent	26%	48%

Value of Agricultural Assets

Between 2012 and 2022, and after adjusting for inflation, the County's total agricultural asset value increased by 11%, the average asset value per farm operation increased by 30%, and the average asset value per acre increased by 16%.

In 2022, Outagamie County recorded \$1.8 billion in agricultural assets (Exhibit 7), which was two percent of the total value of agricultural assets in Wisconsin overall.

The average farm operation in Outagamie County recorded \$1.8 million in total assets in 2022, compared to \$1.4 million for the average farm operation in Wisconsin overall.

Exhibit 7. Inflation-Adjusted (2022 dollars) Value of Assets (Ag. Land, including Buildings) in Outagamie County – 2012, 2017, and 2022

Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2017 and 2022 (Table 8). Note: asset value includes agricultural land, including buildings.

	Total Asset Value	Total Asset Value Per	
		Farm Operation	Agriculture Acre
2012 (2022 \$)	\$1.64b	\$1.40m	\$6,536
2017 (2022 \$)	\$1.98b	\$1.75m	\$8,360
2022	\$1.83b	\$1.83m	\$7,559
Change (2012 to 2022)			
Number	\$1.83m	425,961	1,023
Percent	11%	30%	16%

Agricultural Land Transactions

Between 2000 and 2022, agricultural producers sold 49,580 acres of agricultural land in Outagamie County. In this time, an average of 2,156 acres of agricultural land sold per year.

Since 2010, agricultural land has primarily sold to other agricultural producers (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8. Share of Ag. Land (Acres) with and without Improvements* Sold by Subsequent Use in Outagamie County - 2000 through 2022

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

*Note: Data for 2020, 2021, and 2022 only includes land sales without improvements.

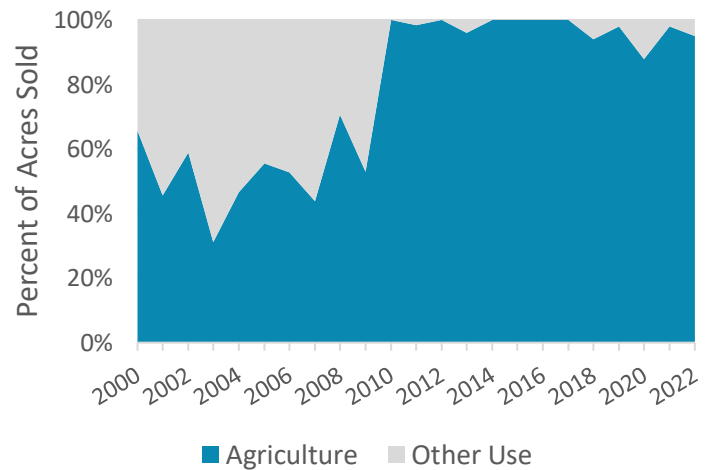


Exhibit 9 looks at the average cost per acre of agricultural land *without* improvements.

Between 2000 and 2022, agricultural land without improvements that diverted to other uses often sold for a premium. However, in 2010, 2012, and between 2014 and 2017, all agricultural land without improvements sold to owners that continued to use the land for agriculture.

Exhibit 9. Average Cost per Acre of Agricultural Land (without Improvements) Sold by Subsequent Use in Outagamie County - 2000 through 2022

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

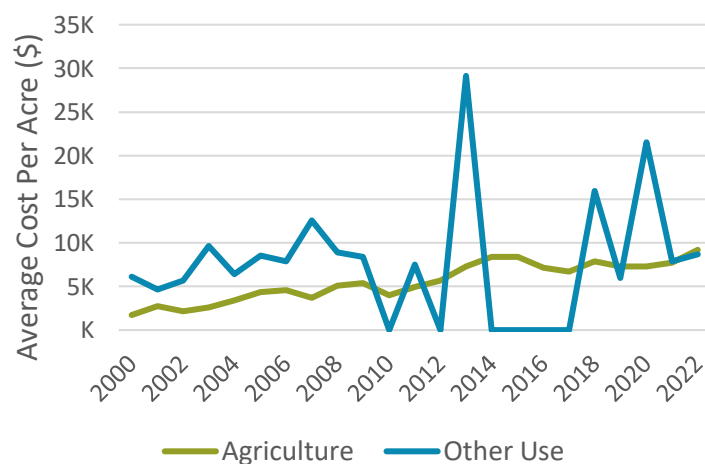


Exhibit 10 looks at the average cost per acre of agricultural land *with* improvements.

Between 2000 and 2020, and similar to agricultural land sales without improvements, agricultural land that diverted to other uses often sold for a premium. However, from 2010 to 2017, agricultural land with improvements had only sold to buyers who continued to use the land for agricultural purposes.

Exhibit 10. Average Cost per Acre of Agricultural Land (with Improvements) Sold by Subsequent Use in Outagamie County – 2000 through 2020

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

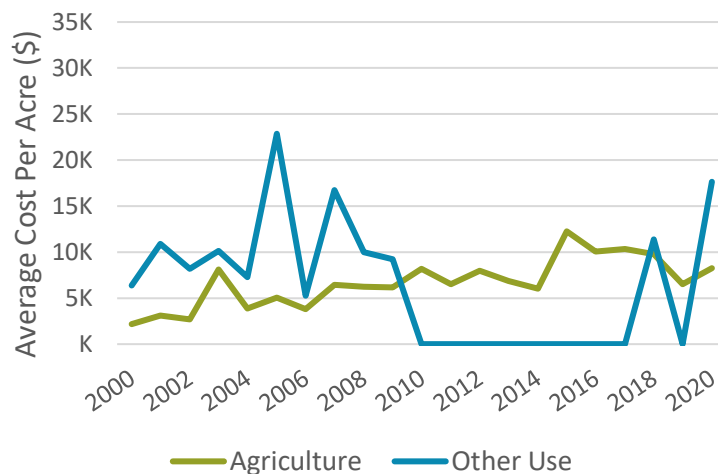


Exhibit 11. Farm in the Town of Grand Chute, WI



CONCLUDING SUMMARY

This analysis identified four major trends between 2012 and 2022:

- **Loss of farmland acres.** Between 2012 and 2022, the County lost over 9,000 farm acres and 170 farm operations.
- **Increase in size of production.** Although the County has experienced a decline in its agricultural land base, the average farm size continues to grow. The average farm size grew by 27 acres (13%), from 2012 to 2022.
- **Growth in commodity sales.** Without adjusting for inflation, from 2012 to 2022, total commodity sales grew 26% and average sales per farm operation grew by 48%.
- **Retention of agricultural land.** Between 2000 and 2022, Outagamie County saw the sale of 49,580 acres of agricultural land, with an average of 2,156 acres sold annually. Although the County saw a net loss of 9,000 farm acres from 2012 to 2022, since 2010, a majority share of the county's agricultural land had sold to other agricultural producers.

As Outagamie County continues to develop, the County will continue to assess its agricultural trends to ensure the County maintains policies that protect its agricultural land base. This analysis concludes that the policies documented in Outagamie County's Farmland Preservation for the 2023-2033 period are still effective in addressing the County's farmland preservation goals.

Exhibit 12. Farm in the Village of Greenville, WI

