Agriculture works hard for Lafayette County every day. Family-owned farms, food processors and agriculture-related businesses generate thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity while contributing to local income and tax revenues.

When following the trail of barn quilts through Lafayette County, located in Southwest Wisconsin, you will find agricultural diversity, including some of the best cheese produced anywhere in the state. Lafayette County is one of the major agricultural counties in the state with that industry contributing a significant component of the County's economy.

The county is home to many specialty cheese makers, dairy farms (cows and goats), and grain farms. The mix of small town atmosphere, farmers markets, and rolling hills complete the picturesque county (with no stop-lights!).

**How important is agriculture?**

- Agriculture provides **jobs for 4,114 Lafayette County residents.**
- Agriculture accounts for **$1.3 billion in economic activity.**
- Agriculture contributes **$323 million to the county’s total income.**
- Agriculture pays **$12.7 million in taxes.** This figure does not include all property taxes paid to local schools.

**Who owns the farms?**

- **86.8%** Individuals or families
- **2.3%** Non-family corporations and other
- **7.2%** Family partnerships
- **3.7%** Family-owned corporations

**Produced in 2014 by:**
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board
Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection

**Economic data (2012) provided by:**
Steven C. Deller, Professor, Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Community Development Specialist, University of Wisconsin-Extension.

**For more Information, contact:**
Lafayette County UW-Extension
Agriculture Center
627 Washington Street, Darlington, WI 53530-1396
608-776-4820 • http://lafayette.uwex.edu/

An EEO/AA employer, the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and Americans with Disabilities (ADA) requirements.
Agriculture provides 58% of Lafayette County’s jobs
Lafayette County agriculture provides 4,114 jobs, or 57.5 percent, of the county’s workforce of 7,156. Production jobs include farm owners and managers and farm employees. Agricultural service jobs include veterinarians, crop and livestock consultants, feed, fuel and other crop input suppliers, farm machinery dealers, barn builders and agricultural lenders, to name a few. Processing jobs include those employed in food processing and other value-added industries that support food processors. Every job in agriculture generates an additional 0.72 jobs in the county.

Agriculture contributes $323 million to county income
Lafayette County agriculture accounts for $323.2 million, or 71.5 percent, of the county’s total income. This includes wages, salaries, benefits and profits of farmers and workers in agriculture-related businesses. Every dollar of agricultural income generates an additional $1.07 of county income.

Agriculture pumps about $1.3 billion into local economy
Lafayette County agriculture generates $1.27 billion in economic activity, 89.4 percent, of the county’s total economic activity. Every dollar of sales from agricultural products generates an additional $0.48 of economic activity in other parts of the county’s economy.

Here’s how agriculture stimulates economic activity:
- The direct effect of agriculture equals $858.6 million and includes the sale of farm products and value-added products.
- Purchases of agricultural and food-processing inputs, services and equipment add another $376.9 million in economic activity. For example, this includes business-to-business purchases of fuel, seed, fertilizer, feed and farm machinery, as well as veterinary services, crop and livestock consultants and equipment leasing.
- This business-to-business activity then generates another $36.1 million in economic activity when people who work in agriculture-related businesses spend their earnings in the local economy.

Agriculture pays almost $13 million in taxes
Economic activity associated with Lafayette County farms and agriculture-related businesses generates $12.7 million in local and state taxes. This figure does not include all property taxes paid to support local schools. If it did, the number would increase dramatically.

Table 1. Taxes paid by agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tax Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales tax</td>
<td>$2.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax</td>
<td>$4.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property tax</td>
<td>$3.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$3.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12.7 million</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Lafayette County’s top commodities (sales by dollar value, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Sales (Million)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>$113.2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>$92.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other crops &amp; hay</td>
<td>$4.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs &amp; pigs</td>
<td>$3.4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep, goats, &amp; their products</td>
<td>$2.6 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dairy is a key Lafayette County industry
Dairy farming is the major agricultural industry in Lafayette County. On-farm production and milk sales account for $150.5 million. Processing milk into dairy products generates another $864.4 million.

- Fifteen plants process dairy products in Lafayette County.
- On-farm milk production accounts for 542 jobs, and dairy processing accounts for 1,759 jobs.
- At the county level, each dairy cow generates $4,421 in on-farm sales to producers.
- At the state level, each dairy cow generates over $34,000 in total sales.