Agriculture works hard for Sauk 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.

Sauk County has a diverse rural landscape with a variety of farms. The dairy industry is the prominent industry including family farms and local agribusinesses. In addition to dairy, Sauk County is a leader in the state for the production of cattle and hogs. There is also a strong connection to the farm with farmers markets, CSAs and agritourism including Fermentation Festival, various pick-your-own operations, bed and breakfasts, meat markets and cheese factories around the county. Overall, agriculture has a tremendous impact on the county and the variety of family farms continue to keep agriculture thriving in Sauk County.

How important is agriculture?
- Agriculture provides jobs for 5,463 Sauk County residents.
- Agriculture accounts for $865 million in economic activity.
- Agriculture contributes $331 million to the county’s total income.
- Agriculture pays $16.3 million in taxes. This figure does not include all property taxes paid to local schools.

Who owns the farms?
- 84.6% Individuals or families
- 7.5% Family partnerships
- 5.5% Family-owned corporations
- 2.3% Non-family corporations and other
Agriculture provides 12% of Sauk County’s jobs

Sauk County agriculture provides 5,463 jobs, or 11.7 percent, of the county’s workforce of 46,653. 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 0.77 jobs in the county.

Agriculture contributes $331 million to county income

Sauk County agriculture accounts for $331 million, or 10.4 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 $1.14 of county income.

Agriculture pumps $865 million into local economy

Sauk County agriculture generates $865.3 million in economic activity, about 13.8 percent, of the county’s total economic activity. Every dollar of sales from agricultural products generates an additional $0.60 of economic activity in other parts of the county’s economy.

Here’s how agriculture stimulates economic activity:

- The direct effect of agriculture equals $542.3 million and includes the sale of farm products and value-added products.
- Purchases of agricultural and food-processing inputs, services and equipment add another $224.4 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 $98.6 million in economic activity when people who work in agriculture-related businesses spend their earnings in the local economy.

Agriculture pays over $16 million in taxes

Economic activity associated with Sauk County farms and agriculture-related businesses generates $16.3 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>$3.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income tax</td>
<td>$4.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property tax</td>
<td>$4.8 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$3.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16.3 million</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Milk</td>
<td>$93.1 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Grain</td>
<td>$62.7 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cattle &amp; calves</td>
<td>$29.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Hogs &amp; pigs</td>
<td>$9.9 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other crops &amp; hay</td>
<td>$4.7 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dairy is a key Sauk County industry

Dairy farming is the major agricultural industry in Sauk County. On-farm production and milk sales account for $145.9 million. Processing milk into dairy products generates another $348.9 million.

- Seven plants process dairy products in Sauk County.
- On-farm milk production accounts for 826 jobs, and dairy processing accounts for 1,031 jobs.
- At the county level, each dairy cow generates $4,311 in on-farm sales to producers.
- At the state level, each dairy cow generates over $34,000 in total sales.

2014

Sauk County