

Mecosta County

Area ¹	571 square miles (355,266 acres of land ²)
Population ³	42,090
Largest city	Big Rapids
Watershed(s)	Muskegon, Saginaw, Grand



Top 10 rankings:

- #1 in Michigan in **number hog and pig operations** (105)
- #3 in Michigan in **potatoes** (undisclosed quantity)
- #3 in Michigan in **number of dairy farms** (3)
- #7 in Michigan in **total number of animal operations** (634)

Agricultural Revenues²

Total market value of agriculture production ⁴	
Total crop sales	
Total livestock sales	

Amount

\$72,652,000
\$19,277,000
\$53,376,000

MI top 20 ranking

#13

Locally Important Products

Hogs and pigs	105 operations	#1
Revenue from hogs and pigs	\$32,822,000	#3
Potatoes	undisclosed acres	#3
Cattle and calves	353 operations	#10

Key Michigan Products

Corn, soy, and wheat	22,084 acres (19.3% of cropland)	
Revenue from corn, soy, and wheat	\$5,859,000	
Vegetables	not available	
Revenue from vegetables	not available	
Fruit and tree nuts	120 acres (0.1% of cropland)	
Revenue from fruits, tree nuts and berries	not available	
Dairy farms	105 farms (0.8% of all in MI)	#4
Revenue from milk and other dairy	\$14,001,000	
All animal operations	634 operations (65,691 animals ⁵)	#7

Agricultural Land²

Total number of farms	845
Total farmland	114,715 acres (32.3% of total area)
Forage/pasture/non-crop farmland	30,917 acres (27.0% of farmland)
Number of farms using organic production	2 (no certified organic farms ⁶)
Cropland in organic production	not available
Cropland in transition to organic	107 acres
Area of greenhouse/nursery operations	not available

Mecosta County

Michigan Food and Agricultural Systems Profiles

Agricultural Chemicals⁷

Number Percent of MI total MI top 20 ranking

Fertilizer manufacturers, distributors, and storage facilities	2	0.8%
Pesticide storage facilities	1	0.7%

Processing and Warehousing⁷

Wholesale food processing plants	11	1.1%
Food warehouses	2	0.2%
Controlled atmosphere storage facilities	0	0.0%
Dairy processing plants	1	1.4%
Dairy warehouse, transfer, and truck cleaning facilities	0	0.0%
Slaughter facilities (MDA licensed)	0	0.0%
Meat processing plants (MDA licensed)	0	0.0%
Rendering facilities	1	33.3%
Commercial feed manufacturing facilities	2	0.5%
Livestock markets/buying stations	0	0.0%
Ethanol plants	none	

Retailing and Distribution

Food service establishments (all) ⁸	157	0.4%
Retail food establishments	71	0.5%
Total amount spent by consumers on food (estimate) ⁹	\$75,300,000	
Emergency food distribution sites ¹⁰	8	0.3%
Pounds distributed	261,149	0.1%
Students receiving free or reduced school lunch ¹¹	3,347	48.9% of students in county
Households receiving food stamp benefits	6,465	15.3% of households in county
Total federal funding for food stamp benefits	\$7,077,167	
Pet population (estimate) ¹²	23,000	
Port(s) of entry	none	

Local Distribution

Farmers' markets ¹³	1
U-pick farms /On-farm markets	0
Farms using Community Supported Agriculture ²	6
Value of direct-to-consumer farm product sales	\$504,000

Local food production index¹⁴ 36

The local food production index describes both the quantity and diversity of agricultural production in a county. It is obtained by comparing county per capita production of major food crops with national per capita consumption of those crops. The highest possible index score of 100 indicates that sufficient quantities of all included crops are produced within the county to meet local demand. Michigan's statewide production index score is 30.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau State & County Quick Facts: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/26000.html>

² 2007 Census of Agriculture. National Agricultural Statistics Service. <http://www.nass.usda.gov/mi>

³ Michigan Economic Development Corporation Economic Profiler: <http://ref.michigan.org/medc/MilInfo/Places/>

⁴ Mecosta County received \$653,000 in federal commodity payments in 2007.

⁵ Includes cattle, hogs, horses, ponies, goats, sheep, chickens, alpacas, llamas, turkeys, and pheasants.

⁶ Certified organic data from 2007 Census of Agriculture provided by Dr. Jim Bingen, MSU CARRS, from a special request to NASS.

⁷ Michigan Department of Agriculture Databases, 2009; see explanatory document for details.

⁸ By MDA's definition, "food service establishments" includes all facilities selling food; licensed by local health departments. "Retail food establishments" includes only grocery, convenience stores, and other facilities selling food for at-home preparation and/or consumption; licensed by MDA.

⁹ Calculated from county population and household income (American Community Survey, US Census Bureau 2007) and estimate of 12.1% of income spent on food in the Midwest region (Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/cex/2007/share/region.pdf>)

¹⁰ Food Bank Council of Michigan, "Michigan Blueprint to End Hunger County-by-County Report," FY 2006. <http://www.fbcnich.org/site/DocServer/County-by-County7-07.pdf?docID=981>

¹¹ Michigan League for Human Services. Kids Count in Michigan Databook, 2007. <http://www.milhs.org/information/default.asp?NavPageID=50096>

¹² Calculated from American Community Survey 2008 population estimates (US Census Bureau), according to Ohio Department of Agriculture Animal Emergency Response Plan, 2007. Includes dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, rodents, and turtles.

¹³ Michigan Farms & Farmers' Market 2009 Directory: <http://www.michiganfarmfun.com/> and Michigan Farmers Market Association, <http://farmersmarkets.msu.edu/>.

¹⁴ Calculated using USDA Census of Agriculture Data, adapted from Timmons, Wang and Kent (2008). Local Foods: Estimating Capacity. Journal of Extension 46(5).