

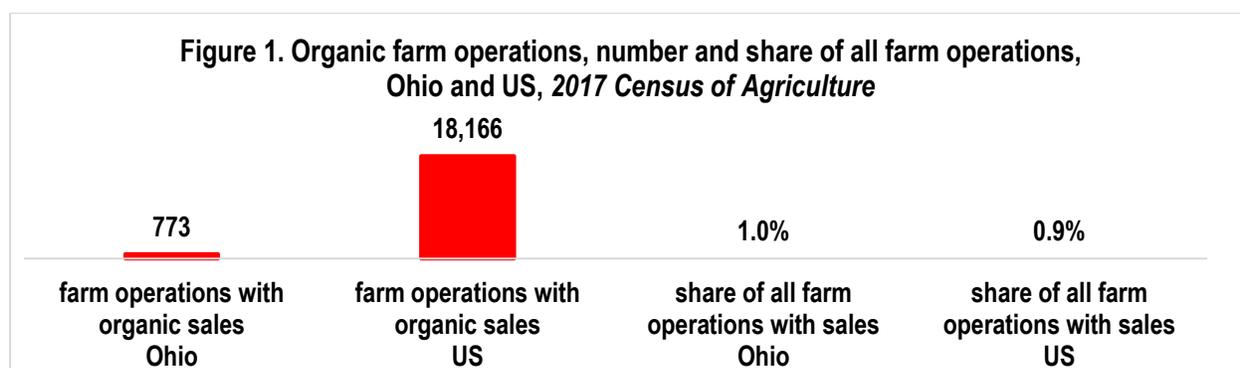
A Brief Look at Ohio and US Organic Agriculture, 2017 Census of Agriculture

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Organic production is one of the most discussed forms of differentiated production within US agriculture. Differentiated production is a product with an attribute(s) demanded by a market segment that is willing to pay for the attribute(s). This brief article highlights some features of Ohio and US operations that produce organic farm products as tabulated by the 2017 *Census of Agriculture*.

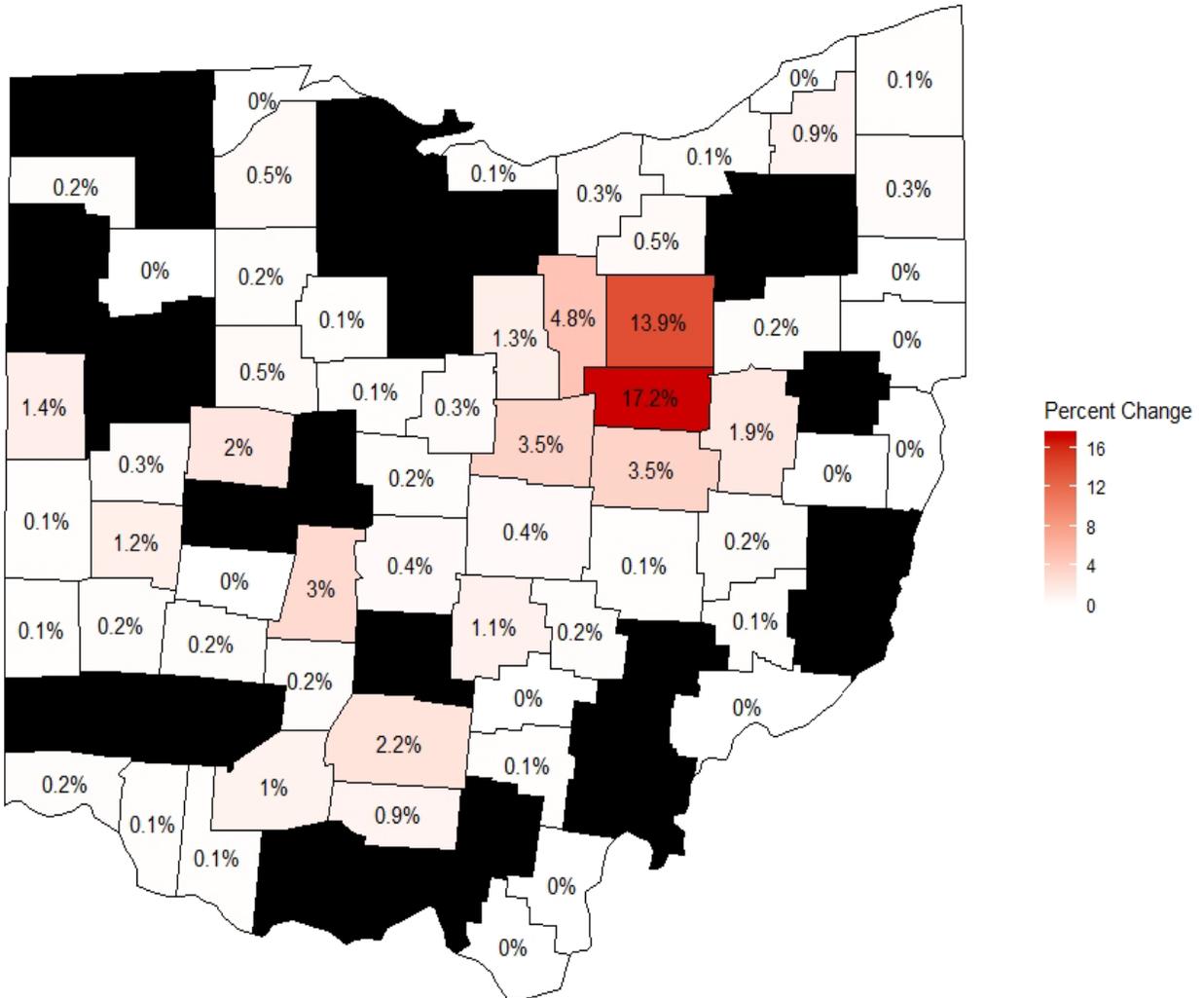
Census Questions and Instructions: Census respondents were asked if they produced organic farm products according to USDA NOP (US Department of Agriculture National Organic Program) or had acres transitioning into NOP. One or more of these boxes could be checked: (1) USDA NOP certified organic production, (2) USDA NOP organic production exempt from certification (exempt normally is sales less than \$5,000), (3) acres transitioning to USDA NOP, and (4) production according to USDA NOP standards but NOT certified or exempt. Respondent were asked to report the value of USDA NOP certified or exempt organically produced commodities sold from their operation in 2017. They were instructed to (1) include the gross value of agricultural sales before expenses or taxes, (2) exclude crop and livestock sales from transitioning land, and (3) exclude processing and handling.

Number of Operations with Organic Sales: The 2017 *Census of Agriculture* reported 773 Ohio farm operations sold organic farm products during 2017 (see Figure 1). They make up 1.0% of all Ohio operations with farm sales in 2017 (see Figure 1). The Ohio share is similar to the US share of 0.9%. Both shares exceed their 0.7% share in the 2012 *Census of Agriculture*.



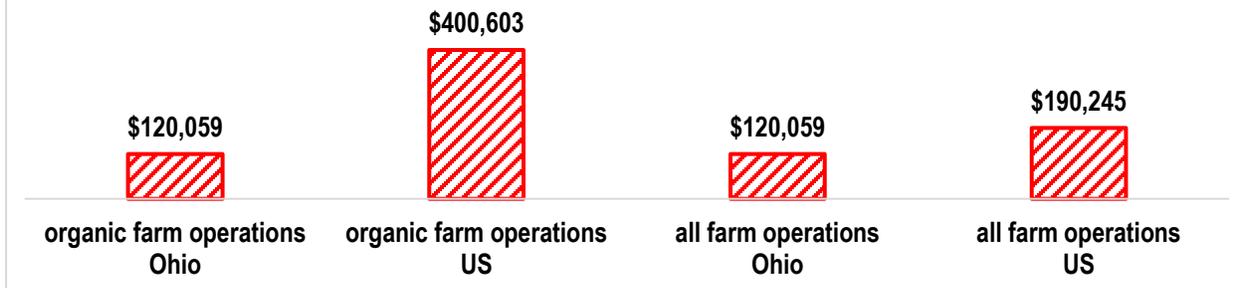
Out of Ohio's 88 counties, 79 (90%) fall within one standard deviation of the average signifying that distribution of Organic operations in Ohio is evenly wide spread outside of Holmes (94), Wayne (94), Ashland (56), Coshocton (27), Knox (27), Richland (18) and Tuscarawas (18) Counties (see Figure 2). Presence of Amish and Mennonite producers in this area with markets of Artisan products are a likely explanation. Holmes, Wayne and Ashland Counties together account for 35% of all Ohio farm operations with organic sales in 2017. Two counties are above the standard deviation but do not touch the previous grouping: Madison (25) and Geauga (19). Ohio's 3 largest urban counties of Hamilton, Franklin, and Cuyahoga - where operations of less than 50 acres are more prevalent and higher populations of organic consumers reside - had 3, 9, and 4 organic farm producers, respectively.

Figure 4. Distribution of organic farm sales across counties, Ohio, 2017 Census of Agriculture



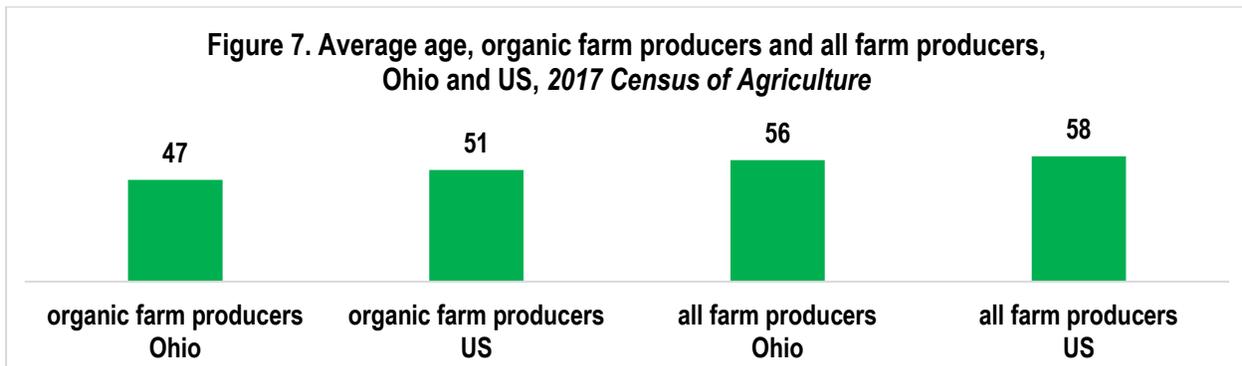
Share of organic farm sales varied widely by county (see Figure 5). Holmes County not only had the largest number of operations with organic sales, but the highest percentage of organic sales to total agriculture sales at 51%. Wayne was next at 17%. For the majority of Ohio's counties, organic sales represented 0.01% of total agricultural sales in the county for 2017. Counties in black have organic farm sales but have too few organic operations to report and maintain privacy.

Figure 6. Average sales, farm operations with organic sales and all farm operations with sales, Ohio and US, 2017 Census of Agriculture



Selected Producer Characteristics: Organic farm producers are younger on average than all farm producers (see Figure 7). Slightly more than one-third of both Ohio and US producers are female, whether or not they sell organic farm products. Nearly two-third of organic producers listed farming as their primary occupation, compared with around 40% for all Ohio and US farm producers.

Figure 7. Average age, organic farm producers and all farm producers, Ohio and US, 2017 Census of Agriculture



Summary:

- ▶ Both number of farm operations producing organic farm products and share of all farm sales that are organic products increased between the *2017 and 2012 Censuses of Agriculture*.
- ▶ The most dramatic change was the near doubling of average sale of farm organic products per US operation that sells organic products.
- ▶ For the US, average organic products sold per operation is now more than double average sales of all farm products per operation.
- ▶ Average sales of organic farm products are much smaller for Ohio than for the US (less than one-third the US average).
- ▶ Producers of organic farm products are younger than all farm producers, which is consistent with the common story that preference for organic products is stronger among younger consumers.