

## **Characteristics of Ohio Women in Agriculture**

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### **Highlights**

- According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, around one-third of all farmers in Ohio are female.
- Both female and male farmers exhibit a similar distribution pattern for age, with the majority falling within the 55-64 age range.
- Female farmers in Ohio manage smaller farms compared to their male counterparts.
- Over half of farms operated by female producers in Ohio specialize in crop production, particularly in oilseed and grain farming.
- Female farmers in Ohio are less likely to state farming as their primary occupation and tend to have lower market value of products sold.

### **Introduction**

This report examines the characteristics of female farmers compared to the overall farming population in Ohio. Using data from the 2022 Census of Agriculture, we explore the demographic characteristics of women in Ohio's farming sector.

### **Data from the Census of Agriculture**

The data for this report comes from the Census of Agriculture, carried out every five years by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Census of Agriculture gathers data on various aspects of agricultural production, demographics, and economic factors relevant to farmers and ranchers throughout the United States. The data used in this report is from the 2022 Census of Agriculture and is accessible through the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service website.

### **Profile of Ohio Women Farmers**

The majority of agricultural producers in Ohio are male farmers, constituting approximately two-thirds of the total, while female farmers represent about one-third (Figure 1). The percentage of

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female farmers has remained stable, with a minor decrease from 33.6% to 33.1% between 2017 and 2022.

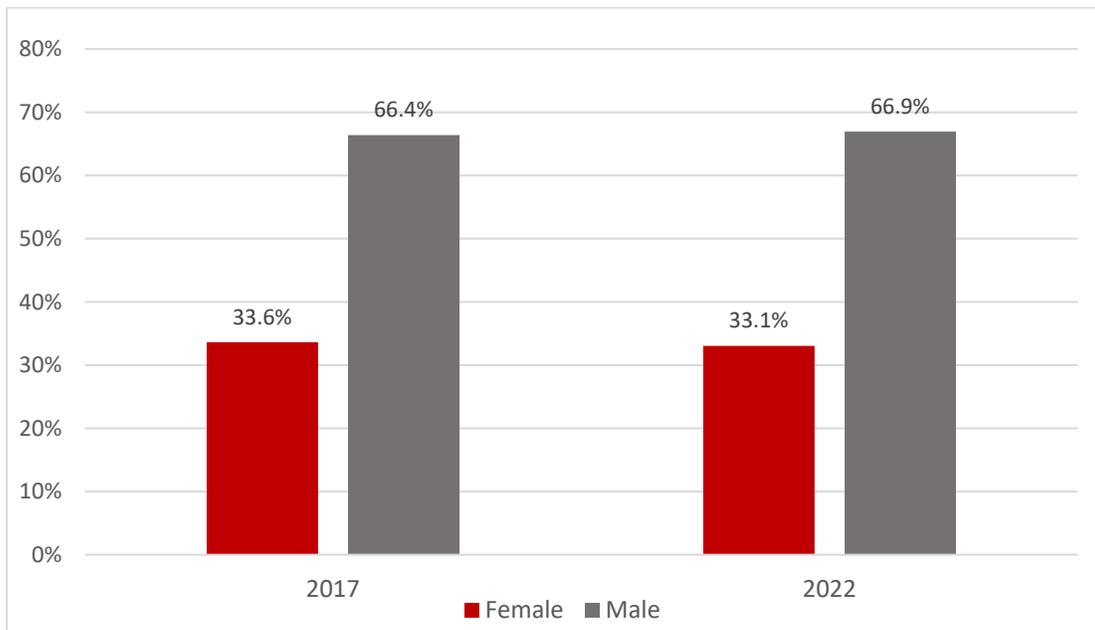


Figure 1: Proportion of Female Farmers in Ohio, 2017 and 2022

An analysis of the 2022 Census of Agriculture provides insightful perspectives on the female producers in Ohio. Figure 2 displays the geographic distribution of female farmers throughout Ohio’s counties. The top map illustrates the number of female farmers in each Ohio county, while the bottom map shows the number of female farmers as a percentage of the number of all farmers in each county. Counties in Northwest and Southeast Ohio have a lower number of female farmers, with the number of female farmers being less than 500. However, the counties in Southeast Ohio had a relatively high proportion of female farmers, exceeding 33% of the total farming population. In contrast, the counties in Northwest Ohio had a lower percentage of female farmers (less than 33%).



According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, the average age of female farmers in Ohio was 55.4 years, while the average age of male farmers was slightly higher at 56.8 years in 2022. Figure 3 illustrates the age distribution of female and male farmers in Ohio. It highlights a predominant concentration of farmers in the 55-64 age range, representing approximately 24% of female and male farmers. In age groups below 55 years old, the percentage of female farmers is slightly higher than that of male farmers. On the other hand, the percentage of male farmers is slightly higher than female farmers for farmers that are 65 or older. Overall, the age distribution pattern is similar for female and male farmers.

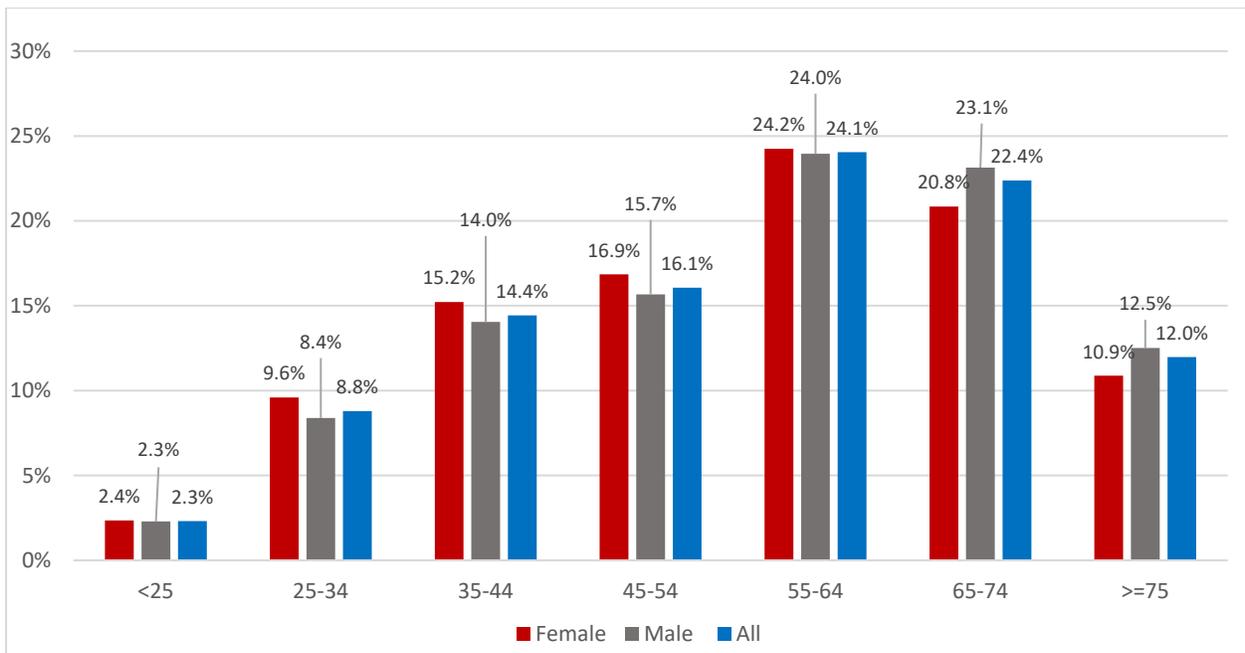


Figure 3: Age Distribution of Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

The farming occupation and off-farm employment reveal distinct differences between male and female farmers in Ohio. Only 31% of female farmers in Ohio considered farming their primary occupation in 2022, suggesting a reliance on various income sources (Figure 4). Additionally, 40% of female farmers in Ohio were actively involved in off-farm work for over 200 days per year, slightly less than the 45% of male farmers.

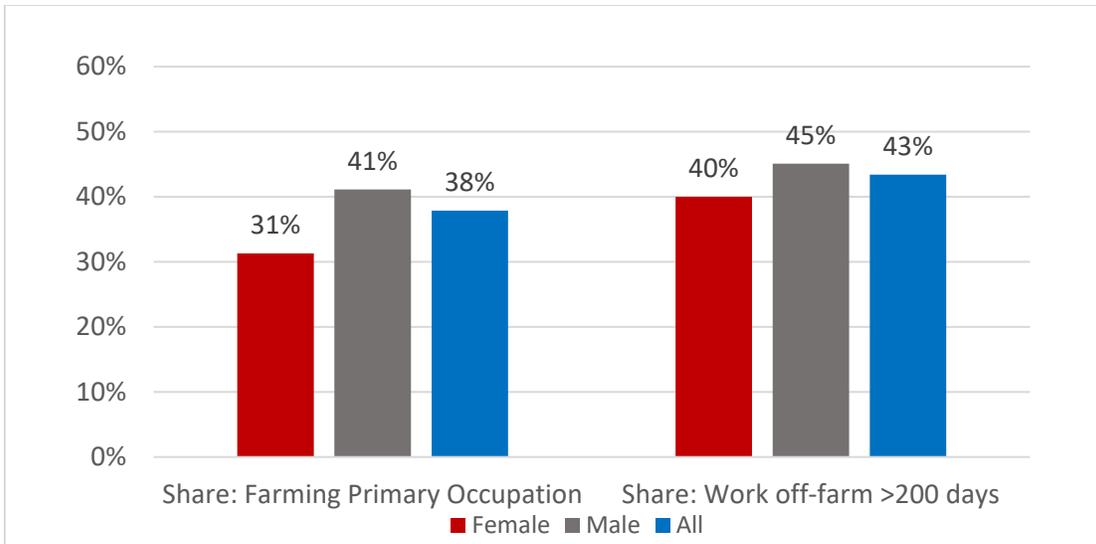


Figure 4: Selected Characteristics Among Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

### Characteristics of Farms Operated by Female Producers

In 2022, there were 40,269 farms operated by female farmers and 72,184 farms operated by male farmers. The average size of farms operated by female farmers was 132.9 acres, in contrast to the larger average of 185.4 acres operated by male farmers. As depicted in Figure 5, female farmers were more likely than male farmers to operate farms that are smaller than 50 acres, while the reverse is true for farms greater than 50 acres.

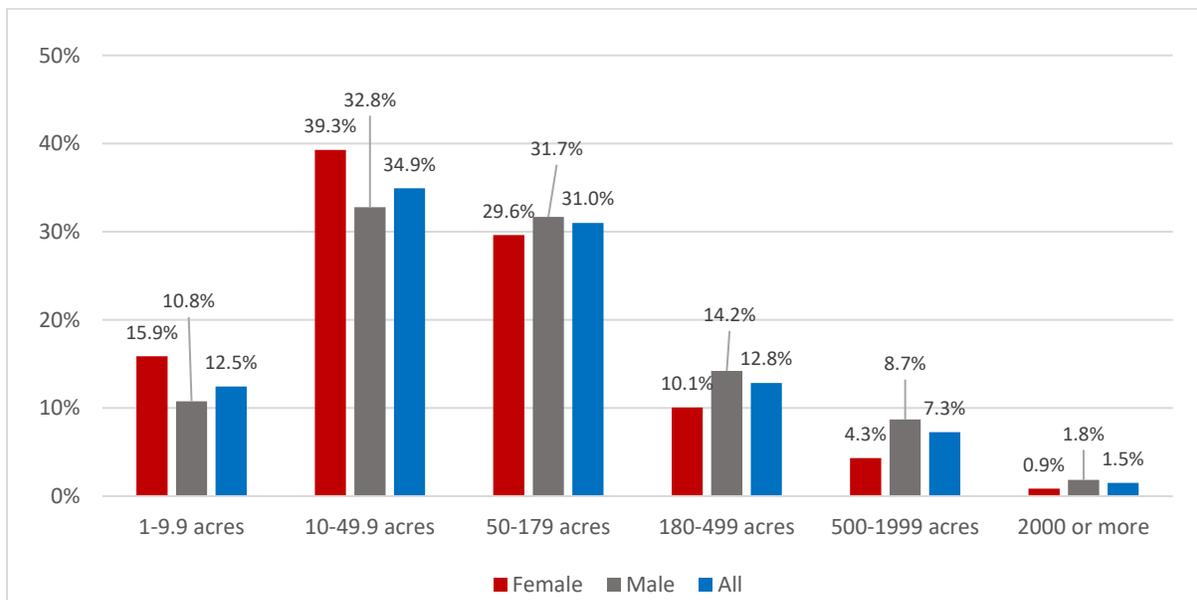


Figure 5: Percentage Distribution of Acres Operated by Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

Female farmers in Ohio operate a variety of farm types, including crop production, animal production, and aquaculture. Figure 6 shows that over half of the farms operated by female producers in Ohio specialized in crop farming. Specifically, 24% of the farms operated by female producers specialized in oilseed and grain, followed by 22% in other crop farming. In addition, 15% of the farms operated by female producers specialized in beef cattle ranching and farming and 14% specialized in aquaculture and other animal production in 2022.

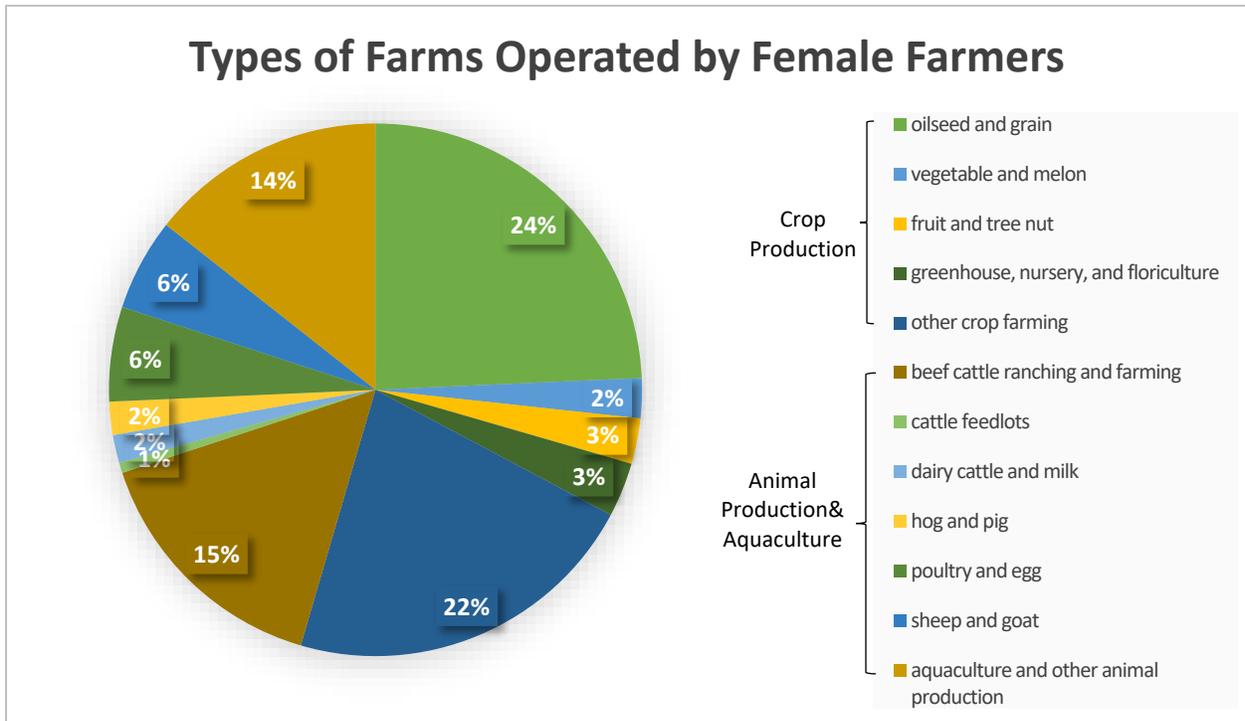


Figure 6: Types of Farms Operated by Female Farmers in Ohio

Figure 7 compares the farm types of farms operated by female and male producers. Female and male producers are more likely to specialize in crop production than livestock production. About 55% of farms operated by female farmers in Ohio specialized in crop production which is lower than the 63% of farms operated by male farmers.

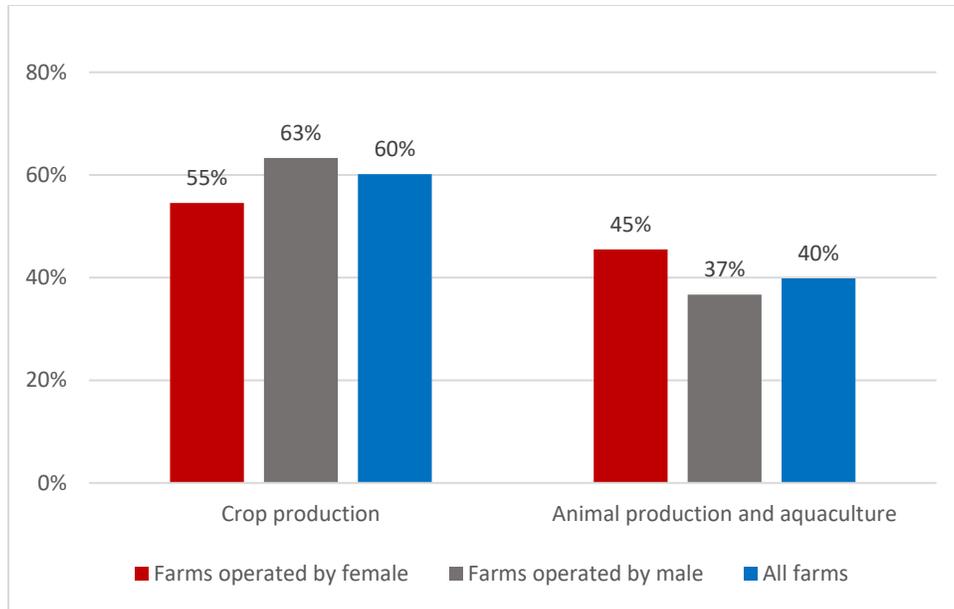


Figure 7: Types of Farms Operated by Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

Figure 8 illustrates the land ownership patterns among female and male farmers in Ohio. Full ownership was more common among female farmers, with 80% holding full ownership of their operated acres, compared to 70% among male farmers. On the other hand, 17% of female farmers were part owners of the operated acres compared to 26% of male farmers.

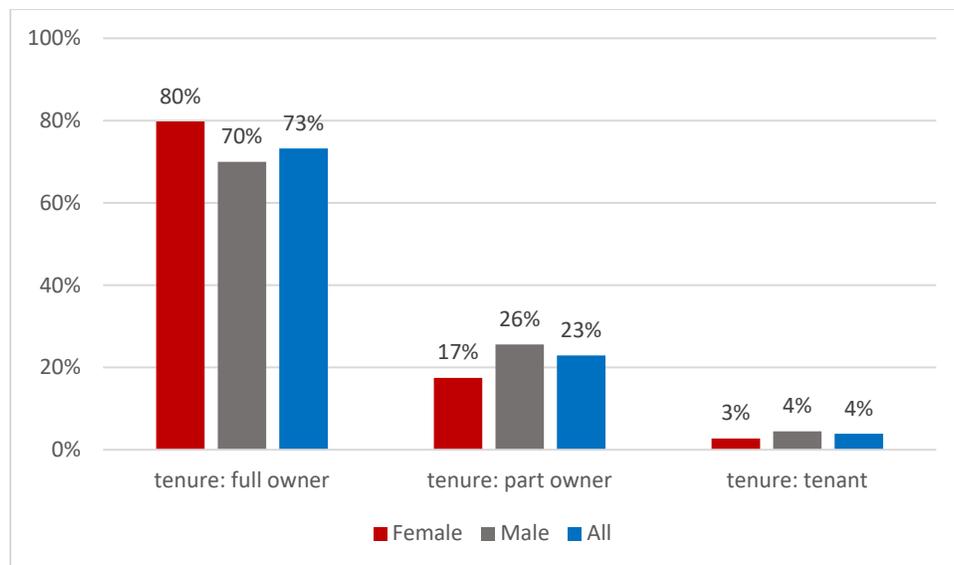


Figure 8: Land Ownership Among Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

Figure 9 exhibits a distinct pattern in farm sales when categorized by gender. Female farmers predominantly appear in the lower sales categories, specifically those with sales under \$25,000. Conversely, in the higher sales brackets, the representation of female farmers decreases significantly. Only 9% of female farmers had sales between \$100,000 and \$499,999, and 6% had sales above \$500,000. In comparison, male farmers make up 14% and 10% of these higher sales brackets, respectively.

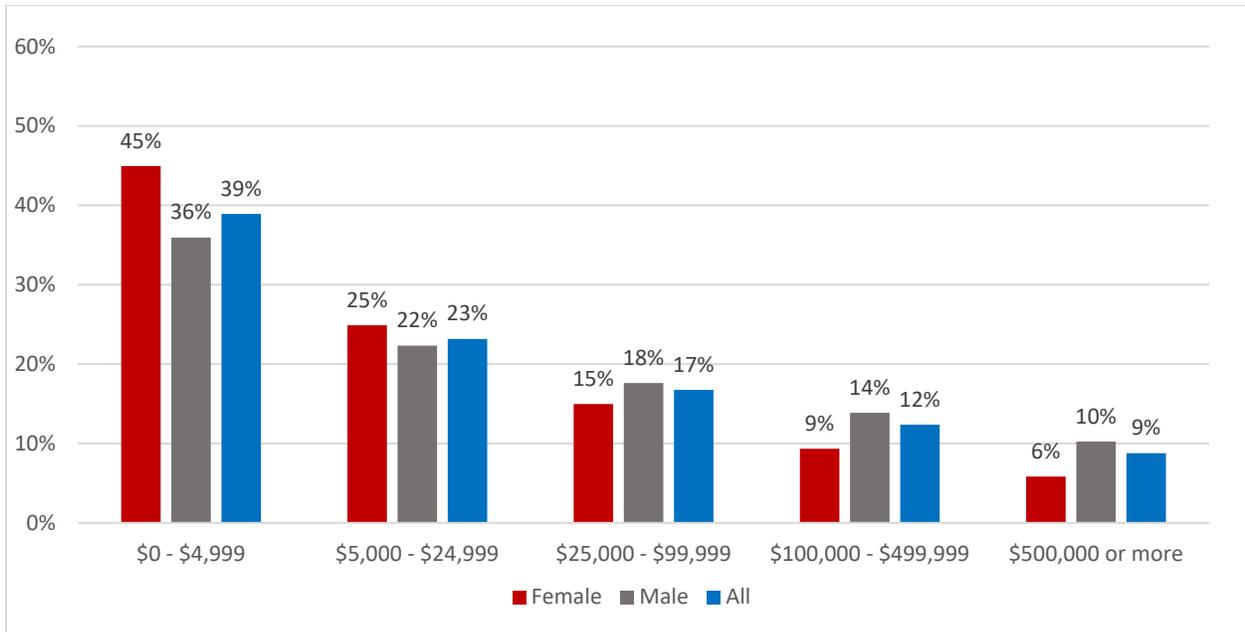


Figure 9: Farm Sales Distribution Among Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

Farms with female producers in Ohio had \$146,744, while farms with male producers had \$213,060 in market value of agricultural products sold and government payments in 2022. The USDA’s definition of economic classes is used in Figure 10 to display the distribution of producers based on the market value of agricultural products sold and government payments. The average market value of products sold from farms operated by female farmers was \$145,313 on a per-farm basis. The figure highlights that a higher percentage of female farmers than male farmers belonged to the lower economic class, specifically in the category with less than \$5,000 in market value of all products sold. In contrast, the distribution pattern for male farmers is the opposite, with a more significant percentage of male farmers than female farmers in the higher economic classes.

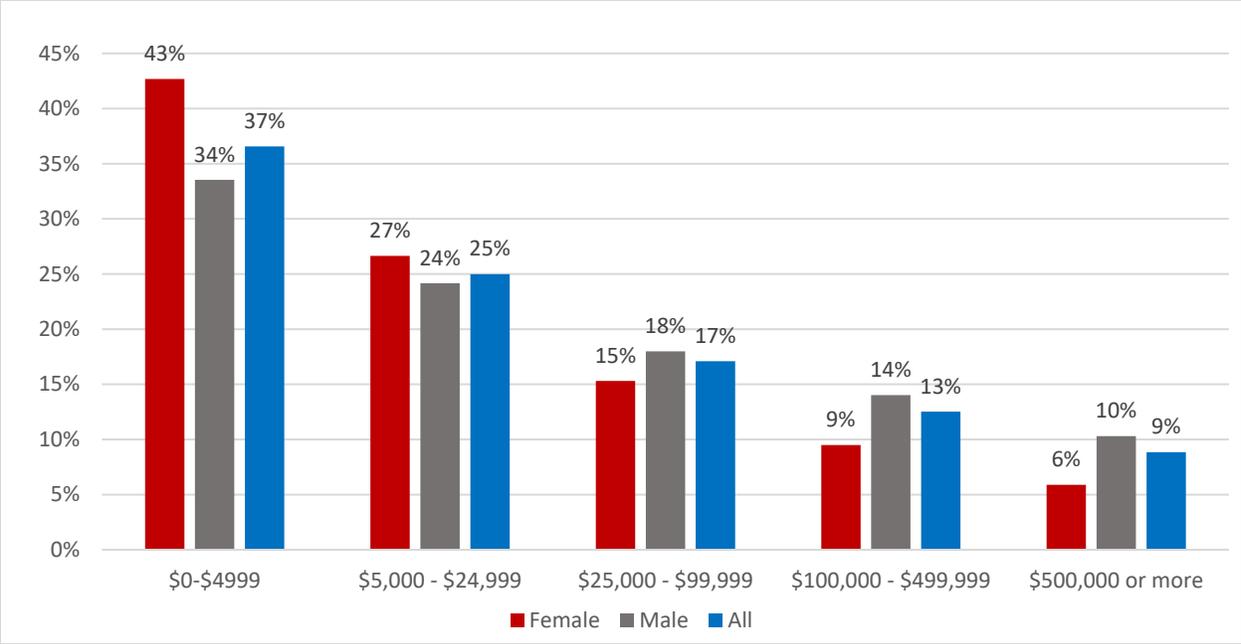


Figure 10: Economic Class Distribution Among Female and Male Farmers in Ohio

**References**

United States. (2022). U.S. Census of Agriculture. <https://www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus/>