

# A Look at South Carolina Agriculture



Capital: Columbia

Population: 4,561,242

Founded: May 23, 1778 (8<sup>th</sup>)

State Bird: Carolina Wren

State Tree: Palmetto

State Flower: Yellow Jessamine

Number of Counties: 46

Largest City: Columbia - 129,333

Nickname: Palmetto State

Number of Farms: 26,900

Average Farm Size: 189 acres

Total Farmland: 4.8 million acres



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## Climate & Soil

- The state's annual average temperature varies from the mid-50s in the mountains to low-60s along the coast.
- During the winter, average temperatures range from the mid-30s in the mountains to low-50s in the Lowcountry.
- During summer, average temperatures range from the upper 60s in the mountains to the mid-70s in the Lowcountry.
- Average annual precipitation is heaviest in northwestern South Carolina, and annual totals vary directly with elevation, soil type, and vegetation:
  - Mountains – 70" to 80" annually
  - Foothills – 60" to 70" annually
  - Piedmont – 45" to 50" annually
  - Midlands – 42" to 47" annually
  - Coastal Plain - 50" to 52" annually
- In general, the Southern Piedmont is a reddish soil that has a high amount of clay near the surface.
- The Carolina Sandhill is a band of deep sandy soil that goes through the middle of the state.

## Crops & Livestock

- Broilers (meat chickens) were the top commodity in 2009. They accounted for over 30% of the state's total agricultural sales.
- South Carolina is home to the only tea farm in North America.
- South Carolina's top agricultural crops in 2007 were: grains, oilseeds, dry beans and dry peas.
- Forests cover two-thirds of the total land area in South Carolina and they are essential for the state's economy, environment, and quality of life. Timber is the third largest employer and third highest payroll of South Carolina manufacturing industries.
- Fresh market fruits and vegetables produced in SC include cucumbers, snap beans and tomatoes, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes.
- Specialty crops include exotic mushrooms, ginkgo and pecans.
- South Carolina greenhouse and nursery products generated \$227 million in cash receipts in 2007.
- In 2005, South Carolina had 415,000 head of cattle, 315,000 hogs, 213.3 million broilers (meat chickens), 8 million turkeys and 781,960 quail.
- Cattle and calves are raised in every county in the state. Beaufort County has the fewest with 700 head, while Anderson County tops the chart with 42,000 head.

## General

- South Carolina total agricultural sales in 2007 were \$2.4 billion dollars.
- There are over 12 million acres of forestland throughout South Carolina, with 74% privately owned.
- South Carolina is home to many ag-related festivals, such as the Okra Strut, the World Grits Festival, the Rice Festival, the Chitlin' Strut, and several festivals featuring peaches, watermelons, shrimp, oysters, and catfish.