

# A Look at Vermont Agriculture



Capital: Montpelier

Population: 621,760

Founded: March 4, 1791 (14<sup>th</sup>)

State Bird: Hermit Thrush

State Tree: Sugar Maple

State Flower: Red Clover

Number of Counties: 14

Largest City: Burlington - 38,889

Nickname: Green Mountain State

Number of Farms: 7,000

Average Farm Size: 177 acres

Total Farmland: 1.2 million acres



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## Climate & Soil

- Vermont, like most of New England, has changeable weather and four distinct seasons. Although it is a year-round vacation destination, thousands of visitors arrive in autumn to see the fall foliage, which usually peaks some time between the end of September and mid October.
- Spring comes late in Vermont. Generally, by May or June warm weather has arrived, and summers are generally mild and dry. The temperature range is 51-82° F. July is the hottest month, with a few days in the 90s.
- Vermont averages about 44" of precipitation per year. Precipitation is generally well-distributed throughout the year, but Vermont has experienced spring flooding and moderate drought over the last four years.
- Winters are quite cold with a range of 0 to 30° F though the weather varies from place to place. Burlington and southern Vermont have somewhat milder temperatures. The annual snowfall averages 55"-65".
- Much of Vermont's terrain is very hilly and some of it can be quite rocky. This is one of the reasons Vermont is ideal for raising livestock of all kinds from cows and sheep to llamas and goats.
- Vermont has a wide variety of soils ranging with its most fertile land near Lake Champlain on Vermont's western border and in the Connecticut River Valley which makes up much of Vermont's Eastern border. Though hilly, much of Vermont's land is excellent for raising hay. Vermont is the largest hay producing state in New England.
- In 1985 the Vermont Legislature designated the Tunbridge Soil Series as the official State Soil.
- Vermont's soil was formed in loamy glacial till and it has good potential for agriculture and forestry.

## Crops & Livestock

- Vermont produces a wide variety of crops including: apples, honey, corn, hay, greenhouse & nursery products, Christmas trees, maple syrup, fruits and vegetables, dairy products, eggs and fiber products.
- Dairy represents about 72% of Vermont's total agricultural economy.
- Vermont is the biggest producer of maple syrup in the United States producing about 36% of the nation's total output.
- When people think of Vermont, they often think of black and white Holstein cows that give milk. The truth is, you can find most of the world's major cow breeds in Vermont as well as beef cattle sheep, llamas, alpacas, goats, chickens, turkeys and other rare poultry breeds, and even emus!
- Vermont is world famous for being the home of the Morgan horse breed.

## General

- Vermont's population is just over 602,000 which ranks it 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation.
- Vermont's highest peak is Mount Mansfield at 4,393 feet.
- Vermont is called the Green Mountain state because of the Green Mountain ridge which runs down the center of the state. Vermont is also the home of three other mountain ranges including the Appalachian, the Hoosac, and the Taconic.
- Vermont covers 9,615 square miles making it one of the smallest states in the country.
- Inventor John Deere who made the plow that allowed the soils of the Great Plains to be tilled by settlers moving westward, was originally from Vermont.