

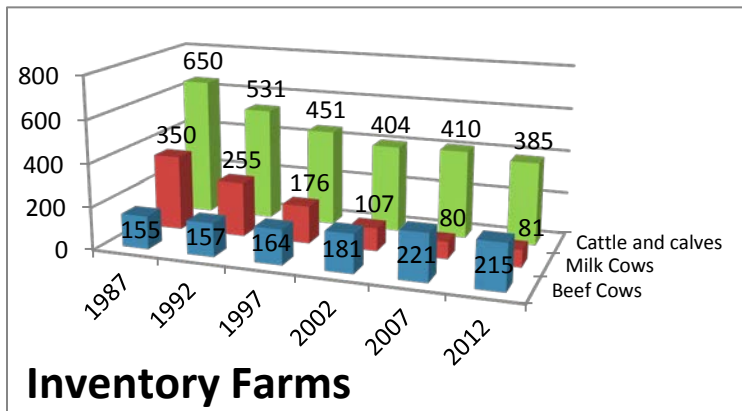


# Agriculture

## Livestock

Local, national and global events and trends affect growth decisions feedlot operators make.

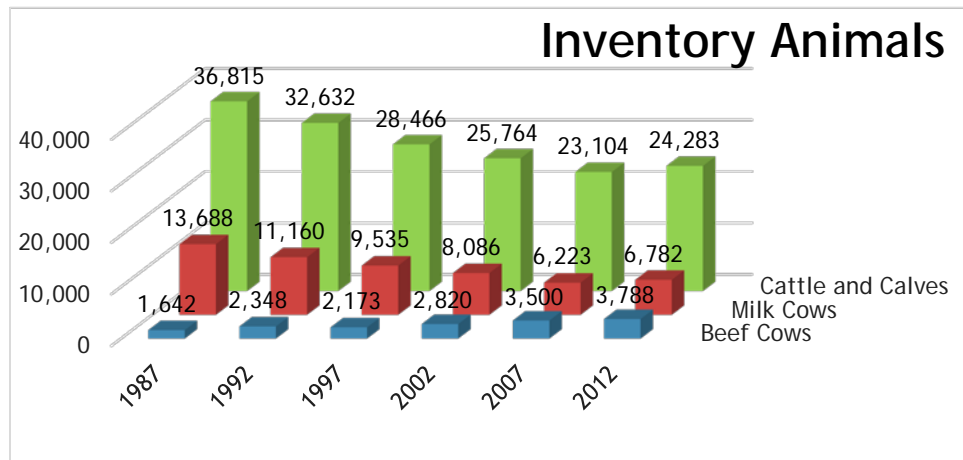
In Rice County, some livestock trends can be seen by comparing census data from the last 25 to 30 years. Easy to note is the sharp decrease in the number of dairy farms and dairy cattle in Rice County. In the last 25 years, the number of dairy operations has decreased by over 75% and the number of milk cows dropped by greater than half.



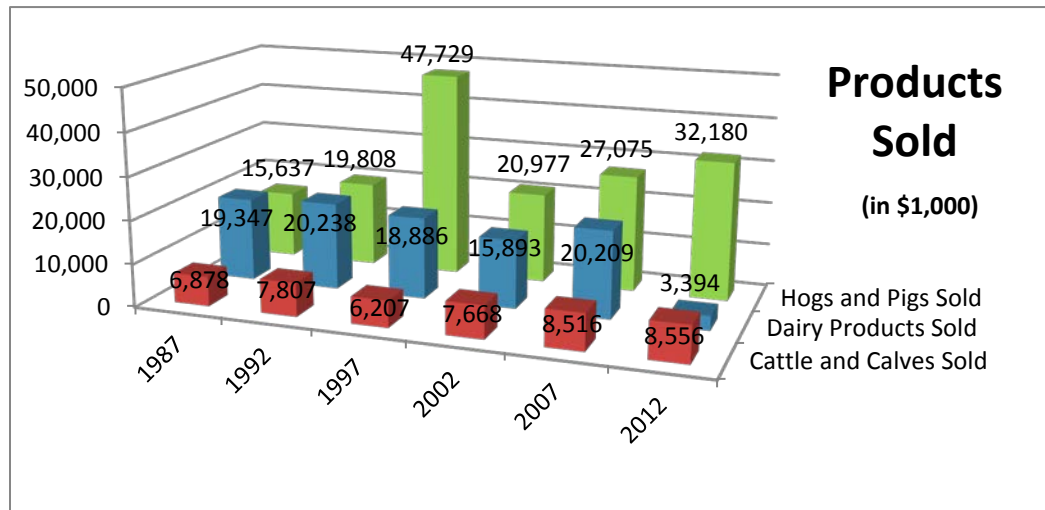
On the other hand, beef cow numbers and beef cow operations have increased over the same period of time. One likely explanation contributing to this trend may be the conversion by some aging dairy operators to less-involved beef raising facilities.

Minnesota continues to be a leader in agricultural exports globally, "While the current economic crisis has caused a global economic slowdown, exports have continued to provide jobs and economic activity

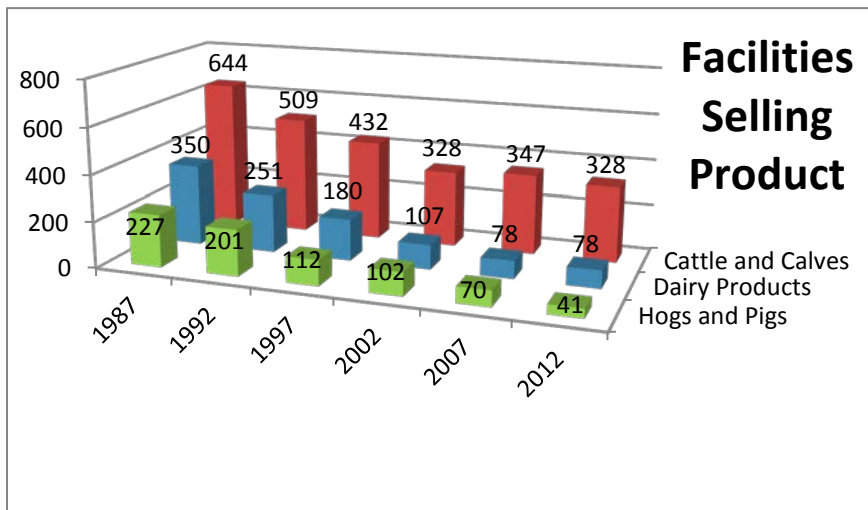
for Minnesota's agriculture industry." Kurt Markham "MN Ag in the Global Market." RMJ Vol. 4 (2009) 13. Print.



Market values of total products sold by the traditionally significant sectors in Rice County have increased regardless of the alarming decline in



facilities and number of animals. These two charts show that the trend in the number of facilities selling product has little direct correlation to the increasing amount of value in dollars (thousands) being sold to market.



Contributing factors to this may be the increasing size of today's facilities and the recent increase in product values. For a greater in-depth look at trends, not only in Rice County but in Minnesota and the United States, please visit the [USDA Census](http://www.usda.gov/census) website.