



**GROWING HOPE FOR AMERICA**  
October 2, 2010 • Milwaukee, WI • Miller Park

## Farm Aid 25: Growing Hope for America

### Wisconsin Farm and Food Facts

Farm Aid is proud to celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the Upper Midwest, where the organization has deep roots that reach back to its first benefit concert in Champaign, Illinois, in 1985. Farm Aid 25: Growing Hope for America is Farm Aid's first concert in Wisconsin, but the state has been the site of many Farm Aid actions for more than two decades.

### Milwaukee

- Milwaukee is a national leader in local food, home to urban farms and farmers markets that provide urban citizens with fresh produce grown right in the city every day of the week.
- Milwaukee County has 96 farms on 5,458 acres. Between the 2002 and 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture, the number of farms in Milwaukee County grew by 23 percent.
- The average Milwaukee County farm has gross sales of \$103,411, while the average net income per farm is \$21,195.
- Milwaukee is home to Growing Power, a trailblazing farm and pioneer in Community Food Systems development spearheaded by MacArthur Foundation Fellow Will Allen.

### Wisconsin

- Over 97 percent of Wisconsin's 78,000 farms are family farms.
- Wisconsin's farms and agricultural businesses generate approximately \$60 billion in economic activity, providing jobs for over 350,000 people and supporting schools, roads, banks, grocery stores and other local businesses.
- The 1.2 million dairy cows in "America's Dairyland" produce 2.2 billion gallons of milk each month. The average Wisconsin dairy cow generates more than \$17,000 a year in economic activity.
- Wisconsin's 12,000 cheese makers and artisans produce more than 600 varieties of cheese and win more awards than in any other state.
- Wisconsin ranks second nationwide for the number of organic farms, with 1,222 organic farms, 8 percent of the nation's total. Wisconsin has more organic and grass-based dairy farms than any other state.

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- The Dane County Farmers Market in Madison, Wis., is the largest farmers market in the United States.
- Wisconsin leads the nation in the production of snap beans, cranberries and ginseng.
- Wisconsin is home to the country's largest organic farming conference, which is organized by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) in La Crosse, Wis., each year.
- Wisconsin is a leader in the Farm to School movement. In May of this year, Governor Jim Doyle signed into law a bill promoting statewide Farm to School programs, a boost for family farmers and the health of youth across the state.

## **Wisconsin and Its Neighbors**

- Wisconsin and its neighbors in the Upper Midwest (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Minnesota) have more than 350,000 farms on over 93 million acres of land.
- The Upper Midwest is home to some of the longest standing advocates for family farmers, including the Farmers Legal Action Group (FLAG) in St. Paul, Minn., the Land Stewardship Project in Minneapolis and Family Farm Defenders in Madison, Wis.
- At present, about 40 percent of the land in the Upper Midwest is used either for agriculture or livestock production. The area raises a diverse selection of agricultural products, including corn, soybeans, dairy, sugar beets, turkeys, apples, hogs, cattle, cranberries, cherries and wild rice.

## **Farm Aid in Wisconsin**

- Farm Aid has a long history of granting to Wisconsin farm organizations. Since 1992, Farm Aid has granted \$273,800 to 11 organizations in the state; \$40,800 of Farm Aid's grant money assisted Wisconsin farmers in times of crisis.
- In response to the devastating 2008 floods that plagued many Midwest farms, Farm Aid responded with emergency funding to several states and organization, including \$7,500 of support to Wisconsin farmers.
- In June of this year, Farm Aid partnered with Family Farm Defenders to organize around the unprecedented joint Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Agriculture workshop on concentration in the dairy industry.
- For more than 18 months, dairy farmers have been paid as little as half of what it costs them to milk their cows. While farmers are holding on best they can, many have had no choice but to get out of dairy farming. Since the crisis began, Farm Aid has been working for dairy farmers in crisis, calling attention to the risks of losing our dairy farmers and advocating for solutions to this crisis.
- Farm Aid 25: Growing Hope for America will open up another market to family farmers: the concert venue. Farm Aid 25: Growing Hope for America will feature family farm-identified, local and organic foods at concessions.

### **Statistical Data provided by the following:**

2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture ([www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov))

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service ARMS Survey ([www.ers.usda.gov/Data/ARMS](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/ARMS))

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection ([www.datcp.state.wi.us](http://www.datcp.state.wi.us))

Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board ([www.eatwisconsincheese.com](http://www.eatwisconsincheese.com))