

# Year 2000 Computerized Systems Readiness Report



USDA  
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## **Most U.S. Farmers Have Heard of the Year 2000 Problem**

Eighty-one percent of U.S. farmers have heard of the Year 2000 (Y2K) computer systems problems and 68 percent realize that it could impact their automated farm systems. The Y2K problem is where some computerized systems may fail because two digits have been used to represent the year instead of four, such as 98 for 1998. The computer may not be able to determine if the year 00 is 1900 or 2000. The Y2K problem could cause computerized systems to malfunction, give erroneous results, or result in a complete system failure.

The number of farmers using automated systems of any type is 32 percent. The most common types of systems used on farms are for record keeping and are used by 29 percent of farmers. Of the farmers using any type of automated system, 55 percent have inventoried their systems for Y2K problems and 31 percent of the inventoried systems had a problem. A solution is in process or completed for ninety-two percent of the systems identified with a problem. Of those farmers who have either fixed or are attempting to fix Y2K problems, 54 percent estimate the cost of fixing the problem will be less than \$1,000. Twenty-two percent were unable to estimate the cost of fixing the problem.

**Survey Procedures:** A sample of 1500 farms and ranches across the United States were selected from two economic sales classes: farms with sales of \$249,999 or less and farms with sales of \$250,000 or more. Within each class, sampling procedures ensured that each type of farm was proportionally represented. Trained telephone interviewers contacted the sample farms. A 76 percent response was obtained from the 1500 farm operators sampled. Once the data were collected, they were reviewed for consistency by both statistician and machine editing processes. The responses were then tabulated for each sale class by type of farm. Results by sales class and type of farm were then weighted back to the farm population.

Farm Operators Responding YES to Awareness Questions  
by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type

Question	Type of Farm 1/				
	Cash	Other	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
Farms by Economic Sales Class	Grains	Crops	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
	Percent				
Have you heard of the Y2K problem?					
All Farms	82	78	84	81	81
\$249,999 or less sales	81	78	84	80	80
\$250,000 or more sales	89	86	83	87	87
Are you aware that Y2K problems may impact farm systems?					
All Farms	66	61	81	68	68
\$249,999 or less sales	64	60	81	67	67
\$250,000 or more sales	77	75	86	77	77

Automated System Usage: Farmers Owning or Leasing  
One or More Automated System  
by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type 2/

Farms by Economic Sales Class	Type of Farm 1/				
	Cash	Other	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
	Grains	Crops	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
	Percent				
All Farms	42	34	39	29	32
\$249,999 or less sales	39	33	37	27	30
\$250,000 or more sales	57	59	68	57	58

- 1/ Cash Grains: Cash Grains & Oilseeds;  
Other Crops: Tobacco, Cotton & Other Crops;  
Specialty: Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Vegetables, Floriculture;  
Livestock: Cattle, Dairy, Hogs, Sheep, Horses, Aquaculture, Poultry & Other Livestock.
- 2/ Automated Systems include: Computer for record keeping; Irrigation system; Automatic feeding system; Storage system for grain or produce; Milking system; Milk storage system; Heating, cooling or ventilation system for livestock; Global positioning system; other automated systems.

Inventoried Systems: Farmers Owning or Leasing Automated Systems  
Who Have Inventoried Them for Year 2000 Readiness  
by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type

Farms by Economic Sales Class	Type of Farm 1/				
	Cash	Other	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
All Farms	49	33	66	59	55
\$249,999 or less sales	49	32	67	61	56
\$250,000 or more sales	49	43	60	46	47

Year 2000 Problems Identified: Automated Systems Inventoried  
That Have Year 2000 Problems  
by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type

Farms by Economic Sales Class	Type of Farm 1/				
	Cash	Other	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
All Farms	36	30	29	31	31
\$249,999 or less sales	33	29	29	29	29
\$250,000 or more sales	47	40	29	47	46

Year 2000 Problems Addressed: Automated Systems With Year 2000 Problems  
That Have a Solution in Process or Completed  
by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type

Farms by Economic Sales Class	Type of Farm 1/				
	Cash	Other	Specialty	Livestock	All Farms
All Farms	84	57	76	98	92
\$249,999 or less sales	83	50	75	100	93
\$250,000 or more sales	84	100	83	90	89

1/ Cash Grains: Cash Grains & Oilseeds;  
Other Crops: Tobacco, Cotton & Other Crops;  
Specialty: Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Vegetables, Floriculture;  
Livestock: Cattle, Dairy, Hogs, Sheep, Horses, Aquaculture, Poultry & Other Livestock.

Farm Operators Owning or Leasing Automated Systems:  
Farms Reporting Systems and Awareness of Year 2000 Problem

Automated Farm Systems	: Farms : Reporting : Automated : System	: Farmers Awareness of the Year 2000 : Problems Who Own or Lease a System :----- : Aware	: Unaware
		Percent	
Computer for Record Keeping	: 28.8	74.5	25.5
Irrigation Systems	: 1.9	64.8	35.2
Automatic Feeding Systems	: 2.5	65.9	34.1
Storage System for Grain, Fresh Vegetables or Produce	: 0.8	79.5	20.5
Milking System	: 2.5	72.1	27.9
Milk Storage System	: 1.9	49.5	50.5
Heating, Cooling or Ventilation System for Livestock	: 2.1	93.4	6.6
Global Positioning System	: 1.2	81.7	18.3
Other Systems	: 2.5	69.0	31.0

Year 2000 Readiness Cost: Estimated Cost of Fixing Year 2000 Problems  
For Systems Identified with a Problem and a Solution in Process or Completed  
By Economic Sales Class

Estimated Cost of Fixing Y2K Problems	Economic Sales Class		All Farms
	\$249,999 or less	\$250,000 or more	
	Percent		
Less Than \$100	17.7	7.9	15.9
\$100 - \$999	41.9	19.2	37.9
\$1,000 - \$4,999	15.2	51.6	21.7
\$5,000 or more	2.4	3.6	2.6
Unable to Estimate	22.8	17.7	21.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Year 2000 Readiness Cost: Estimated Cost of Fixing Year 2000 Problems  
For Systems Identified with a Problem and a Solution in Process or Completed  
By Farm Type

Estimated Cost of Fixing Y2K Problems	Farm Type		All Farms
	Livestock	Specialty, Cash grain and Other Crops	
	Percent		
Less Than \$100	20.8	4.7	15.9
\$100 - \$999	32.8	49.6	37.9
\$1,000 - \$4,999	20.8	23.8	21.7
\$5,000 or more	.8	6.7	2.6
Unable to Estimate	24.8	15.2	21.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Farmers That Have Contacted Suppliers, Service Providers,  
 Market Outlets, Financial Advisors, or Insurance Companies, to Inquire  
 If Their Systems are Year 2000 Ready by Economic Sales Class and Farm Type

Farms by Economic Sales Class	Type of Farm 1/					All Farms
	Cash Grains	Other Crops	Specialty	All Livestock		
All Farms	21	12	8	13	14	
\$249,999 or less sales	21	11	8	12	13	
\$250,000 or more sales	19	21	12	20	20	

1/ Cash Grains: Cash Grains & Oilseeds;  
 Other Crops: Tobacco, Cotton & Other Crops;  
 Specialty: Fruits, Nuts, Berries, Vegetables, Floriculture;  
 Livestock: Cattle, Dairy, Hogs, Sheep, Horses, Aquaculture, Poultry &  
 Other Livestock.

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