

# A Look at Texas Agriculture



## Texas

**Capital:** Austin  
**Population:** 26,448,193 (2013)  
**Founded:** December 29, 1845 (28<sup>th</sup> state)  
**State Nickname:** Lone Star State  
**State Bird:** Mockingbird  
**State Tree:** Pecan  
**State Flower:** Bluebonnet  
**State Grass:** Sideoats Grama  
**State Soil:** Houston Black Clay  
**Motto:** Friendship  
**Number of Counties:** 254  
**Largest City:** Houston 2,195,914 (2013)

### Climate



- Texas enjoys a long growing season with planting beginning in February in the southern part of the state; April and May in the north.
- It becomes very hot during the month of June, July and August. The Central Plains being the hottest in the state, with temperatures sometimes as high as 114-120F.
- The four different regions of Texas vary in average annual rainfall, decreasing from east to west.
  - Coastal Plains 30-55"
  - Central Plains 20-30"
  - High Plains 15-20"
  - Mountains and basins 0-16"
- Texas diverse weather is due to the vast amount of land and two air masses that meet, Rocky Mountain, Canadian cold air mass and the Gulf of Mexico's warm, moist air.

### Crops



- Cotton was once growing wild in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Cotton is now a major cash crop of Texas, producing 5 million bales in 2014.
- The top five crops raised in Texas are
  - Greenhouse and nursery
  - Cotton
  - Corn
  - Grain sorghum
  - Wheat
- Texas is third in sunflower seed production, producing 112.4 million pounds of sunflower seeds.
- Texas grows a variety of vegetables such as sweet potatoes, cucumber, honeydew, spinach, Chile peppers and watermelon.

### Animals



- Texas is the leading state in cattle operations and cattle and calves for 2014. There were 152,000 cattle operations and a total of 11.3 million head of cattle/calves.
- There were 700,000 sheep and lambs in Texas in the year 2014. They produced 2.1 million pounds of wool.

### Soil



- Texas has more than 1,300 different types of soil within its borders.

### General



- Agriculture is the second largest industry in the state, generating more than \$100 billion for the economy annually.
- 98.6% of farm and ranches in Texas are family farms, partnerships or family-held corporations.
- Texas has 266,807 square miles of land or 172 million acres, 128 million acres of which are in agricultural production.
- The average farm size is 523 acres and there are 248,809 farms in Texas.
- Big Spring, Texas, is named for one of the state's largest natural springs.
- Texas is called the "Lone Star State" because of the single star in the state flag. Six different flags have flown over Texas; Spain, France; Mexico, Republic of Texas (Lone Star), the Confederate States and the United States.
- The Alamo in San Antonio is known as the "Cradle of Texas Liberty".
- Texas is #1 in the nation in Cattle, Cotton, Sheep and Goats, Wool and Mohair, Hay production, and Grain sorghum
- 1 in 7 working Texans (14%) are in an agriculture related job.
- Texas has the most women agricultural producers.
- The King Ranch is bigger than the state of Rhode Island.
- Caddo Lake is the only natural lake in the state.