

## ■ Economic Research Service

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- Domestic and international agricultural developments and markets,
- Nutrition education and food assistance, food safety regulation, determinants of consumer demand for quality and safety, and food marketing trends and developments,
- Agricultural resource and environmental issues, and
- National rural and agricultural conditions affecting the rural economy, the financial performance of the farm sector, and the implications of changing farm credit and financial market structures.

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ERS has four principal functions:

- Research,
- Development of economic and statistical indicators,
- Situation and outlook analysis, and
- Staff analysis.

Research, together with economic and statistical indicators, provides the knowledge and the data base for the situation and outlook and staff analysis functions. The products of the situation and outlook analysis are periodic reports that analyze the current situation and forecast the short-term outlook for major agricultural commodities, agricultural exports, agricultural finance, agricultural resources, and world agriculture. ERS staff also assess issues requiring policy decisions by the Administration and Congress.

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