

■ Foreign Ownership of U.S. Farmland

Foreign ownership of U.S. agricultural land remained relatively steady from 1981 through 1995—slightly above or below 1 percent of the privately owned agricultural land in the United States.

At the end of 1995, foreign persons owned 15.1 million acres—slightly more than 1 percent of the 1.3 billion acres of privately owned U.S. agricultural land (farm and forest land).

Forest land accounts for 49 percent of all foreign-owned acreage, cropland for 16 percent, pasture and other agricultural land for 32 percent, and nonagricultural land for 3 percent.

Corporations own 72 percent of the foreign-held acreage, partnerships own 20 percent, and individuals own 6 percent. The remaining 2 percent is held by estates, trusts, institutions, associations, and others.

About 56 percent of the reported foreign holdings involve land actually owned by U.S. corporations. The law requires them to register their land holdings as foreign if as little as 10 percent of their stock is held by foreign investors. The remaining 44 percent of the foreign-held land is owned by investors not affiliated with U.S. firms.

A total of 63 percent of foreign-held acreage is owned by investors (including individuals, corporations, partnerships, etc.) from Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands Antilles, and the British Virgin Islands (in descending rank order). Japanese investors own only 3 percent of foreign-owned acreage.

Maine is the State with the largest number of acres (2,968,434) owned by foreign persons. Foreign holdings in Maine account for 16 percent of that State's privately owned agricultural land and 20 percent of all the reported foreign-owned agricultural land nationwide. Four companies own 91 percent of the foreign-held acres in Maine, almost all in forest land. Two of these companies are Canadian, one is French, and the fourth is a U.S. corporation that is partially Canadian owned.

Outside of Maine, foreign holdings are concentrated in the West and South, containing 34 and 32 percent, respectively, of all reported foreign holdings of U.S. agricultural land.

These findings are based on reports submitted to USDA under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978.

Table 2-4.

U.S. agricultural landholdings by country of foreign owner,
December 31, 1995

Interests excluding U.S. Corporations with foreign shareholders

<i>Country</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Acres</i>
	<i>Number</i>		<i>Number</i>
Argentina	12,578	Lebanon	12,663
Australia	6,106	Liberia	30,981
Austria	29,336	Liechtenstein	133,276
Bahamas	36,325	Luxembourg	3,109
Bahrain	313	Malaysia	7,948
Belgium	65,586	Mexico	179,276
Belize	549	Morocco	1,035
Bermuda	73,835	Namibia	197
Bolivia	11	Netherlands	112,104
Brazil	10,336	Netherlands Antilles	355,382
British Virgin Islands	124,062	New Zealand	14,011
Canada	1,571,341	Nicaragua	1,378
Cayman Islands	39,028	Norway	4,913
Chile	2,055	Oman	454
China	924	Pakistan	982
Colombia	11,414	Panama	121,629
Costa Rica	13,835	Peru	308
Croatia	1,023	Philippines	3,816
Cuba	58	Poland	147
Czech Republic	347	Portugal	4,146
Denmark	12,948	Russia	771
Dominican Republic	2,108	St. Vincent	2,637
Ecuador	971	Saudi Arabia	31,956
Egypt	2,076	Senegal	10
El Salvador	128	Singapore	504
France	128,663	Somalia	11
Gambia	294	South Africa	2,673
Germany	753,530	Spain	4,883
Greece	60,491	Sweden	54,880
Guatemala	1,102	Switzerland	286,005
Guyana	35	Syria	2,689
Honduras	1,018	Taiwan	7,899
Hong Kong	15,061	Tanzania	10,143
Hungary	103	Thailand	1,835
India	1,754	Trinidad & Tobago	94
Indonesia	1,392	Turkey	38
Iran	2,343	Turks Island	3,292
Ireland	10,490	United Arab Emirates	4,149
Israel	951	United Kingdom	1,798,722
Italy	81,477	Uruguay	10,807
Ivory Coast	119	Venezuela	22,339
Jamaica	567	Vietnam	152
Japan	199,980	Zimbabwe	230
Jordan	1,580	Multiple ¹	54,843
Kampuchea	31	Third tier ²	54,872
Korea (South)	1,570		
Kuwait	20,188		
Laos	31	Subtotal ³	6,644,252

See footnotes at end of table.

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Table 2-4 continued.

U.S. agricultural landholdings by country of foreign owner,
December 31, 1995 (continued)

U.S. Corporations with foreign shareholders

<i>Country</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Acres</i>
	<i>Number</i>		<i>Number</i>
US/Andorra	3,741	US/Lebanon	411
US/Argentina	4,056	US/Liberia	24,064
US/Australia	5,030	US/Libyan Arab Republic	280
US/Austria	26,138	US/Liechtenstein	101,202
US/Bahamas	61,500	US/Luxembourg	234,551
US/Barbados	41	US/Malaysia	300
US/Belgium	88,553	US/Malta	500
US/Bermuda	37,571	US/Mexico	254,395
US/Brazil	14,396	US/Netherlands	384,297
US/Brit. Virgin Islands	424,704	US/Netherlands Antilles	210,572
US/Canada	1,799,034	US/New Hebrides	883
US/Cayman Islands	52,536	US/New Zealand	50,455
US/Chile	9,948	US/Nicaragua	282
US/China	13,151	US/Norway	9,709
US/Colombia	11,435	US/Pakistan	423
US/Costa Rica	407	US/Panama	151,088
US/Denmark	8,228	US/Paraguay	236
US/Dominican Republic	589	US/Peru	1,696
US/Ecuador	1,632	US/Philippines	7,881
US/Egypt	4,264	US/Portugal	1,683
US/El Salvador	607	US/Qatar	219
US/Finland	2,419	US/Saudi Arabia	10,711
US/France	1,100,081	US/Singapore	73
US/Germany	872,745	US/South Africa	2,733
US/Greece	5,249	US/Spain	7,846
US/Guatemala	412	US/Sweden	4,094
US/Guyana	334	US Switzerland	331,355
US/Honduras	37	US/Taiwan	45,029
US/Hong Kong	131,139	US/Thailand	252
US/Indonesia	644	US/Trinidad & Tobago	20
US/Iran	1,861	US/Turkey	443
US/Iraq	800	US/United Arab Emirates	4,543
US/Ireland	1,942	US/United Kingdom	1,044,245
US/Israel	414	US/Uruguay	695
US/Italy	23,547	US/Venezuela	40,182
US/Japan	290,936	US/Multiple	178,776
US/Jordan	434	US/Third Tier	342,754
US/Kenya	32	Subtotal ⁴	8,457,880
US/Korea (South)	85	Total all landholdings	15,102,037
US/Kuwait	8,330		

¹A report is processed as "multiple" when no single country predominates—for example, an equal partnership between a Canadian and a German.

²A report is processed as "third tier" if three or more levels of ownership are reported with no foreign interests stated.

³Total interests excluding U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders.

⁴Total interest of U.S. corporations with foreign shareholders.

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act data.

Table 2-5.

U.S. agricultural landholdings of foreign owners, by State,
December 31, 1995

<i>State or Territory</i>	<i>Foreign-owned agricultural land</i>	<i>State or Territory</i>	<i>Foreign-owned agricultural land</i>	<i>State or Territory</i>	<i>Foreign-owned agricultural land</i>
	<i>Acres</i>		<i>Acres</i>		<i>Acres</i>
Alabama	299,579	Louisiana	682,366	Oklahoma	56,306
Alaska	75	Maine	2,968,434	Oregon	644,143
Arizona	338,653	Maryland	51,260	Pennsylvania	91,769
Arkansas	155,691	Massachusetts	2,029	Puerto Rico	839
California	954,052	Michigan	444,239	Rhode Island	17
Colorado	678,173	Minnesota	221,971	S. Carolina	198,852
Connecticut	881	Mississippi	444,286	S. Dakota	42,957
Delaware	5,878	Missouri	73,354	Tennessee	83,010
Florida	620,559	Montana	474,496	Texas	1,209,677
Georgia	558,953	Nebraska	74,769	Utah	61,013
Hawaii	180,058	Nevada	388,393	Vermont	86,532
Idaho	22,624	New Hampshire	16,477	Virginia	144,284
Illinois	209,549	New Jersey	18,369	Washington	389,777
Indiana	94,395	New Mexico	785,355	W. Virginia	166,974
Iowa	33,105	New York	280,614	Wisconsin	77,890
Kansas	69,490	N. Carolina	153,962	Wyoming	210,983
Kentucky	121,151	N. Dakota	27,839		
		Ohio	185,935	Total	15,102,037

Source: USDA, ERS, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act data.