

2007 CENSUS *OF* **AGRICULTURE** **DATA RELEASE**



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Beginning Farmers

Agricultural Outlook Forum

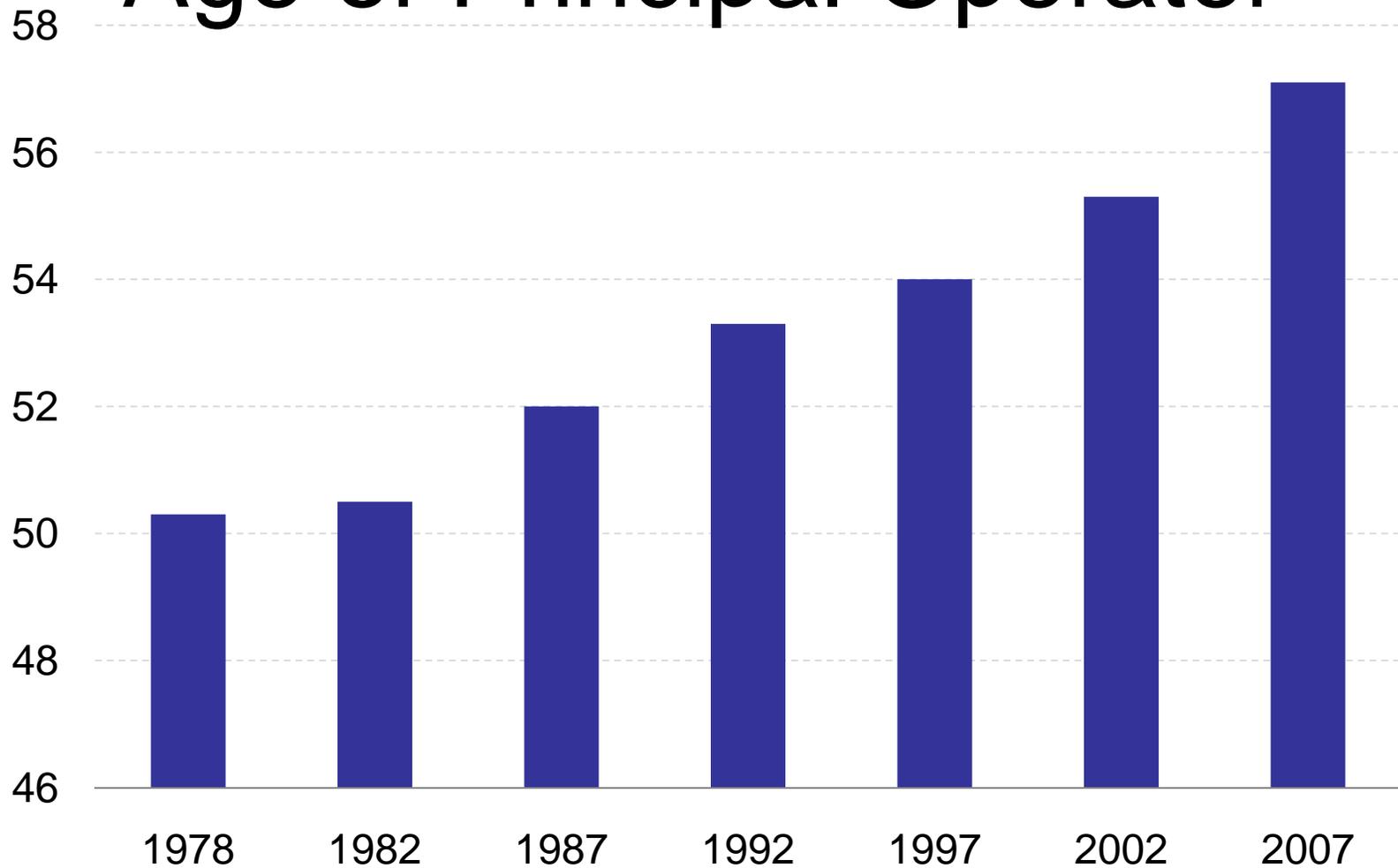
February 20, 2010

Virginia Harris



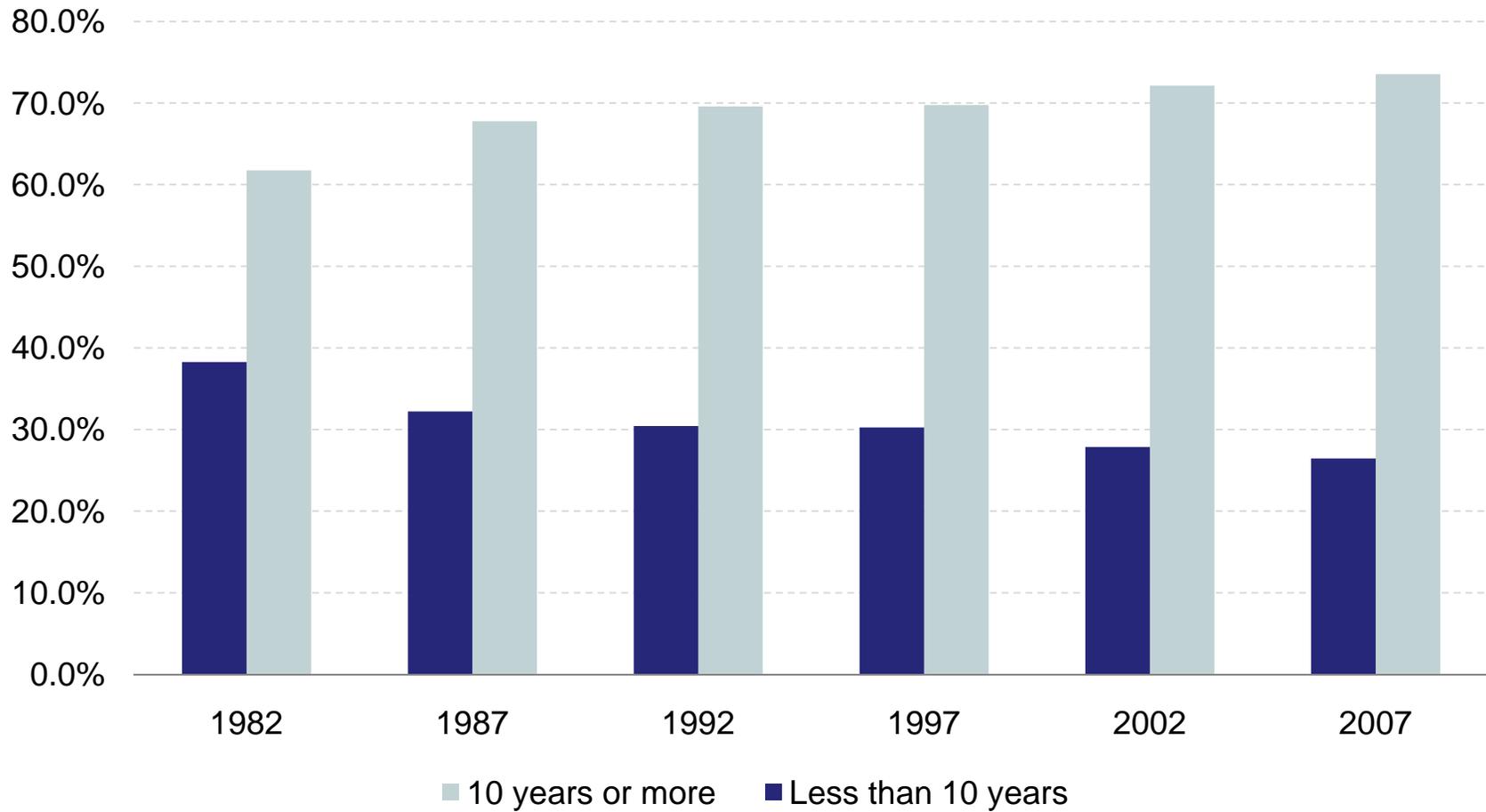
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Age of Principal Operator



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Beginning Farmers



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Definition of Beginning Farmer

- Census question:
 - In what year did the operator begin to operate any part of this operation?
- USDA definition, used for program administration
 - Has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years



New Farms

	All Farms	Operator Started		
		2003-2007	1998-2002	Prior to 1998
Average size	418 acres	201 acres	285 acres	490 acres
Average sales	\$135,000	\$71,000	\$94,000	\$156,000
Average net cash income of operators	\$29,000	\$7,000	\$15,000	\$37,000
Expenses to sales ratio	0.81	0.93	0.86	0.80
Percent reporting positive net income	47%	33%	37%	52%

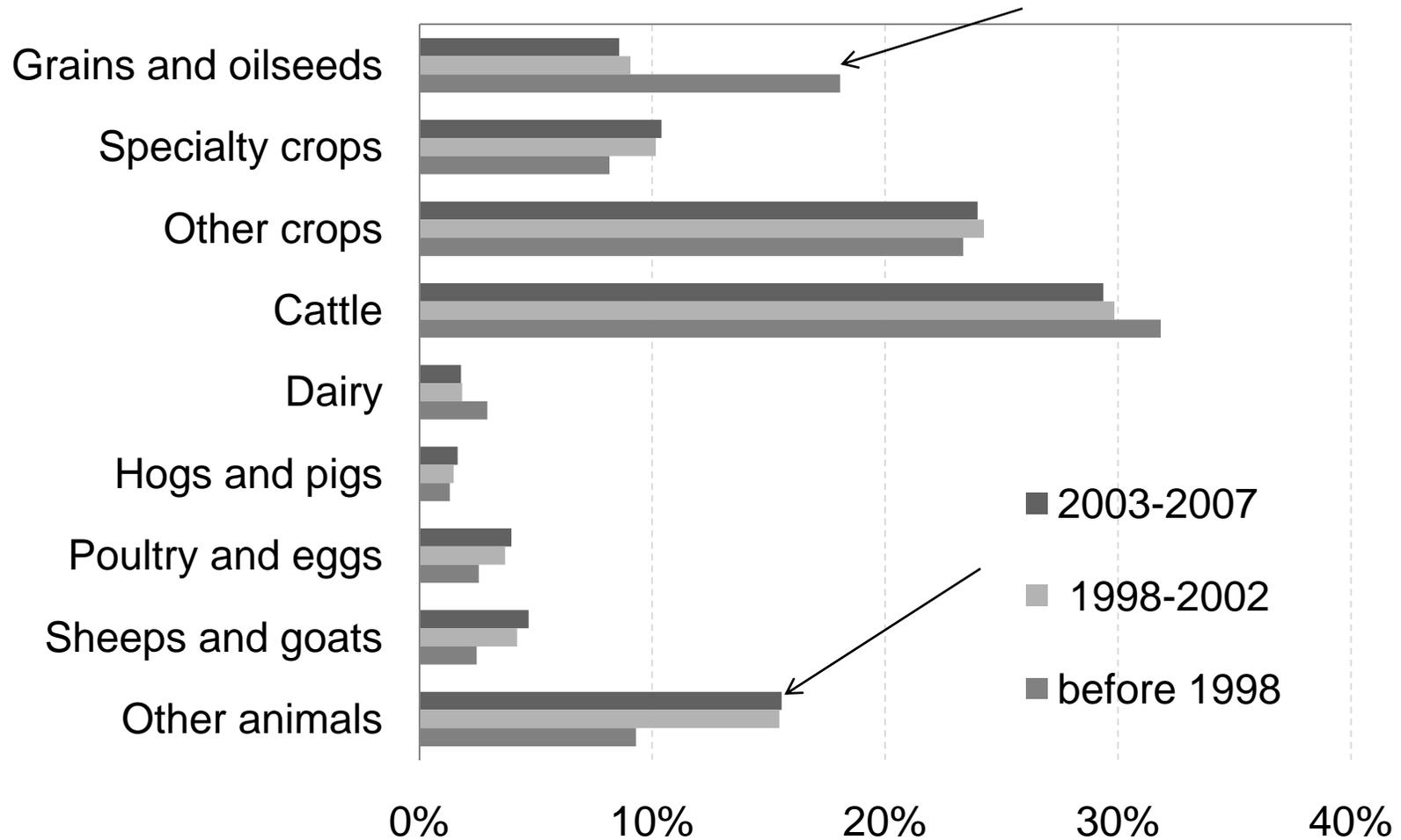


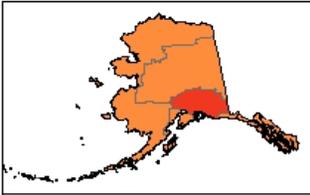
Beginning Farmer Demographics

	All Farms	Operator Started		
		2003-2007	1998-2002	Prior to 1998
Average age of operator	57	48	50	60
Farming as primary occupation	45%	33%	34%	50%
Work off farm	65%	79%	77%	59%
Female principal operator	14%	19%	17%	12%
Minority principal operator	7%	9%	8%	6%

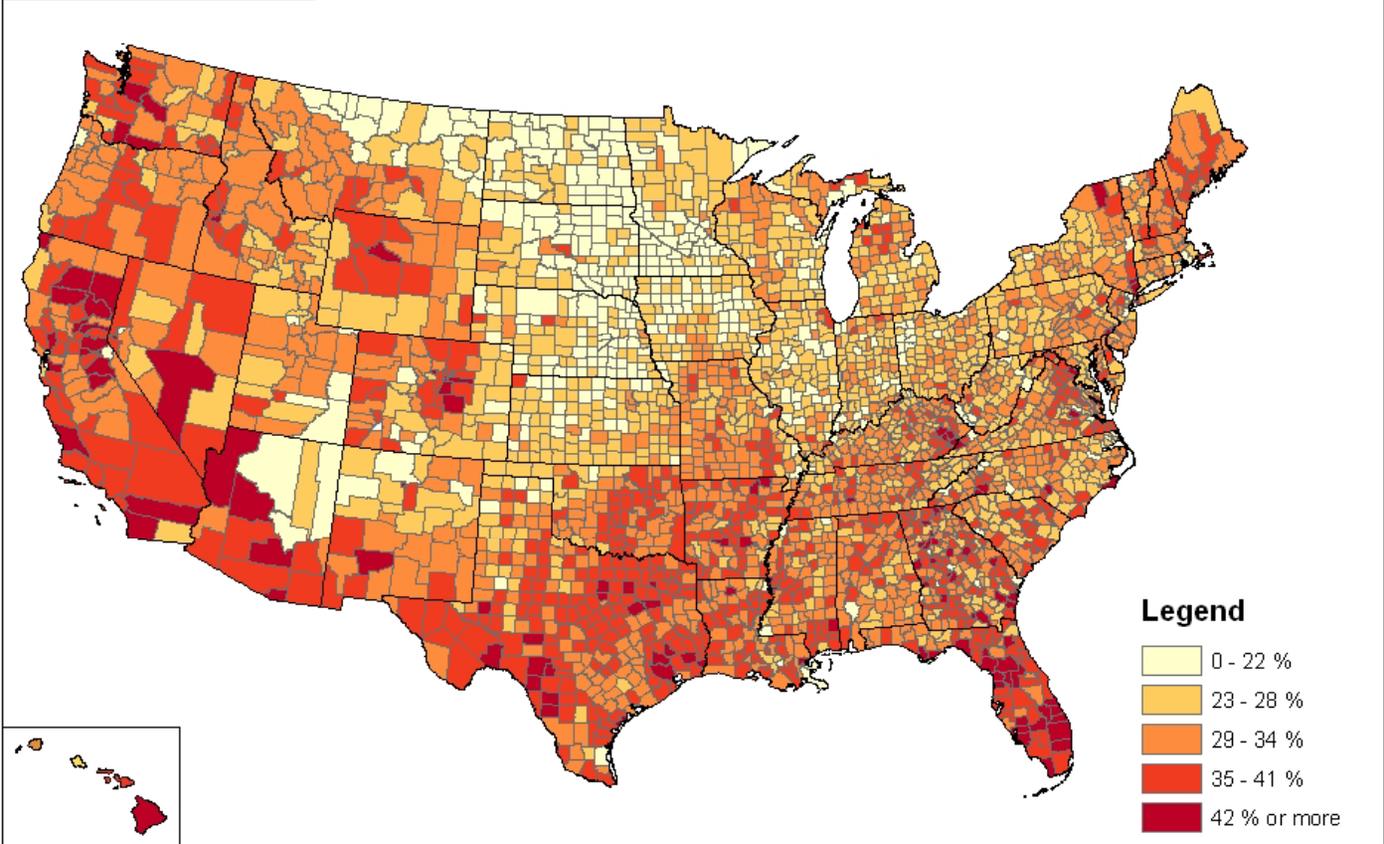


Beginning Farmers and Type of Production





Percent of Beginning Farmers by County



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What we know, and what we don't

- We know:
 - Newer farmers work off the farm more, are not as likely to report farming as their primary occupation, and rely less on the farm for household income
- We don't know:
 - Reasons for working off the farm, or future intention for farm



Farm Operators

- 3,337,450 operators on farms
 - An operator is a person making day to day decisions for the operation
- Principal operators- number is equal to the number of farms (2,204,792)
- Census collects detailed characteristics for up to 3 operators per farm



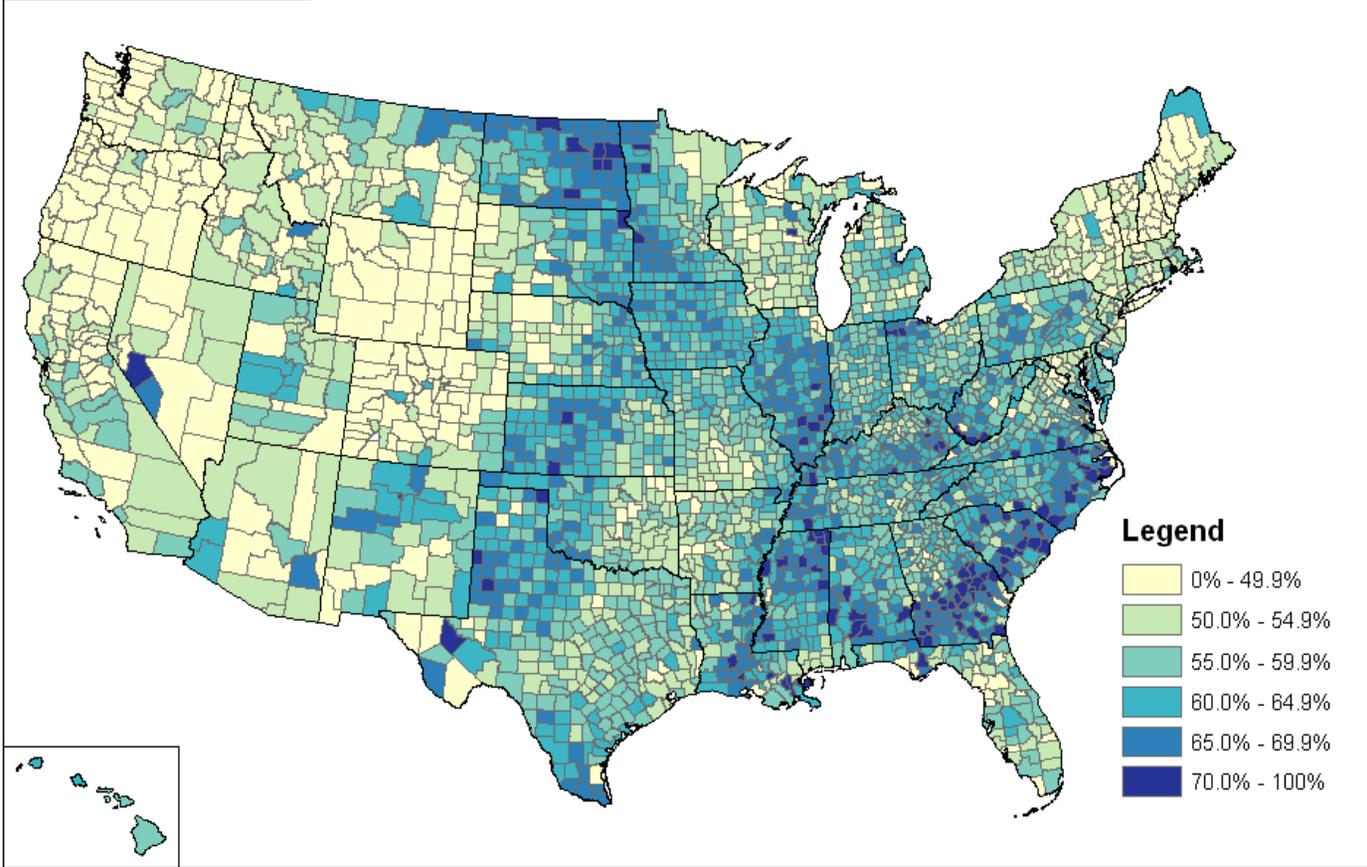
Multiple Operators on Farms

Farms with	2007	2002
Only 1 operator	57.7%	62.3%
2 operators	35.7%	32.0%
3 operators	5.1%	4.0%
4 operators	1.0%	1.2%
5 operators	0.5%	0.6%





Only One Operator on the Farm



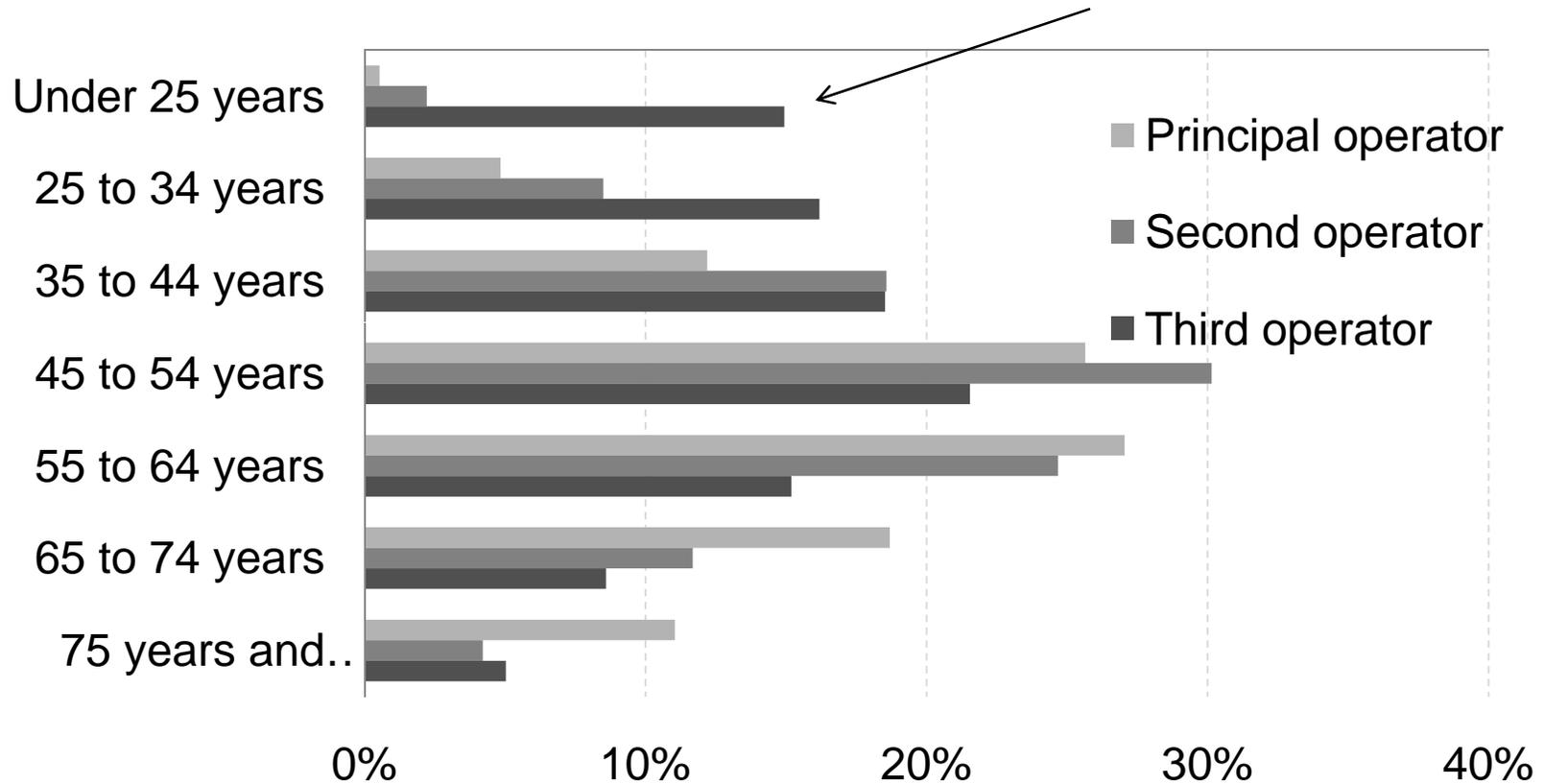
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Beginning Farmers – another look

- Beginning farmers may not be looking to start a new farm on their own, but take over an existing family farm, or apprentice on a farm
- Second and third operators are more likely to be beginning farmers than principal operators



All Operators by Age



Second Operators

- 40% of second operators are beginning farmers, compared to 29% of principal operators
- 2 out of 3 second operators are women (probably mostly spouses)
- Slightly younger than principal operator (54.4 years compared to 57.1)
- 1 out of 3 in different household from principal operator



Second Operators

	Male Second Operator	Female Second Operator
Male Principal Operator	21%	65%
Female Principal Operator	12%	2%



Second Operators

	Second Operator established farmer	Second Operator beginning farmer
Principal Operator established farmer	56%	10%
Principal Operator beginning farmer	3%	31%



Third Operators

- 53% of third operators are beginning farmers, compared to 29% of principal operators
- 60% are male
- Much younger than principal operator (44.6 years compared to 57.1)
- 61% are in separate households from the principal operator



Third Operators

	Male Second Operator	Female Second Operator
Male Principal Operator	50%	35%
Female Principal Operator	10%	5%



Third Operators

	Third Operator established farmer	Third Operator beginning farmer
Principal Operator established farmer	44%	28%
Principal Operator beginning farmer	4%	25%



Generations on Farms

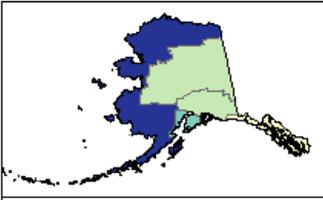
- Definition
 - A farm is considered to have operators of different generations if any two operators differed in age by twenty or more years.
 - Difference could be between op1 and op2, op1 and op3, or op2 and op3



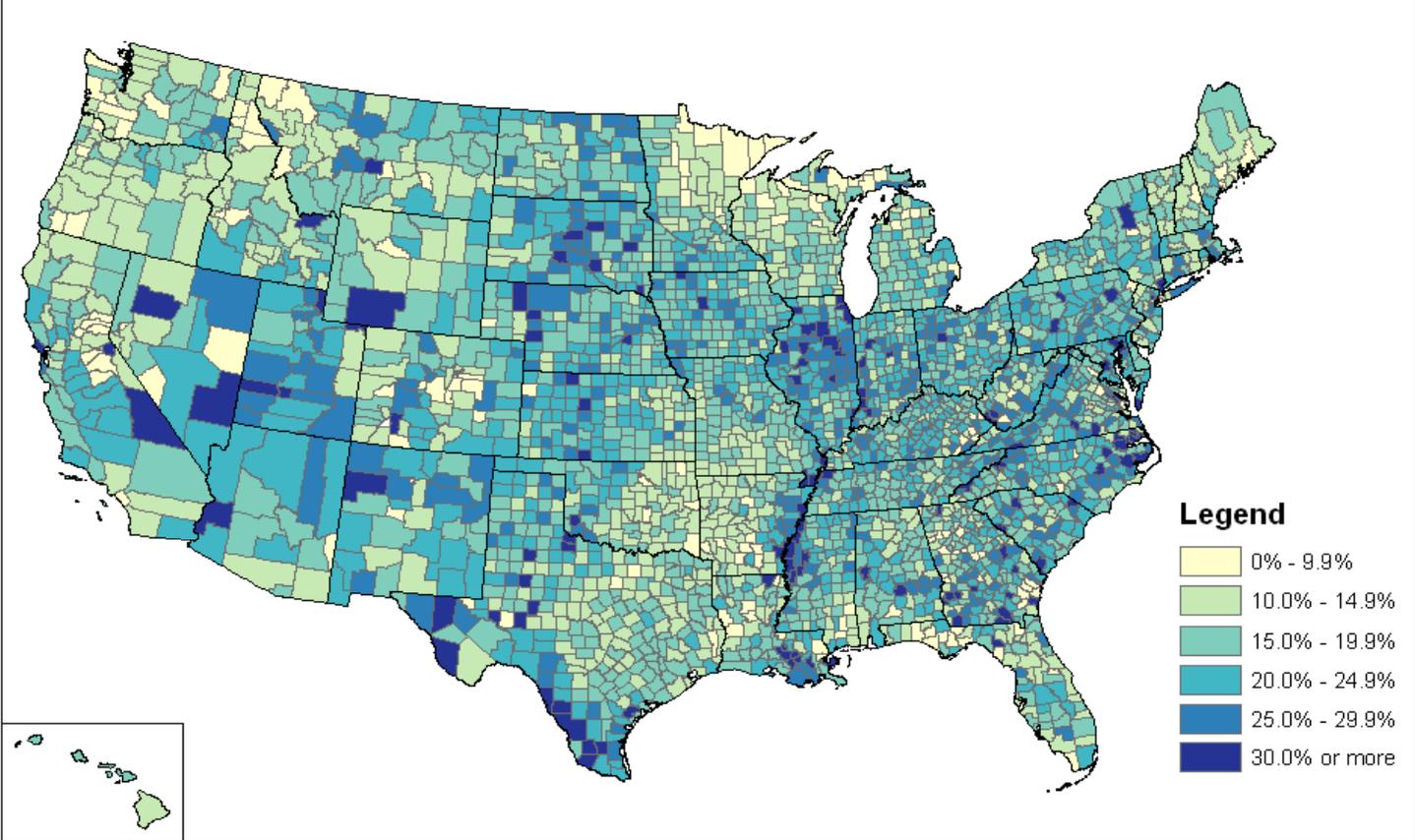
Generations on Farms

- 7.6 percent of all farms have more than one generation of operators on the farm
- If only multiple operator farms are considered, 18.0 percent of farms have more than one generation on the farm





Multiple Generations on Farms



Multiple Generations, by Sales

	Percent with multiple operators	Percent with different generations	
		Farms with multiple operators	All farms
All farms	42.3	18.0	7.6
Farms with \$250,000 or more of sales	51.5	29.4	15.1
\$100,000 - \$249,999 in sales	41.6	27.3	11.4
Less than \$100,000 in sales	41.3	15.6	6.4



	Percent with multiple operators	Percent with different generations	
		All Farms with multiple operators	Farms with multiple operators and sales of \$100,000 or more
Grains and oilseeds	35.3%	27.4%	29.4%
Vegetables	48.1%	18.7%	31.2%
Fruits and nuts	45.1%	16.3%	29.1%
Nursery/Greenhouse	48.7%	15.7%	22.8%
Beef cattle	41.8%	19.1%	30.9%
Dairy	55.7%	28.2%	30.4%
Hogs and pigs	48.6%	18.2%	26.4%
Poultry	55.9%	12.1%	17.2%



	Percent with multiple operators	Multiple Operator Farms	
		Same Generation	Different Generation
Less than 25 years	40.2%	53.0%	47.0%
25 to 34 years	46.9%	81.7%	18.3%
35 to 44 years	48.5%	88.3%	11.7%
45 to 54 years	45.8%	89.2%	10.8%
55 to 64 years	42.9%	85.7%	14.3%
65 to 74 years	37.4%	75.4%	24.6%
75 years or more	31.9%	50.5%	49.5%



- Virginia Harris
- National Agricultural Statistics Service
- 502-582-5293



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