

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Estonia

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Preliminary results of Agricultural Census 2010 in Estonia

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

Estonia released preliminary results of the Agricultural Census 2010. Agricultural activity is consolidating into larger holdings, resulting with Estonia's average size of agricultural holding now comparable to those of Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. Estonia mirrors the trend across Europe wherein farm holdings are consolidating and concentrating agricultural activity onto larger farms but is doing so at a rate several times faster than the European Union on average.

General Information:

Between September 1 and November 15, 2010, Estonia conducted its first Agricultural Census and Survey on Agricultural production since 2001 to come into compliance with the European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1166/2008. The census involved a full survey of farms managing an area of agricultural land of at least one hectare (Ha) or where agricultural products are produced mainly for sale.

Preliminary data released from the 2010 Agricultural Census reveal the current number of agricultural holdings at roughly a third of the total recorded in 2001. At the same time total agricultural area increased 8 percent with agricultural activity concentrated more on larger holdings. Estonia holds 19,700 agricultural holdings of at least one hectare of agricultural area or which produce agricultural products mainly for sale. Further, data show the nearly 30,000 holdings that did not meet minimal qualifications for the survey as they had either ceased agricultural activity totally or cultivated land area less than one hectare (for on-farm consumption). Agricultural holdings of less than 10 Ha recorded the largest decline in the past decade. The number of holdings with 10–100 Ha decreased as well, while the number of large holdings of more than 100 Ha nearly doubled. According to Statistic Estonia this large decrease in the number of holdings does not mean disappearance of agricultural activity on that land. To the contrary, total agricultural land recorded an 8 percent increase, to nearly 938,800 hectares, in the utilized agricultural area in the country. In part, this increase can be explained by the inclusion of permanent grassland in the reported data since 2007.

Livestock data show an even larger consolidation movement with more than three quarters of cattle now held in herds of 100 animals or more.

Based on preliminary census results Statistic Estonia prepared a short analysis of the situation in comparison to the European Union. The average size of Estonian agricultural holdings increased from 16 Ha to 48 Ha within the nine year period, roughly four times more than the EU average (13 ha in 2007). Estonia's agricultural holding's average size now compares to other Member States such as Germany, France and the United Kingdom. *"If in EU in 2007, holdings with more than 100 hectares had at their disposal 47 percent of the agricultural area, then in Estonia in 2010 the respective share accounted for 73 percent. The concentration of agricultural area into large holdings is bigger only in Slovakia, Czech Republic and Bulgaria. The concentration of cattle breeding into larger holdings in Estonia is also one of the EU largest"* – reported Statistic Estonia.

Number of holdings	Total	From 0 to <10 Ha	From 10 to <100Ha	>=100Ha
2010	19,700	10,700	7,300	1,700
2001	55,700	41,800	12,900	1,000
Agricultural area (Ha)	Total	From 0 to <10 Ha	From 10 to <100Ha	>=100Ha
2010	938,800	46,500	205,600	686,700
2001	871,200	148,500	297,400	425,300

Final Census results will be published in December 2011. The results will include an overview of the management of holdings, rental relations, crop production and livestock farming and their production methods, structure of labor force and other activities. The classification by economic size and type of farming will also be published.