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<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/About/IndicatorsNotes.htm>

Methodology notes for Amber Waves Indicators

Measuring nonmetro-metro difference in poverty rates

Measuring agriculture's contribution to Gross Domestic Product

Measuring the importance of trade to U.S. agriculture

Measuring nonmetro-metro difference in poverty rates

Robert Gibbs

The Census Bureau has not released official metro/nonmetro poverty estimates for 2004 due to sample redesign in the Current Population Survey (CPS). The current metro/nonmetro classification, based on the 2000 Census, was phased in over a period of several months, including the period in which households were asked about their 2004 incomes. As a result, the metro designation assigned to CPS households during this period is a mix of the old and new classifications, preventing a consistent measure of nonmetro poverty rates.

For more information, see . . .

The ERS Briefing Room on Rural Income, Poverty, and Welfare.

[top of page](#)

Measuring agriculture's contribution to Gross Domestic Product

Paul Sundell

Measuring the Importance of Trade to U.S. Agriculture

Alberto Jerardo

Starting with the November 2003 edition of Amber Waves, ERS has published a volume-based measure of exports relative to production, which provides an aggregate indicator of the importance of trade to agriculture. The export share of the volume of U.S. agricultural production is estimated from the sum of export volumes of commodities and processed products divided by their corresponding total volume of farm production. To be consistent with production volumes and to represent export importance at the farm level, processed export volumes are converted to farm weight or fresh-weight equivalent using industry conversion factors.

U.S. agricultural commodities and their products are generally classified as either produced from livestock or from crops. Livestock products include red meats, poultry meats, dairy products, eggs, animal fats and oils, and live farm animals. Except for live animals, exported livestock products undergo some form of processing. The major groups for crops include food grains, feed grains, oilseeds, fruits and nuts, vegetables, sugar, cotton, and tobacco.

As a rule, all agricultural commodities and products whose export and corresponding production volumes are available or convertible to weight measures were included in calculating the aggregate export share of U.S. agricultural production. Exports of these categories comprised 78 percent of the total value of U.S. agricultural exports in 2005.

As of February 2007, three major changes were made in the estimate of export

volume shares of processed agricultural products:

For oilseeds, oilmeal, and vegetable oils, only total oilseed production volume is used as the denominator. Previously, production volumes of oilmeal and vegetable oils were added to oilseed volume, which overestimated the denominator. In addition, oilseed-equivalent weights of oilmeal and vegetable oil exports are now used in place of their product weights.

Exports of grain products such as pasta are now included, using total U.S. grain production as the denominator. These products were previously excluded.

Processed fruit and vegetable exports are now converted to farm weight.

Formerly, their product weights were used.

These changes increased the volume of U.S. agricultural exports relative to their production volume, thus raising the collective export share of production.

For more information. . .

Measuring the Importance of Exports to U.S. Agriculture, by Nora Brooks, in *Amber Waves*, Volume 4, Issue 5, USDA, Economic Research Service, February 2007.

Estimating Export Shares of U.S. Agricultural Production, by Alberto Jerardo, in *Amber Waves*, Volume 1, Issue 5, USDA, Economic Research Service, November 2003.

[top of page](#)

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