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Massachusetts Cranberry Growers and Partners

Introduction

Whether you are sharing a meal with friends, slipping into a cotton or wool sweater, or filling your gas tank with 10% ethanol fuel, you are depending on the work of farmers. While small family farms have been disappearing across the United States, agriculture remains an important business enterprise. According to the Future Farmers of America, there are more than two million farms in the United States. Agriculture is the nation's largest employer with more than 22 million people working in some phase -from growing food and fiber to processing, packaging, marketing and selling it at the supermarket. The United States provides food at a lower cost, as a percentage of income, than any other country in the world. We produce sufficient surplus to export close to 90 billion dollars of agricultural products to the rest of the world.

In order to sustain high productivity, modern farmers work with technology such as computers and satellite imaging, matching crops to soil and water resources to increase yield and reduce waste. Water and soil conservation and integrated pest management are among the techniques used to improve productivity while limiting damage to soil, water and air. Working with government agencies, farmers are supporting economic development while protecting water supplies, reducing soil erosion and improving wildlife habitat.