The Economic Importance of Food and Fiber

A Spotlight on Thomas County, Georgia

Prepared for
Thomas County Cooperative Extension
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by:
The Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
The University of Georgia
Total Population
Thomas County

2010 Trend CAED: 46,180
2010 OPB Proj.: 46,235
2007 Est.: 45,237
2000: 42,737
1990: 38,986
1980: 38,098
1970: 34,515
1960: 34,319
1950: 33,932
1940: 31,289
1930: 32,612

Primary data sources: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial censuses & estimate; OPB (State Office of Planning and Budget) CAED (Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development).

Loss: 0 – 7.2%
Loss: 7.2 – 16.6%
Loss: 16.6 – 39.0%
Loss: 39.0 – 61.5%

Avg. GA County = 9.9%
GA = 16.6%
US = 7.2%

Primary data source: U.S. Census Bureau (3/08)
Percent of Land in Cropland & Forestland: 2002

23 – 40%
40 – 55%
55 – 70%
70 – 85%
85% or more

GA Total = 78.5%
GA Avg. Co. = 77.3%
Metro Avg. Co. = 70.7%
Nonmetro Avg. Co. = 82.6%

Thomas Co. 71.3%

Primary data sources:
U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2002
Forest Statistics for Georgia, 1997
Components of 2007 Property Tax Gross Digest
Thomas County

- Residential: 37.1%
- Mobile Home: 1.5%
- Motor Vehicle: 8.2%
- Public Utility: 2.1%
- Industrial: 5.2%
- Commercial: 20.5%
- Ag- Preferential- Environ- Conserv: 24.9%
- Timber*: 0.4%

Primary data source: GA Dept. of Revenue

- 40% Assessment Value of Property
- Gross Digest = $1,240,354,211
- Homestead & Property Exemptions = $104,856,648
- Net M&O Digest = $1,135,497,563
- Value of exempt property = $163,484,558

* Timber taxed at 100% based on previous year sales
# County Property Tax Digest Comparisons: 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>% Residential</th>
<th>% Agricultural</th>
<th>% Commercial</th>
<th>% Industrial</th>
<th>% Utility</th>
<th>% Motor Veh</th>
<th>% Mobile Home</th>
<th>% Timber</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>BROOKS</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLQUITT</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>COOK</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>DECATUR</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.78</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRADY</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MITCHELL</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. GA Co.</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary data source: GA Dept. of Revenue
Agriculture in Georgia

- Georgia's 2007 Farm Gate Value was $11.6 billion. Adding the value of landscape services increased the total agricultural production value to $13.6 billion.

- Total food and fiber production and directly related businesses account for a $59 billion output impact on Georgia's $735 billion economy.
Production Agriculture: 2007

Georgia Total Agricultural Production Value
$13.6 Billion

2007 Farm Gate Value by County in Millions of Dollars

- Poultry & Eggs: 39.8%
- Row & Forage Crops: 12.3%
- Vegetables: 9.8%
- Livestock & Aquaculture: 15.3%
- Landscape services: 15.3%
- Ornamental Horticulture: 5.6%
- Forestry & Products: 4.4%
- Other Income: 4.5%
- Fruits & Nuts: 1.8%
2007 Farm Gate Value in Thomas Co. was $105.8 million. Adding $7.9 million of landscape services increased the total agricultural production value to $113.7 million.

The highest value commodity group was row-forage crops, representing 27.3% of the total agricultural production value.
Thomas County
2007 Agricultural Production Value

2007 Agricultural Production
- Row-Forage crops: 27.3%
- Livestock-Aquaculture: 15.0%
- Poultry-Eggs: 11.0%
- Forestry: 5.7%
- Landscape services: 7.0%
- Fruits-Nuts: 3.6%
- Orn Hort: 4.8%
- Vegetables: 3.9%
- Other: 21.8%

2007 Top Farm Gate Commodities
- Cotton: 20.5%
- Ag-Tourism: 13.9%
- Broilers: 10.7%
- Horses: 6.6%
- Beef: 6.2%
- Timber: 5.7%
- Container Nursery: 3.2%
- Peanuts: 3.3%
- Pecans: 3.3%
- Dairy: 2.7%
- Rest of Commodities: 22.9%

Total AG Value = $113.7 million
Trends in Thomas County:
Number of Farms & Average Farm Size

Number of Farms, Thomas County

Average Farm Size

Source: 1945-2007 (quinquennial) Censuses of Agriculture
Trends in Thomas County: Land in Farms & Farms by Size

Land in Farms
Thomas County

Percent of Farms by Size, 2007

Source: 1945-2007 (quinquennial) Censuses of Agriculture
Trends in Thomas County
Number of Farms by Commodity

Source: 1987-2007 (quinquennial) Censuses of Agriculture
How Do We Compare?

Georgia, Thomas and Surrounding Counties

Farm Gate Value

Sources: 2007 Census of Agriculture and 2007 Farm Gate Value Report
What We Did

County Economy Modeled

- The Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development performed an analysis of the county’s economy, focusing on the role of food and fiber.

- How much of the county’s total current economic output comes from food and fiber production and directly related processing? (A Snapshot of the Economy)

- What is the total (direct and indirect) Impact of food and fiber production and directly related industries?
## Thomas County Economy

### Agriculture Output

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output in $ Millions</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>113.719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>44.397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>123.951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>904.446</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trans-Utilities-Info</td>
<td>108.029</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>414.898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance-Ins-RE</td>
<td>327.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>747.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>223.624</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total County Economic Output = $3.008 billion**
### Thomas County Economy

**Agriculture + Directly Related Businesses OUTPUT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Output in $ Millions</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture + Direct</td>
<td>292.235</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>44.397</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>123.951</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>725.929</td>
<td>24.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trans-Utilities-Info</td>
<td>108.029</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>414.898</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance-Ins-Real Est</td>
<td>327.032</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>747.483</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>223.624</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total County Economic Output = $3.008 billion**
Thomas County Employment
Total Jobs = 27,942

- State & Federal Government: 1,650 (5.9%)
- Construction: 1,014 (3.6%)
- Mining: 487 (1.7%)
- Public Education: 2,407 (8.6%)
- Trans-Utilities-Info: 573 (2.1%)
- Trade: 4,509 (16.1%)
- Finance-Ins-Real Est: 1,269 (4.5%)
- Other Services: 6,440 (23.0%)
- Professional Services: 4,807 (17.2%)
- Manufacturing: 2,492 (8.9%)
- AG + Directly Related: 2,295 (8.2%)

Primary data source: Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development, UGA
An Economic Snapshot of Thomas County

How much of Thomas County’s total economic output comes from food and fiber production?

AG value alone of $113.7 million consisting of Farm Gate Value and landscape services comprises 3.8% of the county’s economy.

AG plus directly related businesses (ex. paperboard mills, animal slaughtering, etc.) comprise 9.7% of the county’s economy.
Food and Fiber Production and Directly Related Manufacturing as % of Total Output

0 - 10%
10 - 20%
20 - 30%
30 - 50%
50 – 77%

Thomas Co. 9.7%
What is the total (direct and indirect) impact of food and fiber production and directly related industries?

This scenario illustrates how other industries are affected by the presence of food and fiber in the county. The indirect impacts measure output created due to food and fiber production and processing in the county.
What Impact Means: A Brief Explanation

- The *impact* numbers capture the ripple effects that food and fiber create in the county’s economy. Many other sectors rely in part on the existence of food and fiber for sales.
## Thomas County
### Agriculture IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct $ Millions</th>
<th>Indirect $ Millions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>113.719</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.560</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
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<td>2.021</td>
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<td>Trans-Utilities-Info</td>
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<td>2.875</td>
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<td>Trade</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Finance-Ins-Real Est</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.552</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.207</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>113.719</strong></td>
<td><strong>37.340</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Total Impact of Production AG = $151.1 million
5.0% of total economy**
### Thomas County

**Production Agriculture + Directly Related Businesses Impact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct $ Millions</th>
<th>Indirect $ Millions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture + Direct</strong></td>
<td>292.235</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mining</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Construction</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.738</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manufacturing</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.751</td>
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<td><strong>Trans-Utilities-Info</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trade</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23.563</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Finance-Ins-Real Est</strong></td>
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<td>18.581</td>
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<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
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<td>29.862</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.551</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>292.235</strong></td>
<td><strong>94.788</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Total Impact of AG + Directly Related = $387 million**

**12.9% of total economy**
### Thomas County
Production Agriculture + Directly Related Industries
Employment *IMPACT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture + Direct</td>
<td>2,295</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-Utilities-Info</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance-Ins-Real Est</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>399</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

**Total Impact of AG + Directly Related Employment = 3,100 Jobs**

11.1% of total employment
What These Numbers Mean: A Brief Explanation

- **Direct** impact is $292.2 million. This includes food and fiber production, processing and directly related manufacturing.

- **Indirect** impact from the Trade sector is $23.6 million. This captures the effects of farmers (direct source) buying supplies (seed, fertilizer, work boots) from local stores. These stores must increase their output to meet farmer demand.
As local stores increase their output, they may demand more stock from local wholesalers (also in the Trade sector). Local wholesalers demand more from local manufacturers, thus increasing activity in the Manufacturing sector.

Local stores also hire employees to assist farmers. They take home wages and buy groceries at the local store which increases demand there.
The total impact of food and fiber production, processing and direct manufacturing is $387 million.

The total county output is $3.0 billion.

Thus, food and fiber (directly and indirectly) account for 12.9% of the total county output.
Food and Fiber Production and Directly Related Manufacturing *IMPACT* as % of Total Output

Thomas Co. 12.9%
Contact Information

Prepared by:
Sue Boatright and Sharon Kane
Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development

“Adding Value to Georgia's Agricultural Economy Through Research and Extension”

To learn more about your county, go to:
http://www.caed.uga.edu/
...click on “Georgia Statistics System”

Special County Area Report
#09-08A
March, 2009