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Economic impact of North Carolina agriculture and agribusiness sets new record

RALEIGH, N.C. – For the first time, the economic impact of North Carolina's agriculture and agribusiness industry has surpassed \$100 billion, setting a new record of \$103.2 billion.

"This is exciting news for businesses in the agriculture industry looking to expand or relocate," said **Steve Yost**, president of [North Carolina's Southeast](#). "Here at NCSE, we've always said that our region is the perfect location for those wanting to make an impact in that industry. North Carolina is growing and our number one industry is growing with it."

The announcement comes from Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler, who shared the numbers from N.C. State economist and professor emeritus Dr. Mike Walden. The numbers are calculated using the latest USDA statistics.

"When I took office in 2005, the economic impact of agriculture and agribusiness was \$59 billion and \$100 billion seemed like a good goal to work toward. In 2016, I made a prediction that North Carolina's agriculture and agribusiness industry would soon reach \$100 billion," Troxler said. "I'm proud to say that we've reached that goal and surpassed last year's economic impact by more than 11 percent. Reaching this milestone is a big accomplishment for everyone in agriculture and agribusiness and proves how much we can accomplish when we are all pulling together."

The 20 counties that make up North Carolina's Southeast place the region in second place in the U.S. for [food manufacturing and processing](#). Several counties also ranked among the top 40 best places to farm in the country. In North Carolina, the southeastern region has the highest agriculture producing counties in the state thanks to its poultry and pork industries.

According to the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, agriculture is the state's top industry, employing a fifth of the state's workforce. More than 12,000 people work in the agriculture industry in southeastern North Carolina and 26,000 more work in food processing. Last year's economic impact figure was \$92.9 billion.

"We are blessed to have a strong, resilient, and engaged agriculture community that includes farmers, agribusiness owners, commodity associations, agricultural associations and effective leadership in the North Carolina General Assembly," Troxler said. "I can assure you we will set new goals and keep North Carolina agriculture growing."

A public-private partnership headquartered in Elizabethtown, N.C., North Carolina's Southeast's mission is to provide strong economic development leadership in southeastern North Carolina through innovative marketing and collaborative regional initiatives that will support the creation of new jobs, generate

capital investment and secure new business locations. Member counties include Anson, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Hoke, Jones, Lenoir, Montgomery, Moore, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland and Wayne. For additional information, visit www.ncse.org