

Mapping The U.S. Farm Subsidy \$1M Club

Adam Andrzejewski

NAME	CITY	STATE	ZIPCODE	AMOUNT
CONCORDIA ALLIED PRODUCERS LLC	ASHBURN	GA	31714	\$23,787,621.00
SCOTT FARMS G P	BRINSON	GA	39825	\$21,988,168.00
HEARD FAMILY FARM	BRINSON	GA	39825	\$20,874,304.00
HADER FARMS PARTNERSHIP	ZUMBROTA	MN	55992	\$19,946,024.00
CROSSROAD FARMS	WILLIAMSPORT	IN	47993	\$18,603,265.00
AMERICAN PEANUT MARKETING ASSOC.	LEARY	GA	39862	\$17,907,523.00
JENKS FAMILY FARMS	MONMOUTH	IL	61462	\$17,363,798.00
MICHAEL STAMER FARMS GENERAL PART	WILLMAR	MN	56201	\$14,191,190.00
P G C FARMS	BRINSON	GA	39825	\$14,164,396.00
DELINE FARMS PARTNERSHIP	CHARLESTON	MO	63834	\$14,053,570.00

SOURCE: Department of Agriculture data released via FOIA.

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Top 10 U.S. farm subsidy recipients from 2008 through 2017 benefiting from 60 federal farm programs administered by the USDA. These government programs include marketing assistance, agricultural risk, price loss coverage, livestock forage, conservation, crop disaster and many more. OpenTheBooks.com

During the Great Depression, farm subsidies were created to keep the family farm afloat and ensure a stable national food supply. Today, these subsidies have grown so lucrative that wealthy investors, large corporations, and farm-estate heirs use taxpayer money to maximize their personal return on investment.

Since 2008, however, the top 10 farm subsidy recipients each received an average of \$18.2 million – that’s \$1.8 million annually, \$150,000 per month, or \$35,000 a week. With the

median household income of \$60,000 a year, these farmers received more than 30 times the average yearly income of U.S. families.

It was never the intent of Congress to create a new class of millionaires through federal farm subsidies. Yet, the subsidies continue to flow. Last year alone, a very fortunate 400 entities, including farmers, corporations, and agri-businesses, harvested between \$1 million and \$9.9 million each in federal farm subsidies.

Last week, our organization, at OpenTheBooks.com [released](#) the oversight report, “Harvesting U.S. Farm Subsidies.” Our report cataloged \$13.2 billion in farm subsidies flowing to 958,000 recipients (FY2017). Using our interactive mapping platform, taxpayers across the country can [search](#) all recipients receiving \$1 million or more in farm subsidies by ZIP Code since 2008.



Mapping \$1 million+ recipients of U.S. farm subsidies during a 10-year period ending 2017.
OPENTHEBOOK.COM

[Review](#) all 6,618 entities receiving more than \$1 million in federal farm subsidies since 2008.

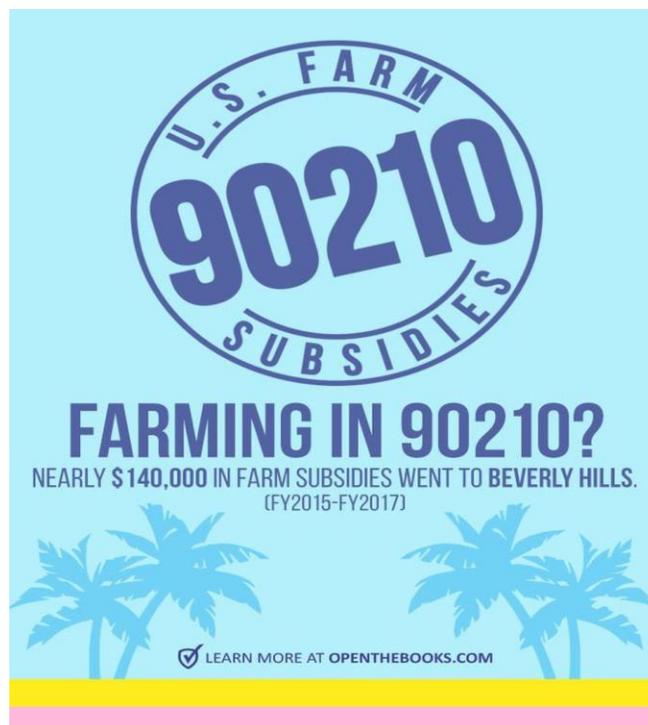
For years, federal farm subsidies have been plagued with problems such as deficient accounting controls, policy corruption, and waste. For example, even billionaire businessman Glen Taylor – the owner of the Minnesota Timberwolves NBA team – received \$116,502 in subsidies in 2017. Does Mr. Taylor, No. 350 on the Forbes 400 list, really need taxpayer funding for his egg and dairy farm in Iowa?

Consider these 10 fast facts regarding the harvesting of farm subsidies:

1. Very expensive mistakes: The Dept. of Agriculture admitted to \$3.7 billion in “improper payments” processed since 2004. Just in the past two years, \$650 million in subsidy

overpayments were shelled out to farmers. In 2011, the Internal Revenue Service reported that \$1.1 billion was paid to 172,801 *deceased* farmers over a six-year period.

2. Not the traditional family farm: The top five recipients reaped between \$18.6 million and \$23.8 million apiece since 2008. Additionally, subsidies of over \$10 million apiece flowed to 18 individual farming entities.
3. The rich got richer: Over \$11 billion in farm subsidies flowed to just 6,618 lucky recipients *who received at least \$1 million since 2008*.
4. Subsidies flow to urban areas where there are no farms: Between years 2015 and 2017, more than \$626 million flowed to recipients in America's urban areas – cities with over a quarter million residents and no farms.
5. City slicker farmers: Residents living in America's five most populated cities received \$18 million in farm subsidies. These cities included Chicago (\$7.7 million), Houston (\$5.8 million), New York City (\$2.8 million), Los Angeles (\$1.6 million), and Philadelphia (\$309,000).
6. Welfare to wealthy farmers: One out of every four dollars in farm subsidies went to someone who received \$250,000 or more that year.
7. The Beverly Hillbillies et al: Prosperous people living in the nation's 150 most affluent ZIP Codes cleaned off nearly \$5 million in farm subsidies last year. Residents living in these areas included 90210–Beverly Hills, CA (\$15,488); 10022–New York City, NY (\$83,169); and 96750–Hawaii County, Hawaii (\$230,697).



Are residents of Beverly Hills, CA really farmers? OPENTHEBOOK.COM

8. Uncle Sam's teat: Two-thirds of all \$1 million farm subsidy recipients are *located outside* of the "bread basket of the Midwest." This area is defined as the states of Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota, and Colorado.
9. Uncle Sam's farming cousins: Even government entities are harvesting the farm subsidy largess. The Montana Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation received \$15.8 million and the Washington Dept. of Natural Resources received \$8.9 million since 2008. The state universities in Arkansas, Minnesota, and Arizona each received over \$1 million in subsidies.
10. Subsidies to not farm: Last year, taxpayers even forked over \$1.8 billion to pay farmers *not to farm their land*. Through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), farmers received rental payments in exchange for *not farming* their land – and these contracts can last 10 to 15 years.
11. Bonus! The nation's food supply is not in jeopardy: The U.S. is the world's largest food [exporter](#) and produced more food than the entire European Union combined last year.

Why hasn't Congress reined in the largess and stopped farm subsidy abuses? Well, our auditors found 12 members of Congress collected up to \$637,059 in subsidy payments last year alone.

In fact, members crafting the policies on the agriculture committees are, many times, large recipients of their subsidies. The list includes Reps Doug LaMalfa (CA-1) with \$1.3 million, Vicky Hartzler (MO-4) with \$20,420, Robert Gibbs (OH-18) with \$7,660, and Sens Charles Grassley (IA) with \$58,210, and Debra Fischer (NE) with \$16,190 (payments between 2015-2017).

This summer, the U.S. House and Senate each passed respective versions of a new farm bill. Not surprisingly, loopholes allow non-farmers — such as congressmen and billionaires — to reap big benefits. It seems that as the two chambers work together to draft final legislation, you'll want to hold on to your wallet.

If you don't like funding \$1 million farm subsidies to already wealthy farmers, corporations, and well-off agri-businesses then now is the time to tell Congress to tighten the reins on the farm subsidy wagon.

Note: The definition of "farm subsidy" used in this piece includes benefits from 60 federal farm programs administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These government programs include marketing assistance, agricultural risk, price loss coverage, livestock forage, conservation, crop disaster and many more. Learn more [download](#) our oversight report, "Harvesting U.S. Farm Subsidies." We requested comment from many of the top 10 recipients of farm subsidies and will update the piece with any comments, feedback, or context if they respond.



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Adam Andrzejewski (say: Angie-eff-ski) is the CEO & Founder of OpenTheBooks.com – one of the largest private databases of government spending in the world. Our mission: “Every Dime, Online, In Real Time.” We've captured 5 billion public-sector transactions including 22 million public employee salary and pension records. I've spoken on big data journalism at Harvard Law School; Georgetown Law School; and the Columbia School of Journalism. Our work has been featured at major national news platforms such as C-SPAN; Good Morning America and ABC World News Tonight; USA Today; The Wall Street Journal; Chicago Tribune; Forbes Magazine; The Boston Globe; Washington Post; FOX News; CBS News; CNN; Real Clear Politics; and TheHill. My Forbes online columns have over 3 million page views.