

**STATEMENT
For Immediate Release**



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**STATEMENT FROM AGRICULTURE DIRECTOR GREG IBACH ON
THE 2012 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE PRELIMINARY REPORT**

The National Agricultural Statistics Service today released a preliminary report highlighting a few key statistics from the 2012 Census of Agriculture. The census is conducted every five years. While the number of farms nationally decreased from 2007 to 2012, the number of farms in Nebraska increased. The increases are found in the small farm categories. There also was an increase from 2007 to 2012 in Nebraska in the number of young farmers and ranchers.

“These numbers reflect the optimism that has returned to Nebraska agriculture due to profitability in the sector the past five years. Families are finding ways to bring their sons and daughters back to the farm or ranch.

“This could be through the addition of livestock, which allows families to add value to an existing crop base. There is a growing recognition that this type of diversification is important for the expansion of a family operation.

“Small farms also are benefitting from increased consumer demand for farm to market products. This provides a good way for young or beginning farmers to get involved in the industry.”