



Principle 1: Conserve Natural and Scenic Assets

County Information Sheet

Allegheny County

Allegheny County's mountainous terrain limits agricultural uses. The county ranked 90th in agriculture in the state and 10th in the VCC region in 1997. Still, it was one of the few in the region to register a slight increase in the number of farms and in farm acreage between 1987 and 1997, gaining 10 farms and 2,855 acres of farmland in the period. Main agricultural products are beef cattle and hay. The average size of farms went up to 194 acres, 20 acres above the regional average.

Total market value of agricultural products in 1997 was \$2,132,000, an increase of more than a third (39%) over its 1987 total. Livestock and poultry made up 89% of that value, although value of crops increased at a higher percentage (more than double since 1992).

Allegheny is a strong forestry county and the Westvaco plant in Covington is the engine for the local economy. The value of timber harvested in Allegheny County was \$2,455,358 in 2000, up from \$378,281 in 1986 (a 549.1 % increase). A notable shift in the 15-year period was the increasing dominance of hardwood, which moved from 60 percent of the harvest to 94 percent. Pine value declined slightly. The county ranked 2nd in the region in timber harvest value in 2000, up from 4th in 1986.

Figure 1-4b.
Agricultural Census Statistics
Allegheny County

	1987	1997	Change 1987-1997
Number of Farms	150	160	up 10
Acres in Farms	28,208	31,063	2,855
Avg. Size of Farm	188	194	6
Market Value of Crops	104,000	225,000	121,000
Market Value of Livestock	1,426,000	1,907,000	481,000
Market Value Ag Products	\$1,530,000	\$2,132,000	\$602,000

Note: Rank in State: 90; in Valley: 10
Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture

Figure 1-4c.
Timber Harvest Volume and Value
Allegheny County
(in thousand board feet)

	1986	2000	Change
Volume:			
Pine Sawtimber	1,019	1,186	16%
Hardwood Sawtimber	2,371	12,290	418%
Subtotal Sawtimber	3,390	13,476	298%
Small Dimension	9,726	20,925	115%
Total Volume :	13,116	34,401	162%
Value (\$):			
Pine	\$151,995	\$147,95	(3%)
Hardwood	\$226,286	\$2,307,399	920%
Total Value	\$378,281	\$2,455,358	549%
Percent Hardwood	60%	94%	
Rank in Region	4	2	
Rank in State	--	39	

Source: Virginia Department of Forestry, July 2002

Note: Volume is based on forest products tax receipts; value is based on average county stumpage costs. The standard measure for saw timber is thousand (mille) board feet abbreviated mbf. A tree 22 inches at breast height with 48 feet of usable stem would yield approximately 500 board feet.