



# Principle 1: Conserve Natural and Scenic Assets

## County Information Sheet

### Rockingham County

Rockingham County, large in area and exceptionally suited to agriculture, has long been the agricultural powerhouse of Virginia.

The county ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in agriculture in the state and in the VCC region in 1997. It is no coincidence that the top products in Rockingham County (poultry and cattle and dairy) deliver the state's greatest cash receipts from farming. Rockingham ranks first in each of these sectors, as well as in the production of hay and of corn for silage. It is the nation's top turkey-producing county and poultry drives the local economy. Poultry processing plants in the area make agriculture the largest employer in the region.

Total market value of agricultural products in 1997 was \$438,103,000, an increase of more than 58% over its 1987 total. Livestock and poultry made up 97% of that value. However, the county lost both farms and farmland in the decade. Between 1987 and 1997, the county lost 61 farms and 11,815 acres. This 5 percent loss of farmland was higher than the regional average and made up nearly 24% of total acreage lost in the region.

Forestry is not as significant in Rockingham County. The county ranked 7th in the region in timber harvest value in 2000, the same as in 1986. The value harvested was \$1,236,804 in 2000, up from \$247,869 in 1986 (a 399% increase). Pine lumber volume and pine value decreased, while all other measures moved up. Hardwood was increasingly dominant, moving from

76 percent of the harvest in 1986 to 96.8 percent in 2000.

**Figure 1-12b.**  
**Agricultural Census Statistics**  
**Rockingham County**

	1987	1997	Change 1987-1997
Number of Farms	1,895	1,834	(61)
Acres in Farms	242,224	230,409	(11,815)
Avg. Size of Farm	128	126	(2)
Market Value of Crops	\$ 6,526,000	\$11,821,000	\$ 5,295,000
Market Value of Livestock	270,642,000	426,282,000	155,640,000
Market Value Ag Products	\$277,168,000	\$438,103,000	\$160,935,000

**Note:** Rank in State: 1; in Valley: 1  
**Source:** U.S. Census of Agriculture

**Figure 1-12c.**  
**Timber Harvest Volume and Value**  
**Rockingham County**  
(in thousand board feet)

	1986	2000	Change
<b>Volume:</b>			
Pine Sawtimber	460	230	(50%)
Hardwood Sawtimber	2,857	4,675	64%
Subtotal Sawtimber	3,317	4,905	48%
Small Dimension	471	1,764	275%
Total Volume :	3,788	6,669	76%
<b>Value (\$):</b>			
Pine	\$59,584	\$39,024	(35%)
Hardwood	188,285	1,197,780	536%
Total Value	\$247,869	\$1,236,804	399%
Percent Hardwood	76%	97%	
Rank in Region	7	7	
Rank in State	--	66	

**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.