

The map displays the following data for each state:

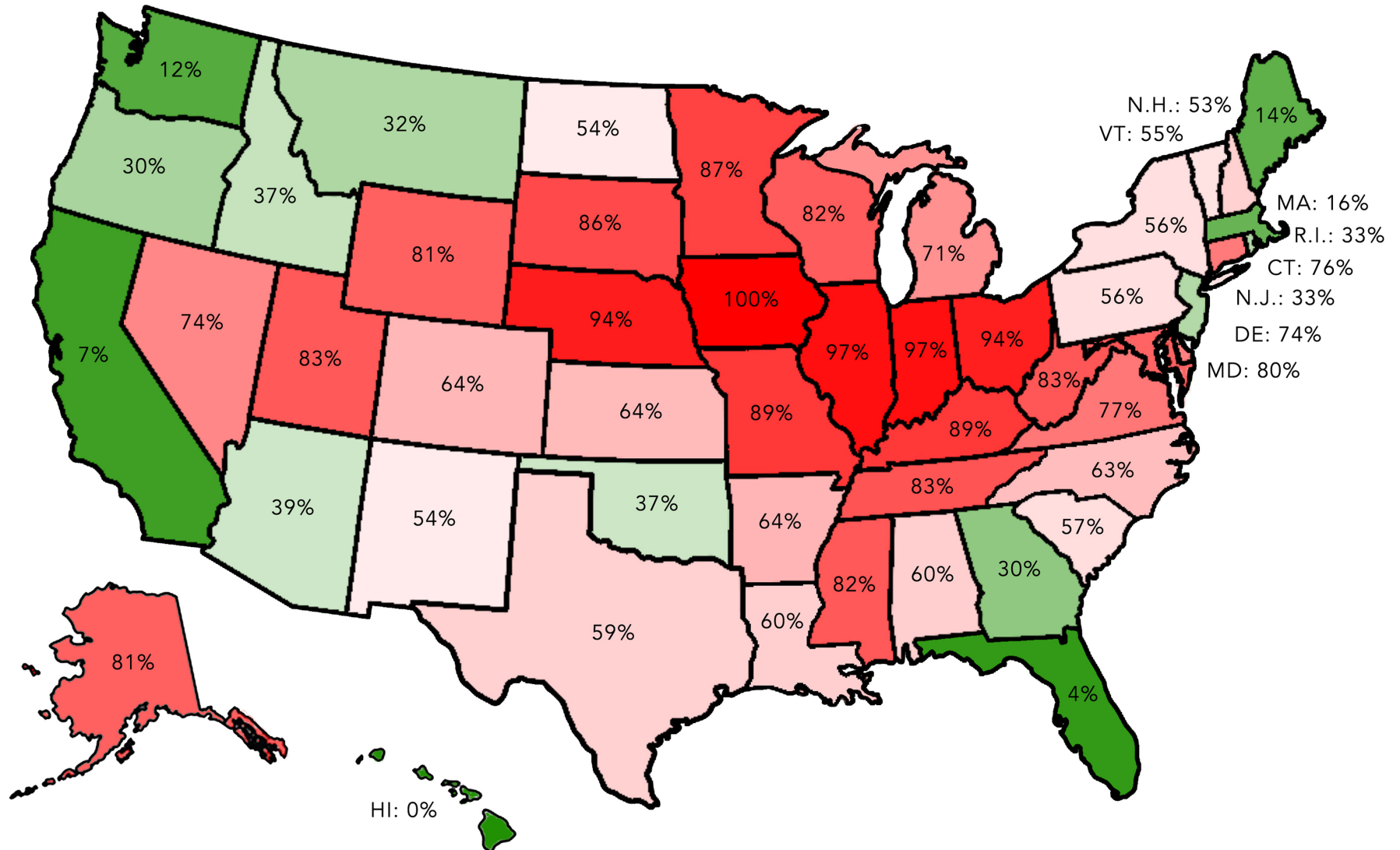
State	Primary Product	Value
Alaska	Potatoes	\$3.8 mil
Arizona	Lettuce	\$424 mil
California	Grapes	\$5.2 bil
Colorado	Wheat	\$9.3 mil
Connecticut	Sweet Corn	\$11 mil
Delaware	Wheat	\$44 mil
Florida	Oranges	\$1.8 bil
Hawaii	Sugarcane	\$73 mil
Idaho	Potatoes	\$1 bil
Illinois	Wheat	\$292 mil
Indiana	Wheat	\$139 mil
Iowa	Wheat	\$419 mil
Kansas	Wheat	\$821 mil
Kentucky	Wheat	\$272 mil
Louisiana	Sugarcane	\$512 mil
Maine	Potatoes	\$177 mil
Massachusetts	Cranberries	\$100 mil
Michigan	Wheat	\$322 mil
Minnesota	Wheat	\$622 mil
Mississippi	Peanuts	\$241 mil
Missouri	Wheat	\$2.9 bil
Montana	Wheat	\$2.7 bil
Nebraska	Wheat	\$4.5 mil
Nevada	Wheat	\$52 mil
New Hampshire	Apples	\$7.8 mil
New Jersey	Blueberries	\$81 mil
New Mexico	Pecans	\$111 mil
New York	Apples	\$250 mil
North Carolina	Peanuts	\$960 mil
North Dakota	Wheat	\$2.9 bil
Ohio	Wheat	\$243 mil
Oklahoma	Wheat	\$536 mil
Oregon	Wheat	\$465 mil
Pennsylvania	Apples	\$250 mil
Rhode Island	Sweet Corn	\$3.5 mil
South Carolina	Peanuts	\$133 mil
South Dakota	Wheat	\$2.9 bil
Tennessee	Wheat	\$145 mil
Texas	Wheat	\$643 mil
Vermont	Maple Syrup	\$35 mil
Virginia	Apples	\$23 mil
Washington	Wheat	\$2.9 bil
West Virginia	Apples	\$23 mil
Wisconsin	Potatoes	\$264 mil
Wyoming	Wheat	\$1.6 bil

Grains Fruits Vegetables Nuts Other

Created by Joe Satran of The Huffington Post. Data Source: USDA/NASS, HuffPost Calculations

Human Food vs. Animal Feed

The percentage of each state's agricultural income derived from crops grown primarily for animal consumption



More Money Made On Human Food

More Money Made On Animal Feed

Created by Joe Satran of The Huffington Post. Data Source: USDA NASS, HuffPost Calculations. "Crops grown primarily for animal feed" refers to field corn, soybeans, hay, barley and sorghum. Income from tobacco, cotton and other non-edible crops is not included.

Driving through the farmlands of Iowa looking for fresh food to eat is a lot like sailing through the ocean looking for fresh water to drink. In the ocean, you're surrounded by water that you can't drink; in Iowa, you're surrounded by food you can't eat. Even though Iowa generates the second-highest amount of revenue of any state off its crops -- \$17 billion in 2012 -- the overwhelming majority of that comes from field corn, which is destined mostly for animal feed and ethanol, not dinner plates.

I came upon this startling fact while trying to answer a seemingly simple question: What crop generates the most money in each state? The Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistical Service<<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>> produces reams of data on such matters, so I figured the question would be easy to answer. But it turned out to be trickier than I thought, because when I pulled the data, I realized that in most states, the biggest crop was one that was used mostly for animal feed. For well over half the states, field corn, soybeans or hay was the crop that generated the most cash in 2012, the latest year for which data are available. Though a small share of some of these crops does eventually get eaten by humans, in the form of things like soy lecithin and high-fructose corn syrup, most of it is fed to animals raised for meat or dairy.

To get more meaningful results, I decided to strip away those crops that are used largely for animal feed, and focus on crops that people actually eat. I plotted the results on a map, which revealed some surprising trends:

[http://s.huffpost.com/images/social/pin_icon_onhover.png]<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/button/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.huffingtonpost.com%2F2015%2F01%2F16%2Flargest-crop-each-state_n_6488930.html&media=http://images.huffingtonpost.com/2015-01-16-PaleMapOfFoodCrops-thumb.jpg&description=2%20Simple%20Maps%20That%20Reveal%20How%20American%20Agriculture%20Actually%20Works>[2015-01-16-PaleMapOfFoodCrops.jpg]

All that wheat! It seems nobody's told heartland farmers about the gluten-free trend quite yet. The non-wheat states are even more interesting. Some are expected: oranges in Florida<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/30/citrus-greening_n_3780984.html>, potatoes in Idaho, apples in Washington. But what about the pecans of New Mexico, or the mushrooms of Pennsylvania<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/18/molly-schuyler_n_3942844.html>? Or the fact that grapes -- used mostly for wine -- generate more than \$5 billion a year in California?

I was also struck by what the map didn't show: the power of the corn belt. When I excluded crops that are fed to animals, like corn, Iowa's biggest crop generates a mere \$4.5 million a year. This makes the state look like an agricultural weakling -- which it totally isn't.

So I did a little more analysis to find out the percentage of each state's crop output, in terms of dollar value, that derives from the crops I had originally excluded: corn, soybeans, sorghum, barley and hay. I plotted these percentages onto a map as well. The result, if you squint, looks a little like an electoral map in a really terrible year for Democrats:

[http://s.huffpost.com/images/social/pin_icon_onhover.png]<http://www.pinterest.com/pin/create/button/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.huffingtonpost.com%2F2015%2F01%2F16%2Flargest-crop-each-state_n_6488930.html&media=http://images.huffingtonpost.com/2015-01-16-MapofAnimalvsHuman-thumb.jpg&description=2%20Simple%20Maps%20That%20Reveal%20How%20American%20Agriculture%20Actually%20Works>[2015-01-16-MapofAnimalvsHuman.jpg]

This second map shows that there are really two different Americas when it comes to agriculture: the heartland, where agriculture is focused on meat and dairy, and the coasts, where it's focused on fruits and vegetables.