

## AGRICULTURAL CENSUS 2006

The following data is from the Census of Agriculture 2006. The Agricultural Census is carried out every June by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). The survey is an annual census of agricultural activity, which collects information relating to land use, crops, livestock, labour, horticulture and area covered by glasshouse (glazed or plastic covered fixed or mobile structures including walk through polythene tunnels).

Historically named the June Agricultural and Horticultural Census this survey was a census collecting data from all farm holdings. In recent years it has actually been conducted as a sample survey, in which data is only sought from a proportion of holdings in each year. The exception to this is in every tenth year when EU regulations demand a complete census; 2000 was the most recent occasion.

There are currently around 210,000 agricultural holdings in England, many of which are very small. The sample sizes used in recent years are between 45,000 and 75,000, and larger holdings are sampled at a higher rate than smaller ones. Information is collected from these by a postal questionnaire (a trial using electronic forms was run in 2002) sent out under the authority of the Agricultural Statistics Act 1979 as amended by the Agriculture (Amendment) Act 1984. This requires the farmer to state what agricultural activity is happening on the land as of **June** each year.

Two sets of results are produced and published each year. Provisional estimates are published for key sections during September and final results are published for all sections in December. All estimates are produced using statistical methods, which allow for non-respondent/non-sampled holdings, making use of past data, where available. This article uses the results from September each year; and only re-releasing if DEFRA make any amendments in December. In order to ensure that individual farms are not identifiable DEFRA have suppressed certain figures.

### Labour

Herefordshire's total labour force has increased since 2000 by 18% (from a total of 9,300 in 2000 to a total of 11,000 in 2006). Comparatively, total labour figures regionally have risen by only 0.4% and have decreased by 3.5% across England.

Table 1. Farm labour numbers, percentages of types of employees and percentage change since year 2000

2006	Herefordshire		West Midlands		England	
	No & %	% Change since 2000	No & %	% Change since 2000	No & %	% Change since 2000
Total labour numbers	<b>11,000</b>	<b>18%</b>	47,533	0%	361,017	-4%
% of full time farmers	<b>22%</b>	-5%	27%	-9%	27%	-10%
% of part time farmers	<b>30%</b>	10%	35%	9%	35%	12%
% of full time managers	<b>2%</b>	-5%	2%	17%	3%	22%
% of part time managers	<b>1%</b>	65%	0.9%	122%	1%	145%
% of male full time employees	<b>7%</b>	-24%	8%	-31%	11%	-30%
% of male part time employees	<b>3%</b>	-6%	4%	-2%	4%	-4%
% of female full time employees	<b>1%</b>	3%	2%	-17%	2%	-8%
% of female part time employees	<b>3%</b>	-9%	3%	-14%	4%	-20%
% of casual workers	<b>32%</b>	109%	18%	29%	13%	2%

--- Numbers suppressed by Defra

Note: small numbers of employees can create a higher percentage change

Source: Agricultural Census, Defra

The highest proportion of agricultural employees were part-time farmers, accounting for 30% of the agricultural workforce in Herefordshire and 35% in both the West Midlands region and England.

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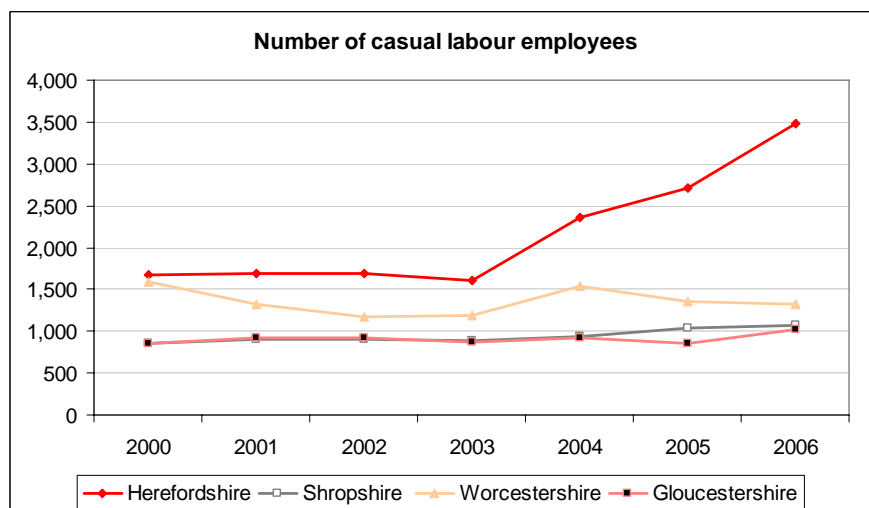
Numbers of full-time managers in Herefordshire have decreased by 5% since 2000; comparatively there has been an increase in the numbers regionally and nationally (17% increase in the West Midlands and 22% across England as a whole). However, the proportion of full-time managers in the agricultural labour force is similar across all areas. There has been a large increase in part time managers in all areas since 2000.

### Casual Labour employees

*Note: Casual labour employees include - family and non-family workers who are employed for less than 20 weeks of the year, youth trainees on official schemes and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) workers.*

The other main difference between Herefordshire, regionally and nationally is the proportion of casual workers and the percentage change. 32% of Herefordshire's agricultural labour force are employed as casual workers (3,477 people), compared to just 18% of the West Midlands agricultural workforce and 13% of England's. For Herefordshire, this is a 22% increase from last year and a 109% increase since 2000, far greater than the regional and national increases (29% and 2% respectively).

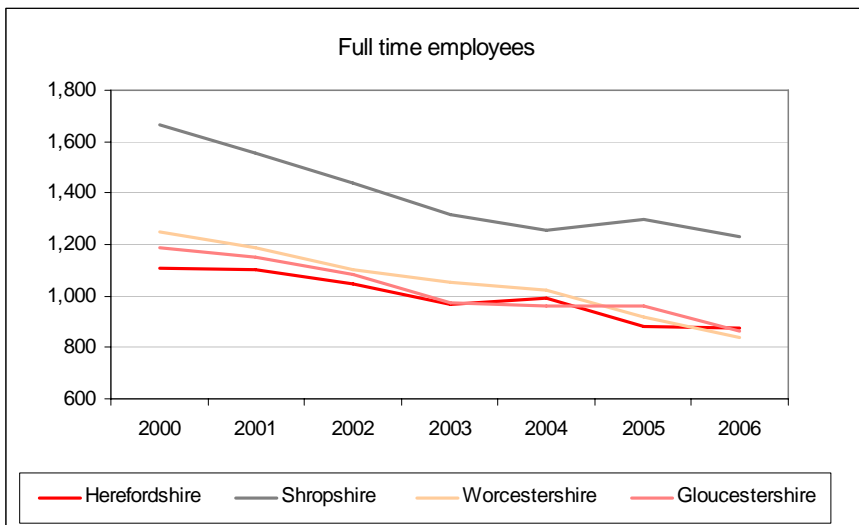
Chart 2. Number of casual labour employees in Herefordshire and neighbouring authorities, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire



Herefordshire has seen a sharp rise in the number of casual labour employees since 2003, with much larger numbers employed in Herefordshire than in neighbouring authorities. Shropshire and Gloucestershire have seen slight increases in the number of casual labour employees in the past year whereas numbers in Worcestershire decreased again over the last year.

**Full & Part-time employees**

Chart 3. Number of full time agricultural employees

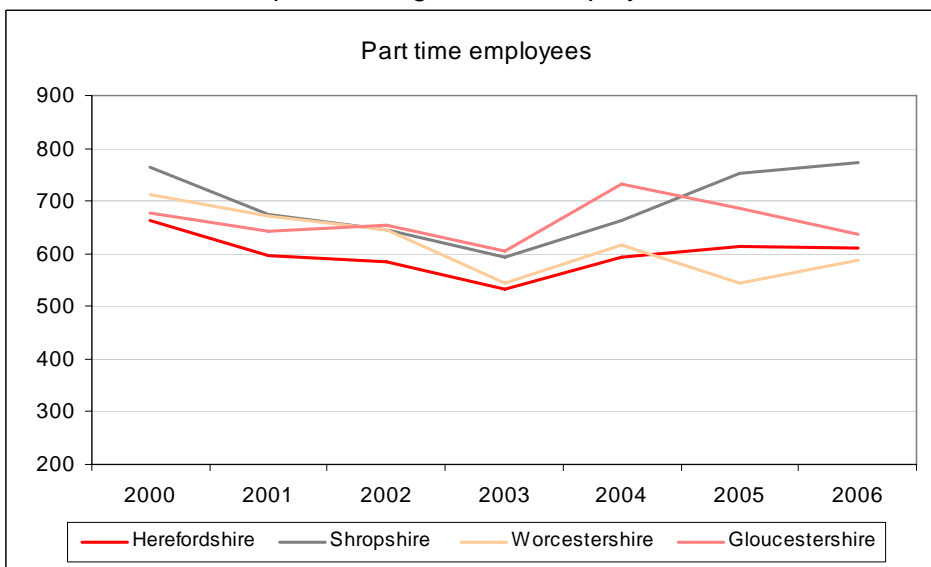


Since 2000 there has been a general downward trend in the number of full-time agricultural employees across all areas, with a 21% reduction in Herefordshire over this time period.

Part time employees are those who work fewer than 39 hours per week.

A different pattern is apparent for part-time employees with all areas seeing increases and decreases over the past six years. Since 2000, Herefordshire has experienced a 0.3% decline in part time employees, compared to a 7% in Gloucestershire, whilst Worcestershire and Shropshire have seen increases between 2000 and 2006 (3% and 8% respectively).

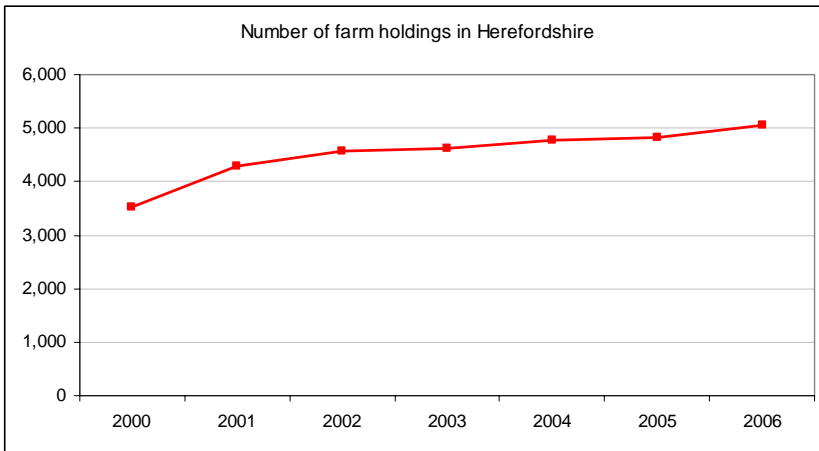
Chart 4. Number of part time agricultural employees



**Land Use**

In 2006 there were a total of 5,066 working farm holdings in Herefordshire with a total farmed area of approximately 182,153 hectares (ha)<sup>1</sup>.

Chart 5. Number of farm holdings in Herefordshire

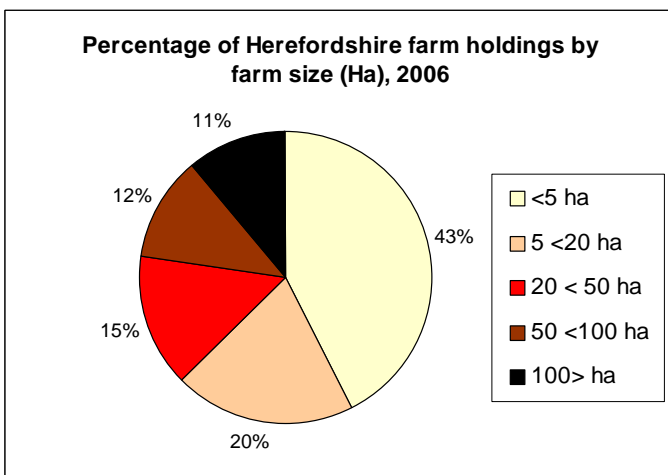


The number of farm holdings in Herefordshire has increased steadily since 2000, by 4% in total over this period.

Over the past 6 years, the amount of total farmed area has fluctuated but overall the total area farmed has increased by 3% since 2000.

In 2006, there has been a 3% increase in holdings that are 'owned' and a 2% decrease in those that are 'rented' compared with 2005.

Chart 6. Percentage of Herefordshire farm holdings by farm size (ha), 2006



The majority of Herefordshire farms are quite small; 43% are less than 5 hectares and a further 20% are between 5 and 20 ha (2,157 and 1,004 holdings respectively). Only 11% of Herefordshire farms are 100 hectares or greater in size (563 holdings). This pattern is similar in Herefordshire's neighbouring authorities, as well as regionally and nationally, all with higher proportions of smaller farms.

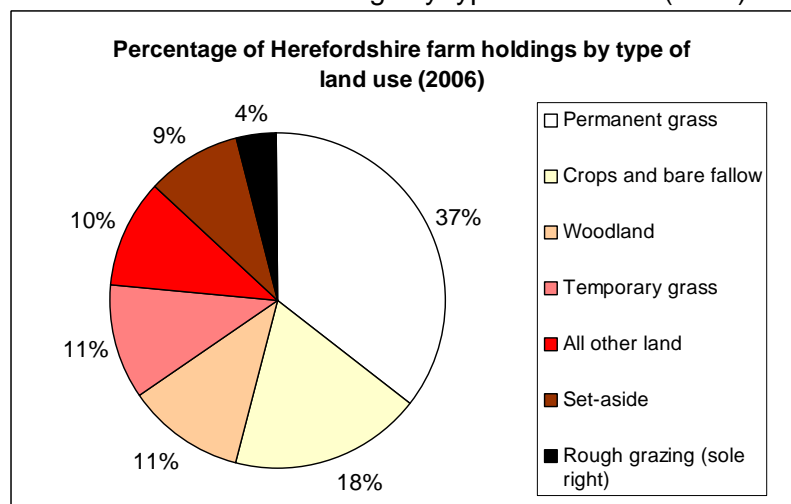
**Number of farm holdings by type of farm**

The percentage of farm holdings in Herefordshire by type of land use is shown on Chart 7.

The majority of Herefordshire's agricultural holdings (37%) are permanent grass, which accounts for 43% (78,338 ha) of the total area.

The second most predominate type of holding (18%) is crops and bare fallow, which occupies 38% (69157 ha) of the total area.

Chart 7. Percentage of Herefordshire farm holdings by type of land use (2006)



<sup>1</sup> 1 hectare = 2.5 acres

The percentage of Herefordshire's farmed area by type of land use is shown in Chart 8 below.

Chart 8. Percentage of Herefordshire's farmed area by type of land use (2004,2005 & 2006)



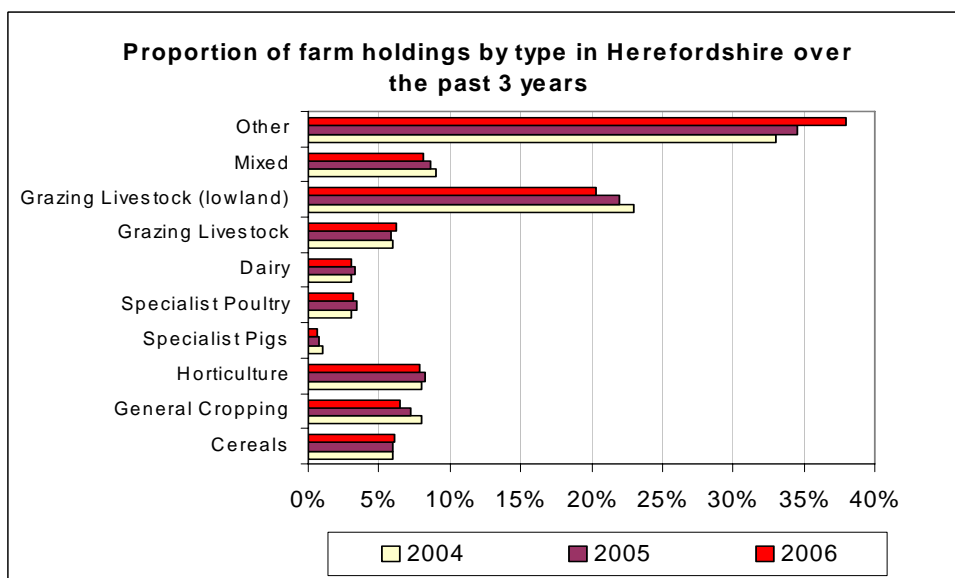
In terms of the proportion of land area used for each type of land use, over the last few years, Herefordshire has seen little change with the exception of slight increases in the area of land used for permanent grass.

Herefordshire's neighbouring authorities, Shropshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, have similar land use proportions to that of Herefordshire. Although Shropshire has slightly more area used for permanent grassland (46%) compared to Herefordshire (43%), Herefordshire is on par with figures for the West Midlands. Worcestershire has more land used for crops and bare fallow (42%) than Herefordshire (38%).

### Farm Type

The largest proportion of farms in Herefordshire are classed as 'other' i.e. those that do not fit with mainstream agriculture classifications (e.g. specialist goat) and this has had a large increase over the last year. In Herefordshire, the largest single category of farm type over the last few years has been grazing livestock (lowland), although the proportion has decreased gradually from 24% in 2003 to 20% currently in 2006. Proportions of general cropping and mixed farm holdings have also seen a continual decrease over the last 3 years.

Chart 9. Proportion of farm holdings by type in Herefordshire (2004, 2005 & 2006)



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The proportions of farm types in Herefordshire in 2005 compared with other areas are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Proportions of farm type holdings for Herefordshire, neighbouring authorities Shropshire & Worcestershire, the West Midlands region and England, 2006

Proportion of farm holdings by type	Herefordshire				Shropshire	Worcester shire	West Midlands	England
	2006	2005	2004	2003				
Cereals	6%	6%	6%	5%	7%	9%	8%	11%
General Cropping	6%	7%	8%	7%	4%	5%	4%	4%
Horticulture	8%	8%	8%	8%	3%	10%	5%	5%
Specialist Pigs	1%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Specialist Poultry	3%	3%	3%	(combined)	3%	3%	3%	3%
Dairy	3%	3%	3%	3%	10%	3%	7%	6%
Grazing Livestock	6%	6%	6%	6%	8%	0%	6%	6%
Grazing Livestock (lowland)	20%	22%	23%	24%	19%	22%	19%	16%
Mixed	8%	9%	9%	10%	7%	5%	6%	5%
Other	38%	35%	33%	34%	39%	41%	41%	41%

Main differences between the proportions of different farm types in Herefordshire and other areas are:

- The proportion of farm holdings that are in the 'other' category has increased from 35% last year to 38% at present, although it still remains lower than the regional and national figures.
- Herefordshire has seen the proportion of farm holdings for grazing livestock remain the same since 2003 at 6%, although a slight decline in the proportion of farm holdings given over to grazing livestock (lowland) has occurred, falling from 22% in 2005 to 20% in 2006.
- Herefordshire has a proportionately higher amount of horticulture holdings (8%) than Shropshire (3%), and regionally and nationally, both 5% but lower than Worcestershire (10%).
- Herefordshire has slightly higher proportions of general cropping holdings than other areas, 6% compared to 4% in Shropshire, the West Midlands region and England.
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire have lower proportions of dairy holdings accounting for only 3% in both areas, compared to 6% across England and 10% in Shropshire.
- Herefordshire has a slightly higher proportion of mixed holdings (8%) compared to the other areas, which range between 5% and 7%.

### Net Farm Incomes

To understand what impact farming has on the economy, Defra undertake a Farm Business Survey to ascertain what incomes is generated from farms across England, giving a breakdown of net farm incomes by farm types (data is not available below regional level). By comparing national farm incomes with the local make up of types of farms we can get an idea what is likely to be happening locally in terms of different farm incomes. The latest data is shown in an article in the August 2007 Quarterly Economic Report, but the key points are noted below.

20% of Herefordshire farms were Grazing Livestock (lowland), which if they follow national trends, would have experienced a decrease in net farm incomes over the last 3 years.

Specialist Poultry farms experienced a large increase in net farm incomes nationally, however, only 3% of Herefordshire's farm holdings were Specialist Poultry.

The farms types nationally that experienced the largest decreases were General Cropping and Cereal farms, both of which account for 6% of Herefordshire's farm holdings. Potentially meaning that 12% of Herefordshire's farm holdings experience large decreases in their net farm incomes over the last 3 years.

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**Crop areas**

38% of Herefordshire's agricultural land area is used for crops and bare fallow. This is the second largest type of land use in Herefordshire, after permanent grassland.

Within this category there are many different types of crops farmed in Herefordshire. Table 3 shows the area farmed for each type of crop for 2006 and for previous years to show how the amount of land devoted to different crops have changed over the last few years.

Table 3. Comparison of amount of crop area (hectares) in Herefordshire over a five-year period

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	Overall change 2001-2006
Wheat	26,498	27,120	29,320	25,437	27,923	22,968	↑
Winter Barley	4,383	4,390	4,936	5,486	6,905	6,223	↓
Spring Barley	---	---	2,918	3,237	2,427	4,812	
Oats	4,804	3,443	4,353	5,145	5,559	4,834	↓
Other Cereals	---	---	595	---	337	317	
<i>Total Cereals</i>	<b>38,720</b>	<b>38,330</b>	<b>41,397</b>	<b>---</b>	<b>43,153</b>	<b>39,153</b>	↓
Potatoes	6,449	6,085	6,707	5,249	5,835	6,239	↑
Sugar beet	1,501	1,744	1,775	1,663	1,618	1,736	↓
Horticulture	5,919	5,382	5,732	6,206	6,163	6,317	↓
Field beans	2,606	2,776	2,867	2,932	3,078	3,860	↓
Peas for harvesting dry area	872	914	1,026	1,171	1,389	1,687	↓
Oilseed rape	5,782	6,039	5,730	4,836	2,993	4,109	↑
Linseed	---	82	23	---	---	90	
Root Crops, Brassicas, Fodder Beet	868	835	378	245	266	412	↑
Other crops for stockfeeding	---	347	636	621	626	741	
Maize	3,036	2,782	2,497	2,505	2,421	2,757	↑
Other arable crops	1,143	951	924	1,105	1,186	962	↑
Bare fallow	1,671	1,713	825	426	391	494	↑
Total peas & Beans	118	45	35	43	34	37	↑
All other veg. & salad	355	343	398	264	333	322	↑
Total veg. grown in open	473	388	443	307	367	359	↑
Under glass or plastic	---	---	21	---	---	18	
Top fruit	3,908	3,808	3,919	4,626	4,556	4,835	↓
Small fruit	1,355	973	1,063	989	906	840	↑
<i>Total fruit</i>	<b>5,263</b>	<b>4,782</b>	<b>5,045</b>	<b>5,615</b>	<b>5,461</b>	<b>5,674</b>	↓
Hardy nursery stock	---	---	302	---	---	244	
Bulbs & flowers	---	---	24	---	26	23	
<b>Total crop area</b>	<b>71,742*</b>	<b>70,161</b>	<b>77,444</b>	<b>72,494*</b>	<b>75,337*</b>	<b>75,236</b>	↓

Note: --- Figures suppressed by DEFRA \* = total crop area excluding suppressed areas

\*\*Small fruit (inc. Strawberries, Raspberries, Blackcurrants, Gooseberries, Blackberries, Wine Grapes and Other Small Fruit)

↑ Increase in farmed area ↓ Decrease in farmed area

Excluding the figures for the areas of land that are suppressed, 54% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land is used for cereals. One of the cereals, wheat, accounts for the single largest proportion (37%) of the total land used for cropping in 2006. This has been the case since 2001. The next largest proportions of land are used for potatoes and oilseed rape (accounting for 9% and 8% of the cropping land respectively).

Despite the largest proportion of land being used for wheat, there has been a slight decrease in the actual farmed area over the last two years but even so this is still a 15% increase on the area used in 2001. Areas used for the other cereals for which current data is available, Winter Barley and Oats, have both fluctuated since 2001 but overall 30% less land is used to farm both of these.

Since 2001, there has been an overall decrease in the total land used for cereals in Herefordshire, despite a slight increase of 1% between 2005 and 2006 (from 38,330 to 38,720 ha respectively).

The area of land used for potatoes in Herefordshire has increased by 6% over the last year and by 3% since 2001. 9% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land is used for potatoes, which is much higher than neighbouring authorities (between 0.3% and 1.5%), the West Midlands (1.7%) and England (1.1%).

In terms of the area of land used for horticulture, there has been a slight increase between 2005 and 2006, although there has been a 6% decrease since 2001. The proportion of crop area in Herefordshire used for horticulture was approximately 8% in 2006. Comparatively 4% of land regionally and nationally was used for horticulture, and 8% in Worcestershire.

The area used for oilseed rape has seen an increase of 41% since 2001, with 8% of the total agricultural crop area now being used for this purpose. This proportion remains lower than other areas, e.g. 15% in Gloucestershire and 11% across England, but similar to Worcestershire and Shropshire (9% and 8% respectively).

Since 2001, the area of land used as bare fallow has seen a large increase (from 494 ha in 2001 to 1,671 ha in 2006) however, this still only accounts for 2% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land use. Regionally and nationally, bare fallow accounts for 3% and 3% respectively.

Herefordshire has seen an overall decline of 19% since 2001 in the area of land used for top fruit (orchard crops such as apples and pears), although in the last year there has been a 3%. Herefordshire maintains a larger proportion of land (5%) for top fruit than regional and national proportions (1.5% and 0.5% respectively).

The area of land used for small fruit (fruit such as strawberries, blackberries and wine grapes) has seen a substantial increase since 2001 (61%). Herefordshire now has 2% of agricultural cropping land used for small fruits, compared to 0.5% regionally and 0.2% nationally.

**Livestock**

Unfortunately, the majority of livestock numbers were suppressed in the most recent Census Survey. Only numbers of pigs, sheep and goats were published, most likely to preserve anonymity of particular farms in other parts of the region where there are small numbers.

Table 4. Numbers of livestock and holdings in Herefordshire, 2005

	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	% change between 2006 and 2002
Dairy	---	---	18,953	---	18,410	
Beef	---	---	21,417	---	19,453	
<i>Total Cattle</i>	---	---	128,350	---	117,787	
<i>Total pigs</i>	25,672	30,389	28,504	27,976	28,608	-10%
<i>Total sheep</i>	665,515	657,876	660,589	654,222	644,216	3%
<i>Total goats</i>	1,748	1,494	1,692	855	896	95%
<i>Total fowl</i>	---	8,540,301	---	---	---	
<i>Total duck</i>	---	3,816	---	---	---	
<i>Total geese</i>	---	1,802	---	---	---	
<b>Total livestock numbers</b>	---	<b>9,235,678</b>	<b>827,081</b>	---	<b>791,500</b>	
<b>Total livestock no's (pigs, sheep &amp; goats)</b>	<b>692,934</b>	<b>689,759</b>	<b>690,785</b>	<b>683,053</b>	<b>673,720</b>	<b>3%</b>

Note: --- Figures suppressed by DEFRA

The largest numbers of livestock holdings farm sheep, with 1,946 holdings farming a total of 665,515 sheep. The number of sheep holdings has increased by 1.6% from 1,915 holdings in the last year and there has been a slight increase in the number of sheep (1.2%) from 657,900.

Numbers of goats in Herefordshire have increased by 95% since 2002. Despite these increases, the number of holdings has remained similar, 104 holdings in 2006 compared to 106 in 2002.

**For further information on the data in this article, please contact the Research Team on 01432 383634, or e-mail [researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk)**

**OR for a copy of the full national report go to [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)**