

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS 2008

The following data is from the Census of Agriculture 2008. The Agricultural Census is carried out every June by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). The census is an annual survey of agricultural activity, which collects information relating to farm type, land use, crops, livestock and labour.

Historically named the June Agricultural and Horticultural Census, this survey was, as its name implied, a census collecting data. In recent years it has 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 this was undertaken.

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.

Labour

In 2008, Herefordshire's total agricultural labour force had increased by 22% since 2000 (from a total of 9,300 in 2000 to a total of 11,402 in 2008). Comparatively, total labour figures increased by less than 1% in the West Midlands and decreased by 4% across England as a whole.

Table 1. Farm labour numbers, percentages of types of workers and percentage change since year 2000, (2008)

2008	Herefordshire		West Midlands		England	
	No & %	% Change since 2000	No & %	% Change since 2000	No & %	% Change since 2000
Total labour numbers	11,402	+22%	47,610	+0.5%	360,109	-3.8%
% of full time farmers	21%	-8%	27%	-12%	26%	-12%
% of part time farmers	27%	+5%	35%	8%	35%	+11%
% of full time managers	2%	-1%	2%	+25%	3%	+26%
% of part time managers	1%	+57%	0.8%	+109%	1%	+150%
% of male full time employees	7%	-16%	9%	-27%	11%	-27%
% of male part time employees	4%	+24%	5%	+21%	5%	+17%
% of female full time employees	2%	+42%	2%	-5%	2%	+1%
% of female part time employees	2%	-15%	3%	-12%	4%	-19%
% of casual workers	34%	+133%	17%	+25%	12%	-4%

--- Numbers suppressed by Defra

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

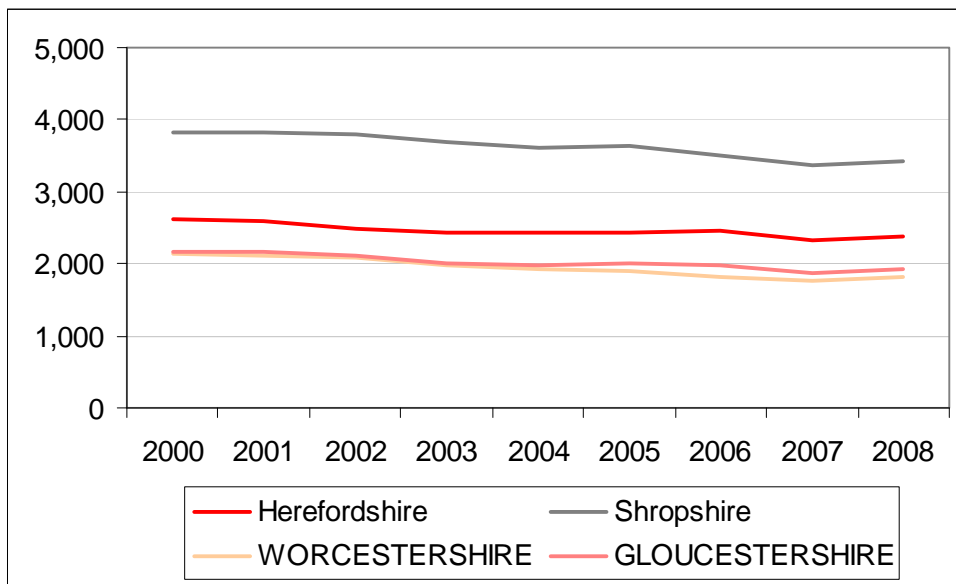
In Herefordshire the highest proportion of the agricultural workforce were casual workers, accounting for 34%. Casual workers only accounted for 17% in the West Midlands region and 12% in England. Part time farmers accounted for the greatest proportion of the workforce in the West Midlands and England as a whole, both 35% compared to only 27% in Herefordshire.

Numbers of full-time managers in Herefordshire have decreased by 1% since 2000. This is very different to the 25% increase seen across the West Midlands and the 26% seen nationally. However, the proportion of full-time managers in the agricultural labour force is small and similar across all areas. There has been a large increase in part time managers in all areas since 2000 but again they represent a small proportion (1%) of the workforce.

Farmers

The number of farmers working full time decreased in all areas between 2000 and 2008. Over this period Herefordshire saw the smallest decrease in the number of full time farmers (8%). This was compared to a decrease of 11% in both Gloucestershire and Shropshire and 15% in Worcestershire. 2008 saw a reversal of the downward trend with all areas experiencing an increase on the previous year; 3% in Herefordshire, 4% in Worcestershire, and 2% in Shropshire and Gloucestershire.

Chart 1. Number of full time farmers in Herefordshire and neighbouring authorities, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire



Between 2007 and 2008 part time farmers showed the opposite trend, decreasing in all areas. Between 2000 and 2007 there was no clear trend, although all areas reported an increase. A large part of this increase was attributable to the increase seen between 2000 and 2001. Over the whole period (2000-2008) Herefordshire increased by 5%, compared to 14% in Shropshire and 6% in both Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.

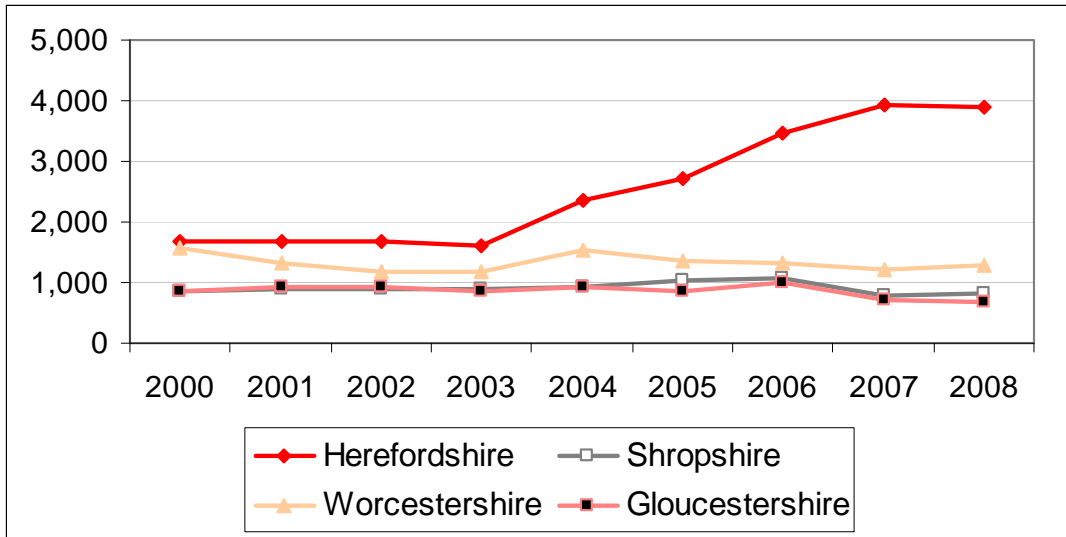
Casual Labour Employees

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.

As noted previously 34% of Herefordshire's agricultural labour force were employed as casual workers (3,883 people), in 2008. This was compared to just 17% of the West Midlands agricultural workforce and 12% of England's. Since 2000 Herefordshire's casual agricultural workforce has increased by 133%, all of this increase coming after 2003 when there was an increase of labour coming from countries which had just gained accession to the European Union. Prior to this numbers of casual labour employees had been stable. Comparatively the increase in the regional and national casual labour force was much smaller (24% and -4%

respectively since 2000). Between 2007 and 2008 however, numbers in Herefordshire remained fairly stable, decreasing by 1% whilst regional and national numbers continued to increase (2% and 6% respectively). Herefordshire has also seen much greater increases than it's neighbouring authorities, which remained stable between 2003 and 2007.

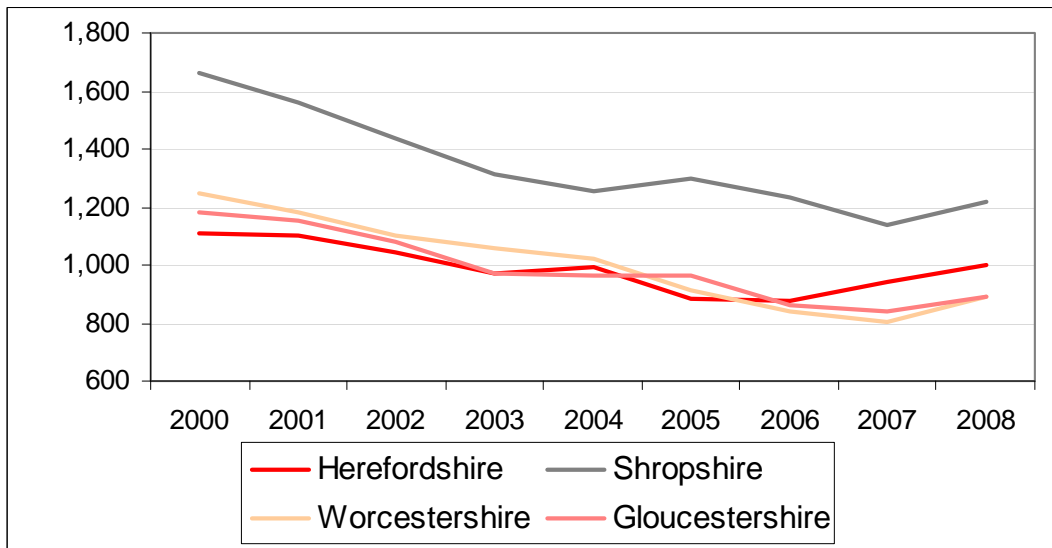
Chart 2. Number of casual labour employees in Herefordshire and neighbouring authorities, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire



Full & Part-time employees

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

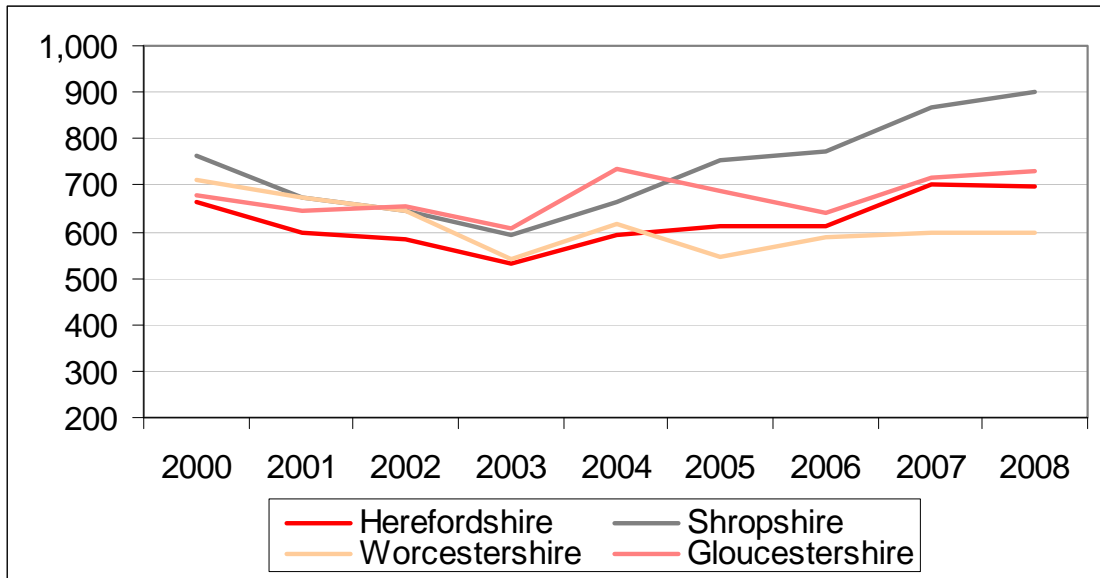
Chart 3. Number of full time agricultural employees



Since 2000 there has been a general downward trend in the number of **full-time** agricultural employees across all areas, with a 20% reduction in Herefordshire between 2000 and 2006 (chart 3). Between 2006 and 2008 however, numbers in Herefordshire actually increased by 14%.

In 2008 Herefordshire and the three neighbouring authorities saw only minor changes in the numbers of **part-time** employees (chart 4). Whilst since 2003 there seems to have been an overall trend of increase, the data presents a very mixed picture for different areas. Prior to 2003, all areas depicted showed a downward trend. Over the whole period Herefordshire experienced a 5% increase in part time employees, compared to a 18% increase in Shropshire, 8% in Gloucestershire and a decrease of 16% in Worcestershire.

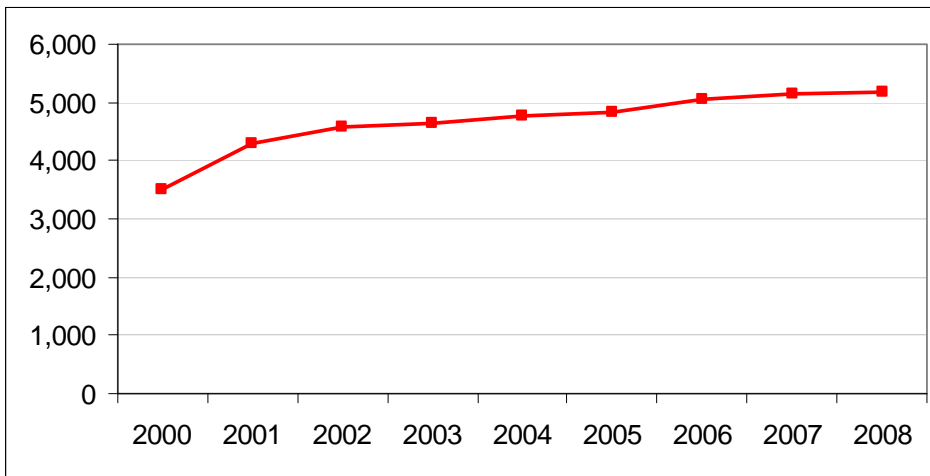
Chart 4. Number of part time agricultural employees



Land Use

In 2008 there were a total of 5,193 working farm holdings in Herefordshire with a total farmed area of approximately 182,529 hectares (ha)¹.

Chart 5. Number of farm holdings in Herefordshire

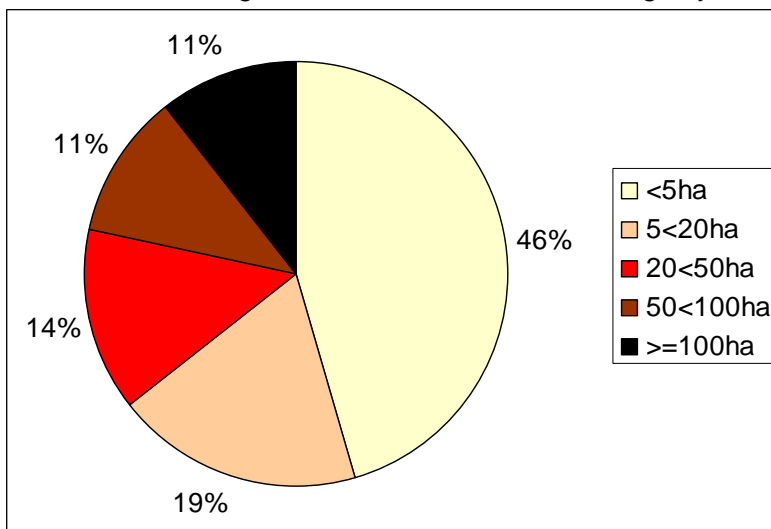


The number of farm holdings in Herefordshire has increased steadily since 2000, by 48% in total over this period.

Over the past eight years, the total farmed area has fluctuated but overall it has increased by 3% since 2000.

In 2008 the proportion of land that was 'owned' or 'rented' showed little change from the previous year, with owned land accounting for 73% and rented land 27%.

Chart 6. Percentage of Herefordshire farm holdings by farm size (ha), 2008



The majority of Herefordshire farms are quite small: 46% are less than 5 hectares and a further 19% are between 5 and 20 ha (2,364 and 989 holdings respectively). Only 11% of Herefordshire farms are 100 hectares or greater in size (548 holdings).

This pattern is similar in Herefordshire's neighbouring authorities, as well as regionally and nationally, all with higher proportions of smaller farms.

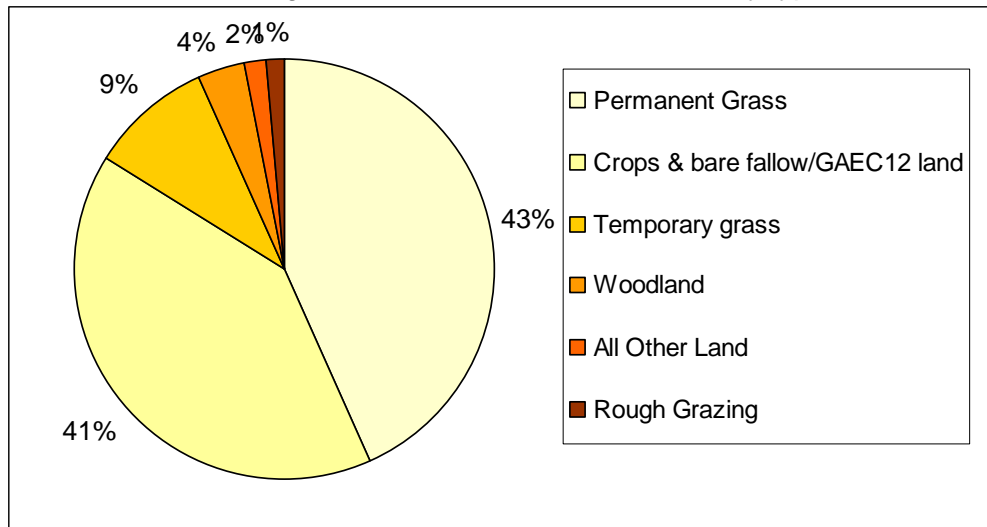
¹ 1 hectare = 2.5 acres

Number of farm holdings by type of farm

Chart 7. Percentage of Herefordshire's farmed area by type of land use

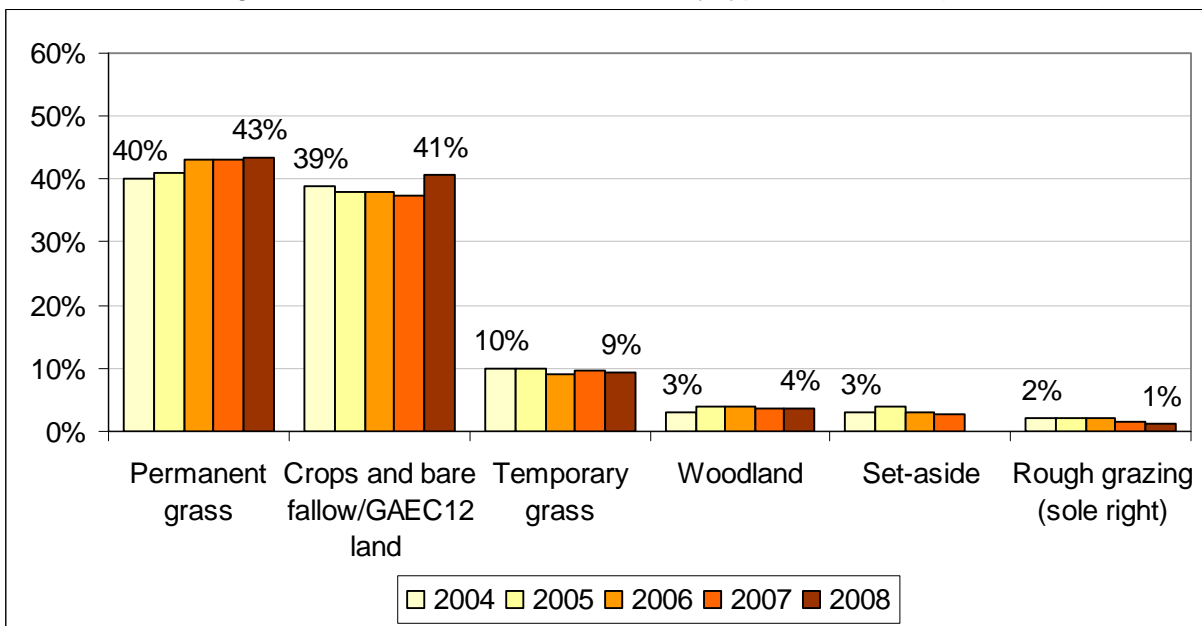
Permanent grass (43%) and crops and bare fallow (41%) together accounted for the vast majority of Herefordshire's agricultural land in 2008.

Permanent grass covered 79,180 ha, whilst crops and bare fallow covered 74,072 ha.



Note: GAEC 12 is land which is not in agricultural production and is one of the land management requirements under the Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) scheme, which are required for single payment. This covers land that was previously set-aside. Non-adherence to these standards may reduce payment received.

Chart 8. Percentage of Herefordshire's farmed area by type of land use (2004- 2007)



In terms of the proportion of land area used for each type of land use (chart 8), 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 and a slight decrease in the area of crops and bare fallow.

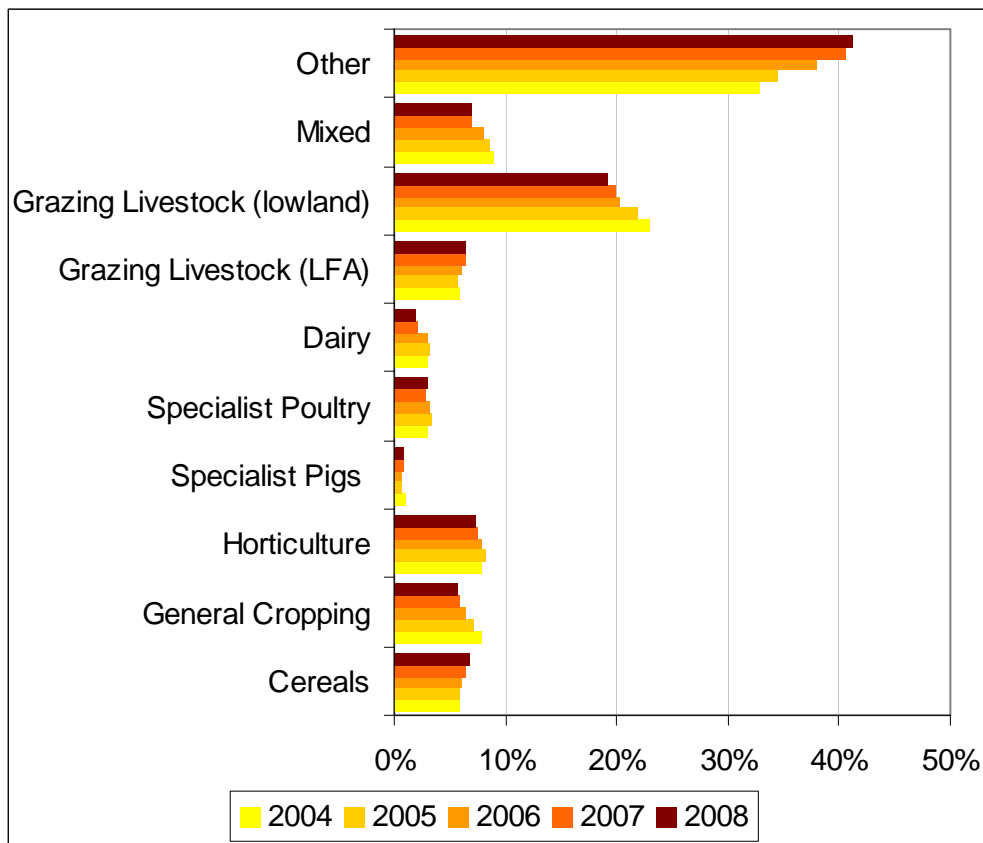
In 2008 the set-aside category was not included to reflect the change in EU policy to reduce set-side payments to 0%. Land previously allocated to set-aside will have been allocated to one of the other categories in 2008, mostly to the crops and bare fallow/GAEC12 land category.

Herefordshire's neighbouring authorities, Shropshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, have similar land use proportions to that of Herefordshire.

Farm Type

The largest proportion of farms in Herefordshire are classed as 'other' i.e. those that do not fit within any other agricultural classification (e.g. specialist horse)². These holdings accounted for 41% in 2008, a marked increase on the proportion in 2004 (33%), but still lower than that seen in the neighbouring authorities, regionally and nationally (Chart 9 and Table 2).

Chart 9. Proportion of farm holdings by type in Herefordshire (2004-2008)



Out of the remaining categories 'grazing livestock (lowland)' accounted for the greatest proportion in Herefordshire, although this decreased from 23% in 2004 to 19% in 2008. The proportion of farm holdings for grazing livestock on less favoured areas (LFA) is relatively low and has remained the same in Herefordshire since 2004 at 6%.

Herefordshire has a proportionately higher amount of horticultural holdings (7%) than Shropshire (3%), Gloucestershire (5%) and regionally (5%) and nationally (4%), but lower than Worcestershire (9%).

Herefordshire has slightly higher proportions of general cropping holdings than other areas, 6% compared to Shropshire (3%), the West Midlands region (4%) and England (4%). However, this has seen a 2 percentage point decrease since 2004.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire have lower proportions of dairy holdings both accounting for only 2%, compared to 5% across England and 7% in Shropshire.

² Definition of 'other': Holdings which either do not fit in well with mainstream agriculture, such as specialist horses, or which are of limited economic importance, such as specialist set-aside, specialist grass and forage and non-classifiable holdings. Specialist grass and forage holdings are holdings consisting only of fodder crops, or only of grass or rough grazing and having no livestock. Non classifiable farms are farms that fit into none of the above categories. Non classifiable holdings are holdings consisting of fallow or buildings and other areas only.

'Mixed' farm holdings accounted for 7% in 2008, a 2 percentage point decrease on 2004. This is still a greater proportion though when compared to other areas. 'Cereals' holdings on the other hand account for a lower proportion than all other areas, 7% compared to 9% in the West Midlands region and 11% in England as a whole.

Table 2. Proportions of farm type holdings for Herefordshire, neighbouring authorities Shropshire, Worcestershire & Gloucestershire the West Midlands region and England, 2008

	Herefordshire	Shrops.	Worcs.	Gloucs.	West Mids.	England
Cereals	7%	8%	9%	10%	9%	11%
General Cropping	6%	3%	4%	1%	4%	4%
Horticulture	7%	3%	9%	5%	5%	4%
Specialist Pigs	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Specialist Poultry	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Dairy	2%	7%	2%	4%	5%	5%
Grazing Livestock (LFA)	6%	8%	0%	0%	6%	6%
Grazing Livestock (lowland)	19%	18%	21%	23%	18%	16%
Mixed	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	4%
Other	41%	44%	45%	48%	45%	45%

Farm Incomes

To understand how farming contributes to the economy, Defra undertakes a Farm Business Survey to ascertain what income is generated from farms across England. This gives a breakdown of business farm income by farm type. The latest data is shown in an article in the August 2009 Quarterly Economic Report (QER), available on the Herefordshire Partnership QER page.

Crop areas

In 2008 41% of Herefordshire's agricultural land area was used for crops and bare fallow, the second largest type of agricultural land use in Herefordshire, after permanent grassland.

Within this category there are many different types of crops farmed in Herefordshire. Table 4 shows the area farmed for each type of crop in 2008 and previous years to show how the amount of land devoted to different crops has changed over the last few years.

Table 4. Comparison of amount of crop area (hectares) in Herefordshire over a seven-year period

Crop	2008	2007	2001	% cropped land	Overall change 2001-2008
Wheat	30,688	25,850	22,968	41%	↑
Winter Barley	4,465	4,149	6,223	6%	↓
Spring Barley	3,000	2,541	4,812	4%	↓
Oats	5,401	5,202	4,834	7%	↑
Other Cereals	546	529	317	1%	↑
Total Cereals	44,101	38,271	39,153	60%	↑
Potatoes	5,923	6,050	6,239	8%	↓
Sugar Beet	903	1,076	1,736	1%	↓
Field Beans	1,468	1,562	3,860	2%	↓
Peas for harvesting dry	770	806	1,687	1%	↓
Oilseed Rape	7,005	6,655	4,109	9%	↑
Linseed	23	---	90	0*%	↓
Root Crops, brassicas, fodder beet	1,143	1,081	412	2%	↑
Other crops for stockfeed	251	304	741	0*%	↓
Maize	3,345	3,182	2,757	5%	↑
Other arable crops	829	869	962	1%	↓
Bare fallow/GAEC 12 land ⁴	2,087	1,977	494	3%	↑
Total peas & Beans	79	50	37	0*%	↑
All other veg & salad	371	307	322	1%	↑
Total veg grown in open¹	450	356	359	1%	↑
Under glass or plastic	60	49	18	0*%	↑
Top fruit*	4,186	3,960	4,835	6%	↓
Small fruit**	1,376	1,151	840	2%	↑
Total fruit²	5,561	5,111	5,674	8%	↓
Hardy nursery stock	142	143	244	0*%	↓
Bulbs & flowers	9	20	23	0*%	↓
Total Horticulture	6,223	5,679	6,317	8%	↓
Total crop area³	74,072	67,512	68,557	100%	↑

Note:

¹ 'Total veg grown in open' is sum of 'Total peas and beans' and 'All other veg & salad'.

² 'Total fruit is sum of 'Top fruit' and 'Small fruit'

³ 'Total crop area' excludes suppressed data

⁴ GAEC 12 is land which is not in agricultural production and is one of the Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) land requirements under the single payment scheme. This covers land that was previously set-aside.

* Top fruit refers to fruit grown in orchards

** Small fruit includes strawberries, raspberries, blackcurrants, gooseberries, blackberries, wine grapes and other small fruit)

0*% indicates values that are less than 0.5% that have been rounded to zero. This is done to differentiate between low values and zero values.

↑ Increase in farmed area ↓ Decrease in farmed area

Excluding figures for the categories that are suppressed, 60% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land was used for cereals, in 2008. In fact the total area of land used for cropping cereals increased by 15% between 2007 and 2008. Out of the cereals, 'wheat', accounted for the single largest proportion (41%) of total land used for cropping. The total cropping area for 'wheat' increased considerably between 2007 and 2008 (19%).

Out of the other cereals 'oats' and 'winter barley' accounted for the next greatest proportions, 7% and 6% respectively. 'Winter barley' and 'spring barley', although seeing an increase between 2007 and 2008 in line with the other cereals, have shown a general trend of decrease in cropping area since 2001, decreasing by 28% and 38% respectively. 'Spring barley' accounted for 4% of the total cropping area in 2008. The 'other cereals' accounted for 1% of total land area in 2008.

After 'wheat', 'oilseed rape' accounted for the largest proportion of cropping area, 9% in 2008. The crop also showed a marked increase in area over the reporting period, 70% between 2001 and 2008. This proportion remained lower than most other areas, e.g. 15% in Gloucestershire, 13% across England, 11% in the West Midlands region and Worcestershire but the same as in Shropshire (9%).

The area of land used for potatoes in Herefordshire decreased by 2% between 2007 and 2008 and by 5% since 2001. In 2008 8% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land was used for potatoes, much higher than neighbouring authorities (between 1% and 4%), the West Midlands (4%) and England (3%).

Maize also accounted for a significant proportion of cropping land in Herefordshire, 5% in 2008. The crop also saw a general increase, 21% on 2001.

Since 2001, the area of land left as 'bare fallow' has seen a large increase (from 494 ha in 2001 to 2,087 ha in 2008, a 323% increase) however, this still only accounted for 3% of Herefordshire's agricultural cropping land used in 2008. Both regionally and nationally, bare fallow accounted for 4%.

The proportion of crop area in Herefordshire used for horticulture was 8% (6,223 ha) in 2008, a 10% increase on 2007, bringing it to similar levels to that seen in 2001 (6,317). Comparatively 4% of land regionally and nationally was used for horticulture, and 8% in Worcestershire.

Since 2005 the total area used for producing top fruit (orchard crops such as apples and pears) in Herefordshire increased by 10% (6% between 2007 and 2008). Prior to 2005 top fruit had seen an overall decline of 19% since 2001. Herefordshire maintains a larger proportion of land (6%) for top fruit than regional and national proportions (both 1%) as well as all of the neighbouring authorities (between 0% and 4%).

The area of land used for small fruit (such as strawberries, blackberries and wine grapes) has seen a large increase since 2001 (68%), resulting in Herefordshire having 2% of agricultural cropping land used for small fruits in 2008, compared to 1% regionally and less than 1% nationally.

Whilst the area 'under glass or plastic' occupied a small proportion of the cropping area in 2008 (less than 1%), there has been a large increase (233%) over the period 2001 to 2008. The proportion in 2008 was greater than that for the West Midlands region and England as a whole. Out of the neighbouring authorities only Worcestershire had a greater proportion.

Livestock

In the 2007 Census, Defra made some significant changes to way it reports on livestock numbers. The most significant change was to their methodology for collecting data for cattle. Previously data was derived from questions within the survey but from 2007 Defra started using the Cattle Tracing System (CTS) to ascertain stock numbers. The CTS is a computer based system to register cattle in Great Britain, and is the fourth element in a comprehensive system of cattle identification and registration. Data relating to where cattle are kept is recorded by the Government so that the animals can be traced for a variety of reasons, including animal disease. This change in methodology is in order to try and reduce the burden on farmers completing the questionnaire. However, this also means that this data is no longer comparable with previous years.

Table 5. Livestock numbers by stock type, 2004-2008

	Livestock numbers			
	2004	2007	2008	% change 2007-2008
Dairy	#	24,507	23,995	-2%
Beef	#	100,277	97,135	-3%
Cattle under 1 year	#	35,613	33,556	-6%
Total Cattle	#	124,784	121,130	-3%
Breeding pigs	2,680	3,035	2,555	-16%
Other pigs	26,334	29,927	28,888	-3%
Total pigs	28,504	32,962	31,443	-5%
Breeding ewes	325,155	293,542	291,390	-1%
Rams ¹		7,007	6,801	-3%
Lambs under 1 year	325,965	320,678	313,400	-2%
Other sheep	17,352	15,371	12,614	-18%
Total sheep	660,589	636,598	624,204	-2%
Goats	1,692	1,494	1,665	+11%
Horses ¹		4,409	4,232	-4%
Total livestock (numbers)*	827,081	800,247	782,675	-2%
Total fowl	---	7,944,710	8,438,589	+6%
Total duck	---	20,403	6,548	-68%
Total geese	---	1,410	1,390	-1%
Turkey		192,589	341,482	+77%
All other birds		63,961	130,133	+103%
Total Poultry¹		8,223,072	8,918,143	+8%

Note:

Data not comparable. New methodology from 2007 using the Cattle Tracing System
1 Category not previously reported
* Excludes poultry
--- Data suppressed by Defra

Data for the number of holdings on which different types of livestock are farmed was not made available from the 2008 census. Data relating to the number of holdings in the following section is taken from 2007.

Out of all livestock, sheep were farmed on the greatest number of holdings within Herefordshire in 2007, 1,860 out of 5,149 (36%). This proportion was high compared to regionally and nationally, where only 27% and 23% of farm holdings were used for sheep farming respectively. The total number of sheep on farms in Herefordshire in 2008 was 624,204, a 2% reduction on the number in 2007 and a 6% reduction on 2004. The average herd size in 2007 for Herefordshire

was 342, greater than for all other areas (England, the West Midlands and neighbouring authorities) except Shropshire (365).

Cattle were farmed on 1,301 holdings (25%) in Herefordshire in 2007. This was the same proportion as seen nationally but lower than in the West Midlands region (27%) and Shropshire (31%). In 2008 the total number of cattle was 121,130 a 3% reduction on 2007. The average cattle herd size for Herefordshire was 96 in 2007. This was smaller than for all other areas apart from Worcestershire (82). The national average was 106.

Table 6. Average herd/flock size for all areas, 2007.

	Cattle	Pigs	Sheep	Goats	Horses	Fowls	Total Poultry
England	106	283	323	13	7	3546	3317
West Midlands Region	102	166	306	14	6	3772	3469
Herefordshire, County of	96	119	342	15	5	8936	8245
Worcestershire	82	165	272	8	6	2295	2189
Shropshire	119	208	365	10	6	4208	3905
Gloucestershire	108	81	248	36	7	3451	3073

Fowl (chicken) were farmed on 17% of farm holdings in 2007. In 2008 there was a total of 8,438,589 fowl farmed in Herefordshire a 6% increase on the number in 2007, but a 1% reduction on the number in 2005. The average size of fowl farms in Herefordshire was significantly greater than all other areas in 2007, with average flock size being 8,936 compared to 4,208 in Shropshire and 3,546 nationally. This is likely to reflect a number of very large installations in Herefordshire.

Ducks and geese were kept on 4% and 3% of farms respectively in 2007, slightly lower proportions than in other areas. Between 2007 and 2008 there was a large reduction in the number of ducks in Herefordshire (68%). This was in contrast to the increase of 435% seen between 2005 and 2007.

Horses were kept on 18% of farms in Herefordshire but the total number of horses was only 4,409 in 2007. In 2008 this number had reduced by 4% to 4,232.

Pigs were farmed on 5% of all holdings in Herefordshire in 2007. In 2008 31,443 pigs were farmed in Herefordshire a 5% reduction on the number in 2007, but still 10% more than in 2004. The average herd size in 2007 was 119, low compared to all other areas except Gloucestershire, with England having an average herd size of 283.

Goats were kept on 2% (99) of holdings in 2007.

For further information on the data in this article, please contact the Research Team on 01432 260 893, or e-mail researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk

OR for a copy of the full national report go to <http://www.defra.gov.uk>