

Farms become fewer and larger

The number of active Danish farms is steadily falling. The size of the remaining farms is increasing, while small family holdings are disappearing. Despite this development, agriculture is still an important factor in the Danish economy.

Danish agriculture is moving towards fewer and larger farms. Since 1970, the number of farms of less than 50 hectares has been reduced from 140,000 to 29,000, while the number of farms of more than 50 hectares has increased from 9,000 to 17,000.

There is a trend towards increased large-scale farming and closure of what may be called "family farms". The most important reason for this is that the development of improved and larger machinery, such as feeding systems and milking robots, has made larger farms possible, while it has been difficult to render small family farms profitable.

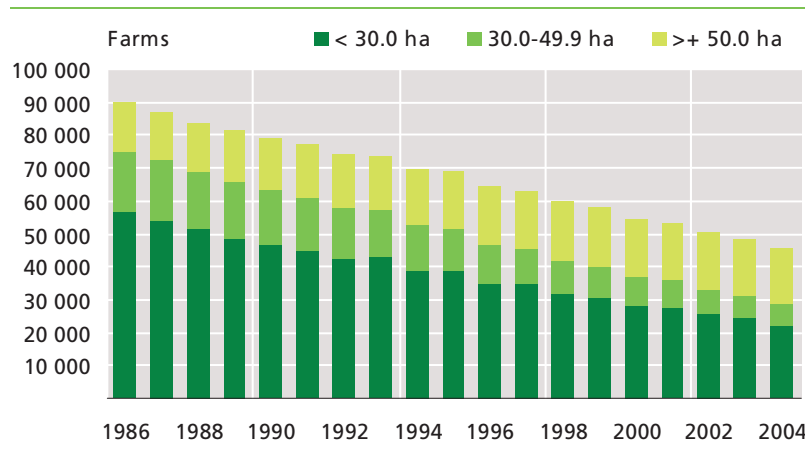
Despite great changes, Danish agriculture still plays an important part of the national economy. Agricultural products constitute 11 per cent of total exports with pork as the most important product.

••• DID YOU KNOW THAT

Danish fields and barns are the home of 13 million pigs. Three-fourths of the pigs are kept in Jutland, while the remaining number is distributed equally between Funen, Zealand and other islands. •••

Certified organic farming is a relatively new phenomenon in Denmark. From 1990 to 2000, the number of organic farms increased from 523 to 3,478. Since then, the number of organic farms has decreased. However, the organic area has remained the same from 2000 to 2004.

NUMBER OF FARMS BY AREA



KEY INDICATORS OF DANISH AGRICULTURE

	Unit	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004
Farms, total	<i>number</i>	148 512	119 155	79 338	54 541	45 624
0.00-19.9	<i>ha</i>	95 739	67 034	32 969	21 391	16 878
20.0-49.9		44 084	40 356	30 355	15 548	11 864
50.0-99.0		7 078	9 616	12 287	10 891	9 040
100.0+		1 611	2 149	3 726	6 711	7 843
Agricultural area, total	<i>1 000 ha</i>	2 941	2 905	2 788	2 647	2 645
Organic farms	<i>number</i>	0	0	523	3 478	3 270*
Organic arable land	<i>ha</i>	0	0	12	166	166*
Degree of specialization						
No cattle or pigs	<i>per cent</i>	11	25	35	42	46
Pigs, no cattle		16	24	19	16	15
Cattle, no pigs		5	18	28	34	32
Cattle and pigs		68	33	18	8	6
Production of pork	<i>mio. kg.</i>	771	1 026	1 260	1 748	1 967
Of which exports	<i>per cent</i>	76.0	68.9	71.1	86.0	87.9

* 2003-figures.