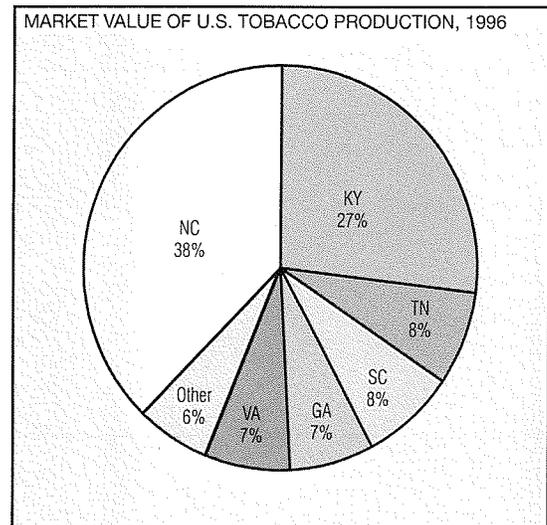
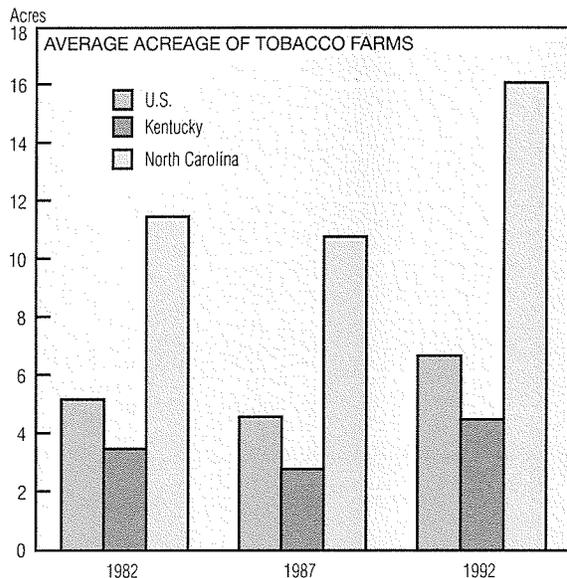
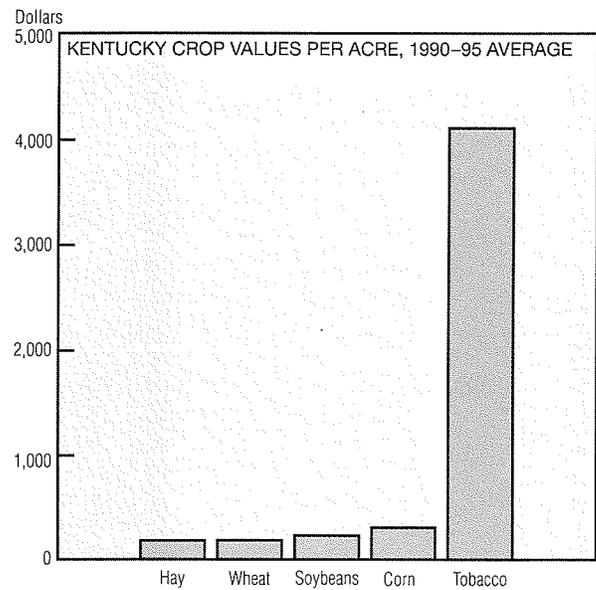
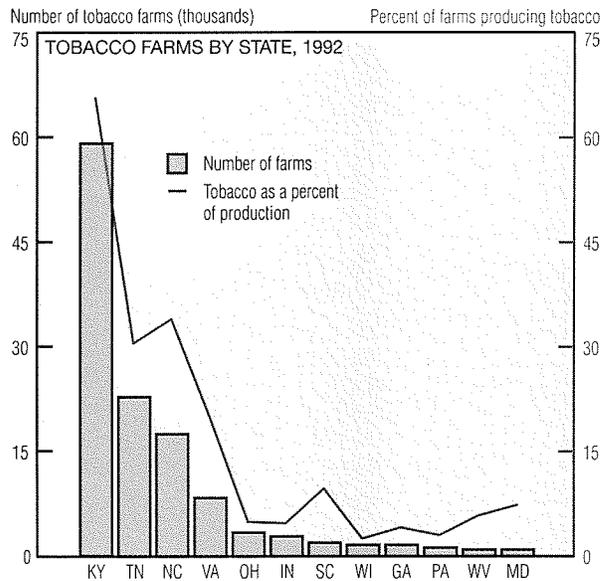


Kentucky Tobacco Farming



SOURCES: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; and Will Snell and Stephan Goetz, "Overview of Kentucky's Tobacco Economy," University of Kentucky, Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, June 1997.

Tobacco is nothing to sneeze at in Kentucky, which is home to half of the nation's 124,270 tobacco farms. In fact, 66% of Kentucky's farmers grow tobacco, making the state's agricultural economy the most tobacco dependent in the Union.

Tobacco production accounts for about 50% of the state's crop receipts and 25% of its agricultural cash. An acre of tobacco averages

\$4,000 in gross returns to the Kentucky farmer, far surpassing returns on the state's other traditional crops. Several counties derive more than 10% of their total personal income from tobacco farming.

Historically, tobacco farms are small-scale operations. In 1992, the median size of a U.S. tobacco farm was 6.7 acres, versus the national average for all crops of 491 acres per

farm. In North Carolina, the nation's top tobacco producer, farms planted in this crop average 16.1 acres, nearly four times the 4.2-acre average of Kentucky's tobacco farms. This size difference can be attributed to Kentucky's topographic limitations and its labor-intensive methods. North Carolina's vast, capital-intensive tobacco farms give it an edge over Kentucky in total output.