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**(S.D.)-Report Says Number Of S.D. Farms Increase, But Shrink In Size**



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/21/2014 08:26 AM

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (ASSOCIATED PRESS)** - A new federal report shows South Dakota saw a minor increase in its number of farms during the last five years, while the size of the average farm shrank slightly.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture released the Census of Agriculture Thursday. It is based on 2012 data.

The report states the average number of farms in South Dakota in 2012 was 31,898. That's up 3 percent from the 2007 census.

But the average size of a farm at 1,352 acres is smaller compared to the previous census. That's down 3 percent or about 49 acres smaller than the average in 2007.

The service portrays the average South Dakota farmer as 56 years old.

The census is issued every five years. It's used in evaluating and implementing agriculture policies and programs.