



Country of private forests

Finland is the most densely forested country in Europe. About 23 million hectares (76 %) of the land area is covered by forests. The majority of which is used in timber production among other objectives. Private individuals and families are the largest group of forest owners with about 60 % of all forests. There are 346,400 forest estates of at least two hectares in private ownership, with a total of 630,000 forest owners.

The average size of a forest estate in private ownership is 30 hectares. The average age of forest owners is over 60 and an increasing number of forest owners will live in towns and cities in future..

Finnish forests are a significant source of various timber products, ecosystem services, energy and recreation. The everyman's right of access means that

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everyone is entitled to enjoy the bounties of nature, including picking of wild berries and mushrooms, even in privately owned forests.

Forests grow at a clearly higher rate than they are cut. The growing stock volume of the forests has been increasing since the 1970s. The annual growth is in excess of 100 million cubic metres, which exceeds the drain by 30 %.

55 million cubic metres of forest is felled in Finland annually for the requirements of forest industry, and the forest sector produces 3.6 % of Finland's gross national product. The forest sector accounts for more than 20 % of Finland's exports. Timber and forests also have a very important role in energy and climate objectives because forests bind a lot of carbon. Forestry and forest industries employed 65,000 persons in 2014.

90 % of Finnish forests are PEFC certified, which is proof of good forest management and the sustainable origin of timber as raw material. In addition to forest certification, the diversity of commercial forests is supported by the Forest Biodiversity Programme (METSU), which is based on the voluntary conservation of private forests.



MTK is the union and interest group for farmers, forest owners and rural entrepreneurs. MTK strives to ensure diverse, sustainable and economically profitable agricultural and forestry production in Finland. MTK has 341 000 members.

Agriculture and Forestry in Finland

Finland is the world's northernmost agricultural country and most densely forested country in Europe. We have 53 000 farms and 346 000 private forest estates. How do we manage sustainable agriculture and forestry under our subarctic conditions?



Metsänomistajat



Advocacy for rural development in Finland

Finland is the world's northernmost agricultural country. Finnish farmlands reach from the 60th latitude to north of the Arctic Circle. Although the growing season is short, Finland has good possibilities to produce tasty food with high food safety.

Finland has ample fresh air and clean water. Our sparsely populated country has little traffic and thus also low volumes of emissions from traffic jams. The hard frosts control plant diseases and kill pests, and that is why our pesticide use is lower than in rest of Europe.

We maintain the knowhow in arctic agriculture in Finland. We have bred varieties that do well in our cool and light summers. They manage to ripen during the short growing season. As an example, Finnish grain is in demand worldwide, thanks to its special characteristics and quality. Finland is one of the biggest producers and exporters of oats in the world.

We take good care of our livestock and production environment. We know how to keep animal diseases at bay. In Finland, antibiotics are used only to sick animals, not as a precaution. Finnish dairy, egg and meat products are free of salmonella. In Finland piglets keep their tails and hens and broilers their beaks. Our methods of producing food is a model for the whole globe.



Agriculture in Finland

- Finland has 53,000 farms with an average arable area of 43 hectares. Of these, 8 % are organic farms.
- Dairy farming is the largest agricultural sector in terms of turnover. The agricultural sales revenue total was EUR 2.5 billion, of which milk accounts for 42 %.
- As land use grain production is the largest sector in Finland. Next come production of other crops and grassland.
- The share of agriculture (including food industry) of the Finnish GNP was EUR 6.1 bill. (3.5 %) in 2013.
- The share of forestry (including secondary production) of the Finnish GNP was EUR 6.2 billion (3.6 %) in 2013.

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Finland is a key player in global oats market

- One-third of all farms have secondary lines of business, 20,000 having diversified. The most common are machine contracting, services, and accommodation and recreational activities.
- Almost 90 per cent of Finnish farms belong to an official agri-environmental programme.
- The average age of farmers is rising. It is currently 49 years.
- Agriculture and horticulture provide employment for 151,000 people. The food sector employs 300,000 people, from production input industry to retailing.
- On the southwestern coast, the growing season can exceed 185 days, but in northernmost Lapland it is less than 105 days. The average temperature for the whole year varies in Finland between +5°C in the warm areas and -2°C in the cold areas. The growing season starts in April-May and ends in August-October. July is the warmest month, and January-February are the coldest.
- In Southern Finland, the grazing season of cows lasts four to five months, in the north three to four.

Source: Luke 2014, Statistics Finland