



# Nevada's Agricultural Footprint

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# Eating is an agricultural act – Wendell Berry

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- What we eat clearly and directly affects our health
- Obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other diet related health problems increased after major agricultural policy changes



# Changes in American Ag Policy

- Farmers no longer compensated for fallowing fields
- Encouraged to grow fencerow to fencerow
- Switched from growing a variety of crops to commodity crops

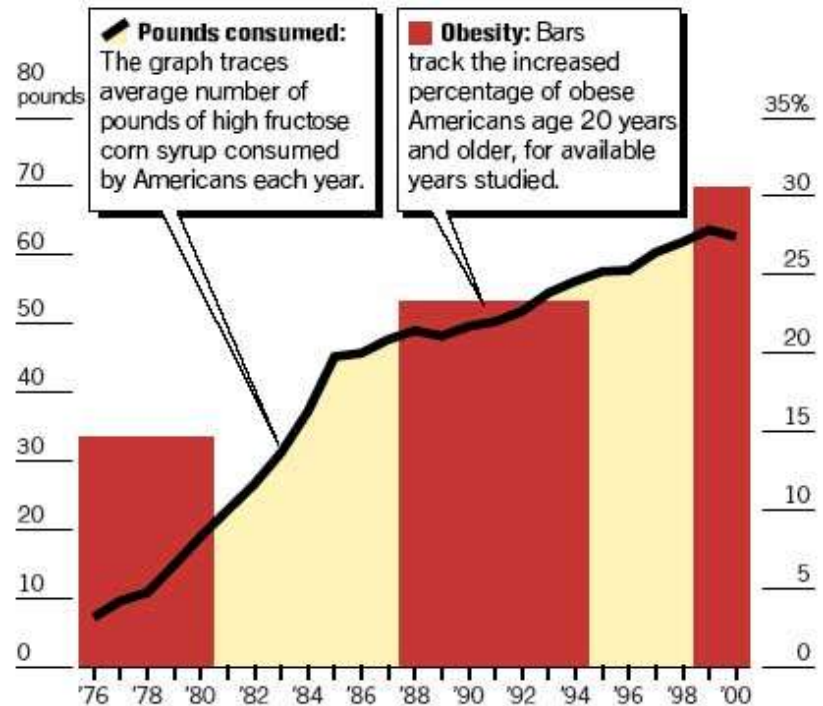


# Changes in American Ag Policy

- Created a calorie surplus
- Had to discover unique ways to encourage Americans to eat more calories

## Obesity and high fructose corn syrup

The number of Americans who are obese has quadrupled in recent years, a study shows. At the same time, high fructose corn syrup consumption has risen at parallel rates.

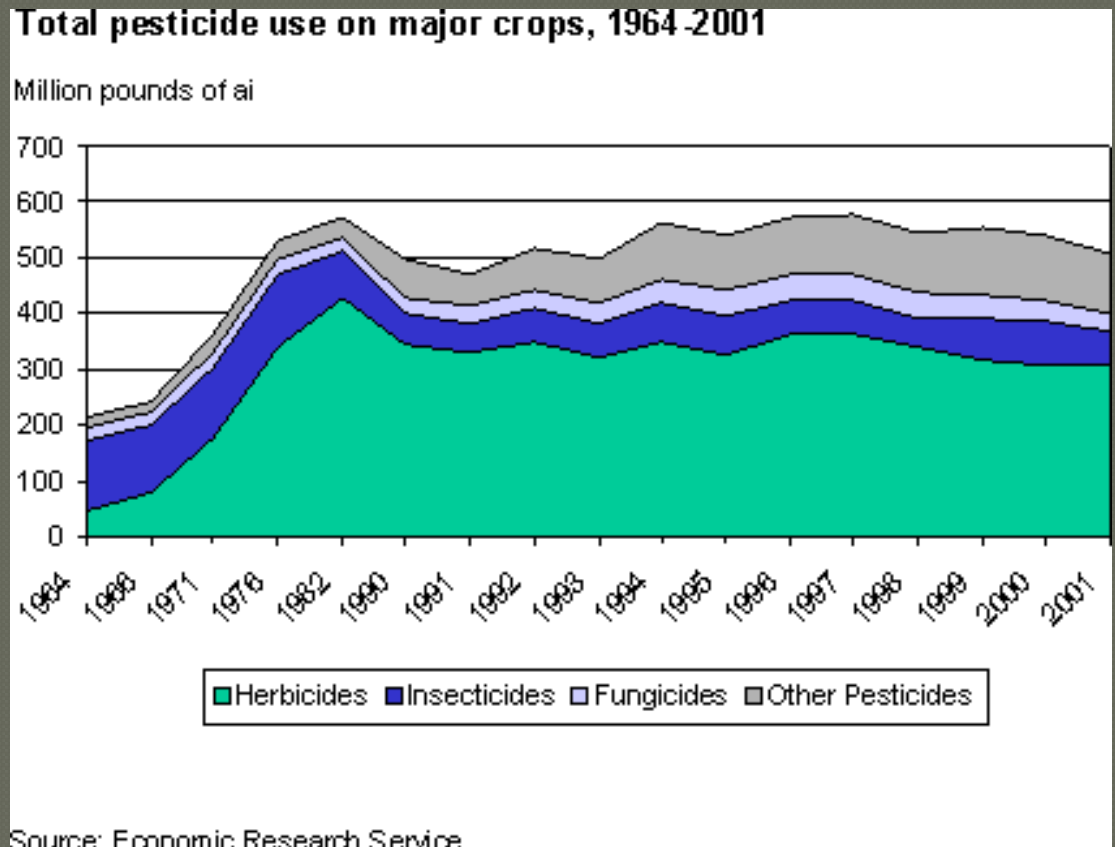


Source: Centers for Disease Control, American Obesity Association, Chronicle research

Chronicle Graphic

# Changes in American Ag Policy

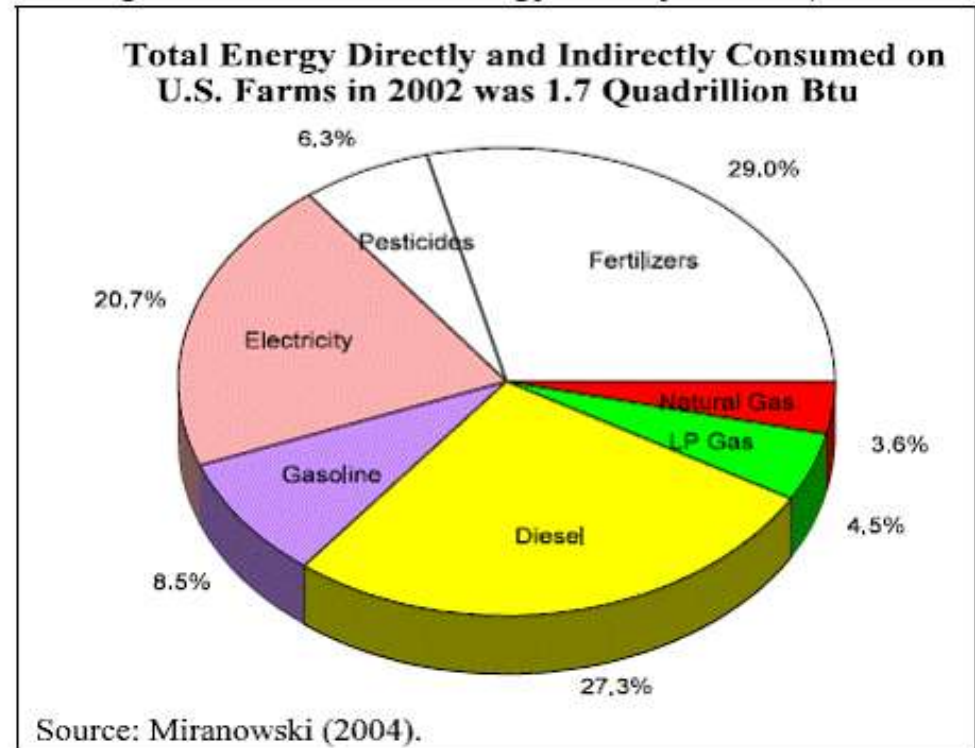
- New farming practices created serious environmental problems
- Use of synthetic chemicals impacts environment and human health



# Conventional Agriculture

- Typical meal averages 1500 miles from farm to plate
- One-third of US fossil fuel energy consumption is used by the industrial food system
- Each US citizen consumes 400 gallons of oil per year

Figure 2. U.S. Farm Energy Use by Source, 2002



# Conventional Agriculture

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- ◉ Farm subsidies for commodity crops
- ◉ 75% of subsidies go to 10% of growers
- ◉ 70% of subsidies are for corn and soybeans



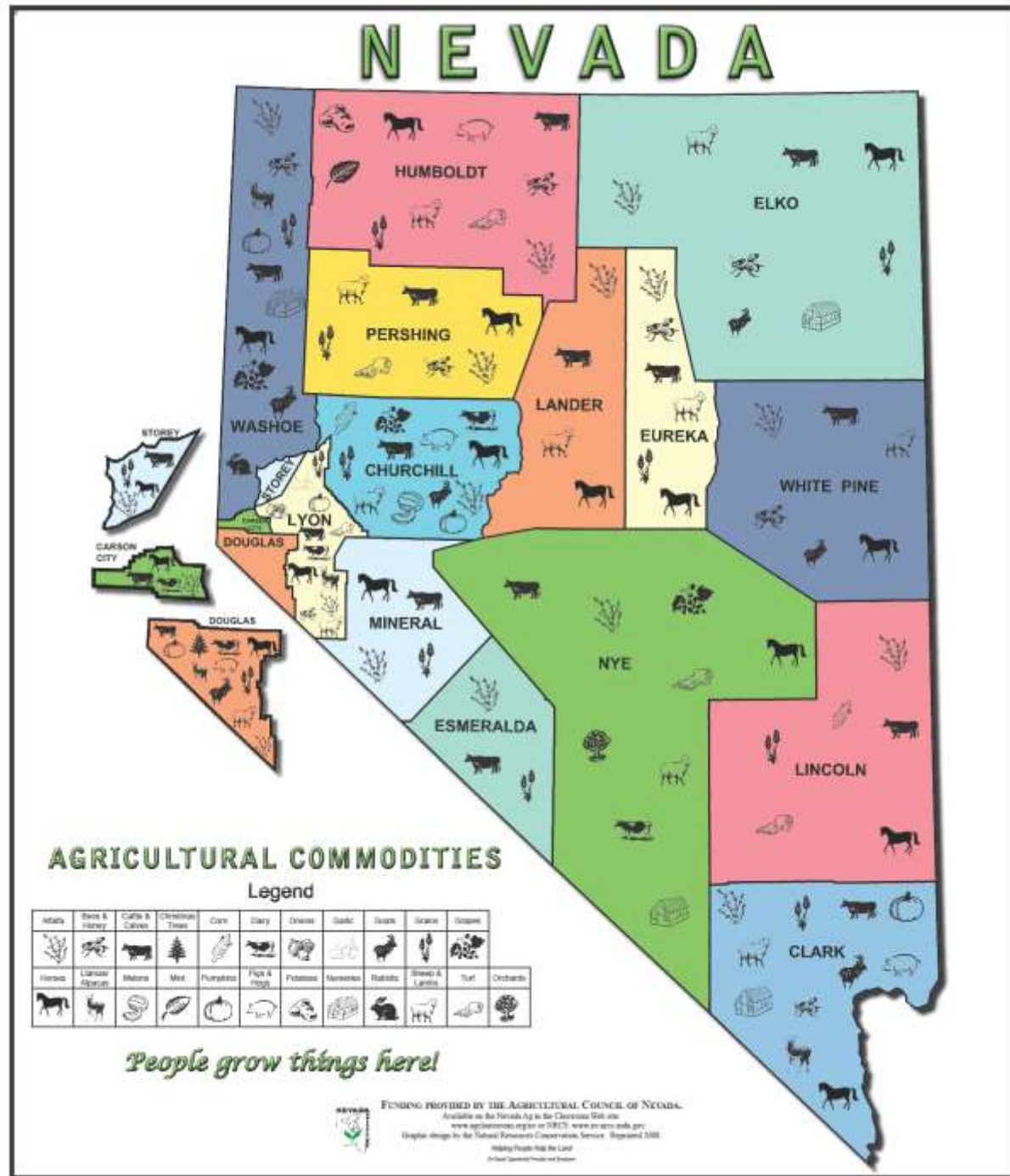
# Conventional Agriculture

- Fed to animals living in confined feeding operations (CAFO)
- Corn and soybeans are used for processed food



# Nevada Agriculture

- 87% is federally owned
- 9% is farmland
- 78.6% of this farmland is pasture or range
- 14.9% of this farmland is crops or “real food”



# Nevada Agriculture

- Top five ag products are cattle, calves, hay, dairy, onions, potatoes
- Hay is primarily alfalfa



# Nevada Agriculture

- Alfalfa requires lots of water
- Alfalfa hay is exported to feed meat and dairy cattle
- Farmers are barely breaking even with alfalfa



# Nevada Agriculture

- Onions and potatoes grown conventionally
- Mostly exported
- Difficult to purchase in local markets
- Specialty crops – crops people consume (tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce, fruit, etc.)
  - Grown by only a handful of farmers



# Nevada Agriculture

- Specialty crops require less water than alfalfa
- Grapes require 1/10 the water of alfalfa



# What Are Our Options?

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Recent research funded by  
United Health Care concluded  
that eating primarily from  
**foodshed**  
could improve the American diet

# Foodshed

- Regional food system
- Seasonal eating
- Often lacks infrastructure
- People unaware of local food options



# Community Supported Agriculture

- Subscription farming
- 10 CSA enterprises in Northern Nevada!
- Provide local, seasonal food for about 350 families
- Average cost is \$27 per week



# Farmers' Markets

- Markets in Reno and Sparks doubled this year
- Many markets accept senior nutrition coupons
- Not yet set-up for WIC EBT



# Urban Agriculture

- Community Gardens
- School Gardens
- Urban Farms
- Home gardens











