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Texas Farmers Aging

SAN ANTONIO (AP) - Farming and ranching is attracting fewer young people, leaving policymakers worried on expanding the nation's food supply.

Texas Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples says that attracting young people into domestic food and fiber production "is vital for any Texan who does not want to be dependent on foreign food."

The average Texas farmer's age in the 2007 agricultural census was almost 59. The San Antonio Express-News (<http://bit.ly/LXsdh7>) reports the only state with older farmers and ranchers was New Mexico, where the age averaged 59.6.

The census showed 914 principal farmers in Texas were younger than 25, less than half from five years earlier. The largest category was Texas farmers 70 and older at 57,227.

Those numbers were tallied before the epic drought of 2011.

Associated Press