



SYSTEM DIMENSIONS	CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL	BIOLOGICAL COMPONENTS	HUMAN USES
Extent Pattern	Nutrients, Carbon, Oxygen Contaminants Physical	Plants and Animals Communities Ecological Productivity	Food, Fiber, and Water Recreation and Other Services

② Status of Animal Species in Farmland Areas

What Is This Indicator, and Why Is It Important? This indicator would report on the status of wildlife in farmland areas.

Farmlands—including both croplands and the patches of natural lands that are intermingled with them—are home to many kinds of wildlife. Some species would be found in the forests, grasslands, or shrublands from which the farmlands were created. Such species may find fewer habitat opportunities in farmland areas, but may take advantage of remaining patches of habitat (see p. 94) and remain in the area, but at low population levels. However, there are many species that favor the kinds of conditions found in areas with extensive farmlands, and these species are often more common than they were before conversion to agriculture.

Status of Animal Species in Farmland Areas

Indicator Development Needed

Why Can't This Indicator be Reported at this Time? An index is needed that that would account for both types of species found on farmlands—those that favor the pre-agricultural landscape and those that favor landscapes dominated by agriculture. This approach must necessarily differ from that taken in reporting on marine, forest, grassland and shrubland, and freshwater species (see pp. 75, 124, 144, and 168), because it is not possible to define a set of “farmland” species in the same way that one can identify species that have evolved to depend on these other ecosystem types.

The technical note for this indicator is on page 237.