

The Fourth of July 2012

On this day in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress, setting the 13 colonies on the road to freedom as a sovereign nation. As always, this most American of holidays will be marked by parades, fireworks and backyard barbecues across the country.

How Do We Know?

As we celebrate this Independence Day, we reflect on how our Founding Fathers enshrined the importance of statistics in our Constitution as a vital tool for measuring our people, places and economy. Since 1790, the U.S. Census has been much more than a simple head count; it has charted the growth and composition of our nation. The questions have evolved over time to address our changing needs. Today, the Decennial Census, the Economic Census and the American Community Survey give Congress and community leaders the information they need to make informed decisions that shape our democracy. These statistics are how we know how our country is doing.

This summer, the Census Bureau will launch more infographics and interactive features that will provide a look at "How Do We Know?" Visit <http://www.census.gov/how> to view today's infographic and to learn more about "How Do We Know?" Follow @uscensusbureau on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube and Pinterest (#HowDoWeKnow) for updates.

2.5 million

In July 1776, the estimated number of people living in the newly independent nation.

Source: [*Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*](#)

313.9 million

The nation's estimated population on this July Fourth.

Source: [Population clock](#)

Flags

\$3.6 million

In 2011, the dollar value of U.S. imports of American flags. The vast majority of this amount (\$3.3 million) was for U.S. flags made in China.

Source: [Foreign Trade Statistics](#)

\$663,071

Dollar value of U.S. flags exported in 2011. Mexico was the leading customer, purchasing \$80,349 worth.

Source: [Foreign Trade Statistics](#)

\$302.7 million

Dollar value of shipments of fabricated flags, banners and similar emblems by the nation's manufacturers in 2007, according to the latest published economic census statistics.

Source: [2007 Economic Census, Series EC0731SP1, Products and Services Code 3149998231](#)

Fireworks

\$223.6 million

The value of fireworks imported from China in 2011, representing the bulk of all U.S. fireworks imported (\$232.5 million). U.S. exports of fireworks, by comparison, came to just \$15.8 million in 2011, with Australia purchasing more than any other country (\$4.5 million).

\$231.8 million

The value of U.S. manufacturers' shipments of fireworks and pyrotechnics (including flares, igniters, etc.) in 2007.

Source: [2007 Economic Census, Series EC0731SP1, Products and Services Code 325998J108](#)

Patriotic-Sounding Place Names

Thirty-one places have "liberty" in their names. The most populous one as of April 1, 2010, was Liberty, Mo. (29,149). Iowa, with four, has more of these places than any other state: Libertyville, New Liberty, North Liberty and West Liberty.

Thirty-five places have "eagle" in their names. The most populous one is Eagle Pass, Texas, with a population of 26,248.

Eleven places have "independence" in their names. The most populous one is Independence, Mo., with a population of 116,830.

Nine places have "freedom" in their names. The most populous one is New Freedom, Pa., with a population of 4,464.

One place has "patriot" in its name. Patriot, Ind., has a population of 209.

Five places have "America" in their names. The most populous is American Fork, Utah, with a population of 26,263.

Source: [American FactFinder](#)

Early Presidential Last Names

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Ranking of the frequency of the surname of our first president, George Washington, among all last names tabulated in the 2000 Census. Other early presidential names that appear on the list, along with their ranking, were Adams (39), Jefferson (594), Madison (1,209) and Monroe (567).

Source: Census 2000 Genealogy <<http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/freqnames2k.html>>

The British are Coming!

\$107.1 billion

Dollar value of trade last year between the United States and the United Kingdom, making the British, our adversary in 1776, our sixth-leading trading partner today.

Source: [Foreign Trade Statistics](#)

Fourth of July Cookouts

Almost 1 in 3

The chance that the hot dogs and pork sausages consumed on the Fourth of July originated in Iowa. The Hawkeye State was home to 19.7 million hogs and pigs on March 1, 2012. This estimate represents almost one-third of the nation's estimated total. North Carolina (8.6 million) and Minnesota (7.6 million) were also homes to large numbers of pigs.

Source: [USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)

7.2 billion pounds

Total production of cattle and calves in Texas in 2011. Chances are good that the beef hot dogs, steaks and burgers on your backyard grill came from the Lone Star State, which accounted for about one-sixth of the nation's total production. And if the beef did not come from Texas, it very well may have come from Nebraska (4.6 billion pounds) or Kansas (4.0 billion pounds).

Source: [USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)

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Number of states in which the value of broiler chicken production was estimated at \$1 billion or greater between December 2010 and November 2011. There is a good chance that one of these states — Georgia, Arkansas, North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi or Texas — is the source of your barbecued chicken.

Source: [USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)

Please Pass the Potato

Potato salad and potato chips are popular food items at Fourth of July barbecues. Approximately half of the nation's spuds were produced in Idaho or Washington state in 2011.

Source: [USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service](#)

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day
Super Bowl	Grandparents Day
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/	Halloween (Oct. 31)
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	(November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	Thanksgiving Day
Mother's Day	The Holiday Season (December)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	
Father's Day	
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: [301-763-3030](tel:301-763-3030); fax: [301-763-3762](tel:301-763-3762); or e-mail: pio@census.gov.