Map 3: 1993 Metropolitan Status for Counties in New York State

Legend:
- GT 1 Million
- 500,000 - 1 Million
- 250,000 - 499,999
- LT 250,000
- Adjacent Nonmet
- Nonadjacent Nonmet
Like the rest of the nation, the proportion of the New York State population living in metropolitan areas has increased since 1950. Unlike the nation as a whole, metropolitan population growth in New York has leveled off since about 1970. The slight increase in metropolitan population since 1980 appears to be the result of the spatial expansion of metropolitan areas at the expense of the nonmetropolitan.
Population density trends in New York's metropolitan areas are very similar to those of the nation as a whole. Like the Northeast Region, New York's population density is much higher than that of the U.S. In fact, population density in New York has historically been and continues to be higher than that of the Northeast as a whole. Of course, these figures are dominated by New York City which is the dominant urban center not only of New York State, but the entire region.

Population densities in New York State's largest metropolitan areas (those with more than one million inhabitants) declined since 1970, but did not decline below levels recorded in 1950. This trend is very similar to that found in the region's largest metropolitan areas. Smaller metropolitan areas in New York showed no decline in population density.
Perhaps most striking, when comparing New York State with the rest of the nation, was the decline in population density in those nonmetropolitan counties not adjacent to metropolitan areas. These trends show long term population loss in the most rural and economically disadvantaged part of New York -- Franklin County.
Metropolitan areas cover almost one-half of New York State's land base. There has been a steady growth in the amount of land within metropolitan areas since about 1960, a pattern similar to the Northeast.
While a large proportion of farms in New York State have been located in metropolitan areas for several decades, a majority were first found in these areas in 1997. As elsewhere, farm numbers have dropped due to the reorganization of the industry, but a steady population of farms in metropolitan areas of New York State has been maintained as these areas expanded spatially.

The amount of farmland found in metropolitan areas has held steady since 1960. With steady declines in farmland located in nonmetropolitan areas, more than half of this land was found in metropolitan areas by 1997. As elsewhere, metropolitan areas have recouped the loss of farmland to urban uses by adding to the overall land base.
Trends in average farm size mirror those of the Northeast. For New York State the average nonmetropolitan farm size was greater than in metropolitan areas throughout the period. The average farm size in the State has grown at about the same rate in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas.
In New York State the concentration of farms in metropolitan areas is even more pronounced than that in the Northeast. For all size classes, one-half or more of the farms are found in the largest metropolitan areas. Also distinctive is the extremely small proportion of New York State farms located in nonadjacent nonmetropolitan counties -- no more than two percent in any size class.
The majority of fruit and nut, greenhouse, vegetable and melon, and crop farms are found in metropolitan areas of New York State. As elsewhere, the largest metropolitan areas of New York account for the highest proportion of fruit and nut, greenhouse, and vegetable and melon farms. Like the Northeast, New York's crop and animal farms are more likely than other farm types to be found in nonmetropolitan areas. However, the largest proportion of these farms are found in nonmetropolitan counties adjacent to metropolitan areas. New York State is also like the Northeast in the very small proportion of any type of farm located in nonmetropolitan areas most remote from metropolitan centers.
The distribution of farms by sales classification in New York State is similar to that of the Northeast. A slightly higher proportion of farms with sales of more than $500,000 is found in the largest metropolitan areas in New York compared with the Northeast. Also a slightly higher proportion of farms with sales less than $250,000 are found in nonmetropolitan counties adjacent to metropolitan areas in New York State relative to the Northeast.
The majority of farms are found in New York State's metropolitan areas regardless of tenure class. Within metropolitan areas, the largest proportions of farms in any tenure class were found in metropolitan areas with more than 500,000 inhabitants. Larger proportions of farmland were operated by part owners and tenants than full owners in metropolitan areas. Within metropolitan areas, the highest proportion of farmland was located in those areas with populations of more than 500,000, regardless of tenure class.
Sixty percent of New York farms with direct sales are located in metropolitan areas, and they account for about seventy percent of all sales. Farms located in metropolitan areas account for a slightly lower proportion of all direct sales than is true for the Northeast (70 vs. 82 percent). Nevertheless, the patterns are similar. Direct sales make up less than two percent of total sales in New York State (about $39 million), they offer a largely untapped market potential.
Figure 40
Farms with Workers and Farmworkers, by Metropolitan Status, New York State, 1997

Like the Northeast, almost three-fifths of New York State farms with workers and more than three-fifths of farmworkers are located in metropolitan areas. About one-fifth of all farms with workers are found in the largest metropolitan areas, those with populations of more than one million, and they employ a disproportionate share of the farmworkers. More than one-third of all farmworkers are located in these areas. Again, these statistics reflect the labor intensive nature of agriculture found in metropolitan areas.
The trends for New York State are more similar to those of the Northeast than those of the nation overall. Like the Northeast, metropolitan areas in New York capture a greater proportion of the payroll than nonmetropolitan areas, and nonadjacent nonmetropolitan areas have a negligible percent of the total payroll. However, there are striking differences between New York State and the Northeast in general. Nonmetropolitan counties that are adjacent to metropolitan counties are responsible for a much higher proportion of the total payroll for the State than for the Northeast. In New York, the highest proportion of payroll in 1987 and 1992 was located in the second largest metropolitan counties — those with populations between 500,000 and one million — until 1997, when the largest areas capture the highest proportion.