



Harry L. Berry  
County Judge/Executive

# Hardin County Counts Its Blessings

Hardin County residents have much to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. We are blessed to live, work, and raise our families here in Hardin County. Your county government's vision is to be the *Commonwealth's Premier County*.

Hardin County Government maximizes all available resources to provide well-planned, adequately resourced and professionally executed public programs, infrastructure, and services to you.

We provide you with numerous services including an Animal Shelter, E-911 Dispatch Center, Emergency Medical services, Emergency Management services, Engineering and GIS services, Recycling and Solid Waste Collection, Code Enforcement, and Road Maintenance.

The county also provides financial support for the County Jail, County Library, County Clerk, County Sheriff, County Coroner, PVA, and Planning and Development.

## People

Visitors to our community comment on the friendliness of our people. They often describe us as generous, family oriented, hard-working, civic-minded, and helpful people. Visitors are surprised to observe we speak to strangers, acknowledge those who walk near us, and in the rural areas, even wave to strangers!

## Location

Our county encompasses 623.28 square miles with a population of approximately 107,316 or 169 people per square mile.<sup>4</sup> We sit in the heart of the Eastern United States providing us with a centralized location for business growth. Our central location and access to transportation is a key to our development. An excellent transportation infrastructure with I-65 going north and south and the Bluegrass and Western Kentucky Parkways running east and west blesses are community. The CSX and the P & L rail lines serve us as well. This transportation system allows greater access to major markets.

## Agriculture

Kentucky is the largest cattle producing state east of the Mississippi River. Hardin County ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in beef production and is home to over 21,700 head on an average farm size of 150 acres.<sup>3</sup> Farm employment represents 2,178 people or 3.8% of our workforce.<sup>2</sup>

Hardin County has 1,357 farms with 202,070 acres used for farm operations. Corn, soybean, and wheat production encompass most of these areas. Total crop sales equal \$40.7 million with animal sales exceeding \$17.2 million<sup>2</sup>

## Cost of Living

Hardin County offers the most diverse and affordable housing in the state. Low taxes, utility rates, and health-care costs contribute to an overall cost of living well below the national average. The county features some of the lowest utility rates in the nation.<sup>1</sup>

## Health Care

Hardin Memorial Health is a comprehensive health care system devoted to the region. The HMM system includes a 300-bed acute care hospital and more than 45 additional locations providing primary as well as specialty care by more than 230 "best-in-class" physicians.

## Economic Development

Agriculture, manufacturing, services, and government employment are the largest sectors of our local economy. Our local Industrial Foundation, Chamber Commerce, and other business/civic development organizations work endlessly growing our local economy.

Our workforce is highly trained and productive. With a civilian labor force of 45,138, our unemployment rate hovers below the national average. We have a well-established business base with companies from Asia, Europe, and Mexico locating here.

The Fort Knox Community plays a significant role in our local economy providing employment, business opportunities, and tax revenues to our county.

## Higher Education

Elizabethtown Community and Technical College provides accessible and affordable education and training through academic and technical associate degrees.

Western Kentucky University offers 45-degree programs at its Elizabethtown and Fort Knox campuses.

McKendree University offers one associate degree program, nine bachelor degree programs and four master degree programs at their Radcliff campus.

Fort Knox Army Continuing Education Center offers higher education degree programs through Central Texas College, Sullivan University, University of Louisville, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, and Western Kentucky University.

## Recreation

Numerous parks, walking trails, and golf courses are found in Hardin County. Youth sporting events along with community festivals and parades are always popular events during the spring, summer, and fall months.

The Hardin County History Museum along with other smaller museums demonstrate the community's pride in its history. Genealogical records back to 1793 are available in our county.

We share a love for the arts with the Hardin County Performing Arts Center, the Historic State Theater, and the Hardin County Playhouse entertaining us.

Restaurants abound in our community and serve as gathering places to catch up with old friends or make new ones.

<sup>1</sup>Elizabethtown/Hardin County, Kentucky Overview; published by the Elizabethtown Hardin County Industrial Foundation 2017

<sup>2</sup>Hardin County Agricultural Development Council, County Comprehensive Plan, May 2015

<sup>3</sup>Hardin County Beef Cattlemen Association 2017

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Census estimates 2017