



## Rural and Forest Land Price Indicators: Vol. 2, No. 3, Q3, 2009

*Trends in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont*

Table 1. Federal Housing Finance Agency House Price Index.

| Region        | Q3 2008 | Q4 2008 | Q1 2009 | Q2 2009 | Q3 2009 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Maine         | 493.0   | 491.2   | 496.8   | 485.9   | 477.3   |
| New Hampshire | 460.9   | 462.9   | 465.0   | 451.6   | 437.0   |
| Vermont       | 460.8   | 461.0   | 462.9   | 456.2   | 453.9   |
| United States | 364.8   | 365.0   | 367.5   | 358.6   | 350.0   |

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency

Note: 1980:Q1 = 100. Includes purchases and refinances.

*Table 1. This index shows the downward slide in house prices. No good news in this backward looking data.*

Table 2. Federal Housing Finance Agency, Housing Price Indicator, Rural Index

| Region        | Q3 2008 | Q4 2008 | Q1 2009 | Q2 2009 | Q3 2009 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Maine         | 201.8   | 200.5   | 202.2   | 200.6   | 196.9   |
| New Hampshire | 234.1   | 234.1   | 237.8   | 229.9   | 223.0   |
| Vermont       | 213.6   | 214.1   | 214.8   | 211.8   | 209.6   |

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency

Note: 1995:Q1 = 100. Rural index has larger standard errors due to fewer observations.

Only includes housing outside of Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

*Table 2. Rural homes have lost value in all three states.*

Table 3. Conventional Mortgage Home Price Index.

| Region        | Q3 2008 | Q4 2008 | Q1 2009 | Q2 2009 | Q3 2009 |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Maine         | 287.5   | 286.7   | 288.8   | 282.6   | 279.3   |
| New Hampshire | 207.3   | 207.6   | 208.6   | 202.2   | 196.8   |
| Vermont       | 288.6   | 288.7   | 288.8   | 284.4   | 283.8   |
| United States | 280.4   | 279.9   | 282.6   | 275.1   | 269.4   |

Source: Freddie Mac

Note: 1987:Q1 = 100.

*Table 3. The conventional mortgage home price also indicates housing price declines. Vermont has generally experienced the lowest level of decline by this index.*



Table 4. Total Single Unit Housing Permits Authorized, Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted.

| Region        | Jun-08 | Sep-08 | Dec-08 | Mar-09 | Jun-09 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Maine         | 197    | 263    | 161    | 167    | 193    |
| New Hampshire | 198    | 180    | 94     | 96     | 126    |
| Vermont       | 99     | 106    | 113    | 45     | 64     |
| United States | 51,000 | 44,000 | 31,000 | 30,000 | 36,000 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Federal Reserve Bank of Boston

*Table 4. Single unit housing permits declined steadily, but began to rebound in June 2009. However, levels were still lower than June 2008.*

Table 5. Selected Maine Timber Prices (Sawlogs in US\$ per MBF)

| Product         | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Hemlock         | 63   | 64   | 63   | 70   | 69   |
| Red Oak         | 304  | 278  | 227  | 229  | 222  |
| Red/White Maple | 121  | 110  | 115  | 112  | 117  |
| Spruce & Fir    | 129  | 145  | 135  | 126  | 125  |
| Sugar Maple     | 247  | 275  | 263  | 222  | 213  |
| White Pine      | 170  | 175  | 182  | 175  | 167  |

Source: Maine Forest Service

*Table 5. This data is released once a year, and usually after July 1<sup>st</sup>. The 2008 data captures both stronger fall 2008 prices and weaker spring 2009 prices.*

Table 6. Selected Maine Timber Prices (Pulpwood in US\$ per ton)

| Product        | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Aspen/Poplar   | 9    | 8    | 7    | 8    | 11   |
| Hemlock        | 5    | 7    | 6    | 6    | 7    |
| Mixed Hardwood | 6    | 6    | 5    | 5    | 9    |
| Spruce & Fir   | 10   | 9    | 9    | 9    | 11   |
| White Pine     | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 5    |

Source: Maine Forest Service

*Table 6. This data is released once a year, and usually after July 1<sup>st</sup>. The 2008 data captures very strong fall 2008 prices and very weak spring 2009 prices. A weakness in this dataset is that it includes responses over an entire year, rather than providing quarterly information.*

Table 7. Biomass (price per ton in US\$)

| State | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Maine | 1.36 | 1.63 | 1.92 | 2.24 | 2.54 |

Source: Maine Forest Service

*Table 7. The numbers show a double digit percentage increase in prices each year.*



Table 8. Farm Real Estate: Average Value Per Acre (US\$).

| Region        | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Maine         | 1,990 | 2,110 | 2,230 | 2,200 | 2,100 |
| New Hampshire | 3,780 | 4,240 | 4,800 | 4,900 | 4,800 |
| Vermont       | 2,320 | 2,480 | 2,740 | 2,900 | 2,800 |
| United States | 1,610 | 1,830 | 2,010 | 2,170 | 2,100 |

Source: USDA, NASS. Note: United States excludes Alaska and Hawaii.

*Table 8. Agricultural land values have fallen in 2009, reflecting weakness in land markets and the overall economy.*

Table 9. Maple Syrup (average gallon equivalent price of all sales in US\$)

| Region        | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Maine         | 19.40 | 21.50 | 24.30 | 30.10 | 36.80 |
| New Hampshire | 35.40 | 41.30 | 43.90 | 46.80 | 52.30 |
| Vermont       | 27.30 | 27.80 | 30.20 | 29.10 | 39.20 |
| United States | 28.40 | 29.90 | 31.30 | 33.20 | 40.50 |

Source: New England Agricultural Statistics, USDA

*Table 9. Despite an increase in US maple syrup production by roughly 30% in 2008, prices have increased.*

Table 10. Construction Sand and Gravel (US\$ value per metric ton)

| State         | 2003                | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|---------------|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Maine         | 4.58 <sup>(a)</sup> | 4.52 | 5.16 | 5.98 | 7.63 |
| New Hampshire | 4.82                | 5.21 | 5.64 | 6.48 | 6.17 |
| Vermont       | 4.51 <sup>(a)</sup> | 4.82 | 6.11 | 6.42 | 6.65 |

Source: USGS

*Table 10. Sand and gravel prices increased in Maine and Vermont in 2007, and decreased in New Hampshire. The impact of the financial crisis does not show in this data. Prices are expected to decline in 2008.*

Table 11. Wild Blueberries (price per pound in US\$)

| State | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Maine | 0.46 | 0.66 | 0.81 | 1.07 | 0.61 |

Source: New England Agricultural Statistics

*Table 11. Prices declined considerably in 2008. This was particularly true of processed blueberries. The price decline has been attributed to the poor economy and a 19 percent increase in production over 2007.*



Table 12. Apples (US\$ price per bushel)

| State         | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Maine         | 13.44 | 14.32 | 17.60 | 17.18 | 21.00 |
| New Hampshire | 12.64 | 13.02 | 14.78 | 14.95 | 17.93 |
| Vermont       | 9.45  | 12.77 | 13.27 | 13.94 | 19.99 |

Source: New England Agricultural Statistics

*Table 12. Prices have generally increased in each state in each of the past five years. The increases in 2008 were notable, because they occurred despite an increase in apple production.*

Table 13. Carbon Dioxide Emissions Allowances (permit to emit one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> in US\$)

| Allocation Year | 12/17/2008 | 3/18/2009 | 6/17/2009 | 9/9/2009 | 12/2/2009 |
|-----------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 2009            | 3.38       | 3.51      | 3.23      | 2.19     | 2.05      |
| 2012            |            | 3.05      | 2.06      | 1.87     | 1.86      |

Source: Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Inc.

Note: Auction results.

*Table 13. The RGGI auctions appear to have worked well, with a substantial level of bidding. Prices for carbon dioxide emissions allowances have declined over the last four auctions.*

#### General Notes:

This data was selected to provide insight into rural and natural resource land prices. It is produced quarterly. The data are collected from a variety of documents and is subject to revision. The information is believed to be accurate, but it is not guaranteed to be correct or suitable for any particular purpose. Some sources report estimates or preliminary results, and the data is revised with some frequency. Corrections and suggestions for additional data are cheerfully accepted.

#### Sources:

Federal Reserve Bank of Boston  
 Freddie Mac  
 Maine Forest Service  
 New England Agricultural Statistics, USDA  
 Federal Housing Finance Agency  
 Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Inc.  
 USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service  
 US Geological Survey

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