



# Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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## Halloween in Pennsylvania - October 31, 2010

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – The occurrence of Halloween, which dates back to Celtic rituals performed thousands of years ago, has long been associated with thoughts of witches, ghosts, devils, and other creatures of the night. In the United States, the first recorded instance of Halloween festivities occurred in Anoka, Minnesota in 1921. However, Allentown, Pennsylvania's annual Halloween parade, rumored to be the nation's first, dates to 1905. While the customs and rituals associated with All-Hallows Eve have changed dramatically over the years, Halloween has grown to one of the most popular and widely celebrated holidays in the United States.

### “Trick or Treat!”

An estimated 1.5 million Pennsylvanians – ages 5 to 14 – were potential “trick-or-treaters” in 2009, down 173,667 since 2000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 Population Estimates. The highest proportion of this age group was located in Chester County (13.7 percent), while the lowest was in Forest County (6.1 percent). The commonwealth's 5.5 million housing units rank it 5<sup>th</sup> among the states, and offer plenty of possible stops for “trick-or-treat” participants.

The commonwealth ranks 42<sup>nd</sup> among the states and the District of Columbia in proportion of the population ages 5 to 14 to the total population (12.0 percent).

### More Scares!

For many trick-or-treating will provide plenty of fright, but others may turn to horror movies to boost the thrills. In 2007, Pennsylvania's movie and film production industries had 1,841 total establishments, which employed 8,749 individuals, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2007 Economic Census. Several scary movies have been filmed in Pennsylvania, including *Night of the Living Dead*, *Silence of the Lambs*, and most recently— *Signs*, which depicted an extra terrestrial invasion of a Bucks County farmhouse.

In 1965, Pennsylvania was the site of a mysterious UFO episode dubbed “Pennsylvania's Roswell,” due to its similarities to the infamous Roswell UFO incident in New Mexico. Eyewitness in the small village of Kecksburg, Pennsylvania reported seeing a brilliant fireball enter the skies to the west shortly before hearing a thunderous crash in the nearby woods. The crash site was immediately secured by the U.S. Army, who, despite claims from local residents, later declared that nothing was found in the area. To this day, the mystery continues to intrigue alien enthusiasts and conspiracy theorist alike.

## Pumpkins Galore

Pumpkin carving is a popular part of a modern Halloween celebration. Luckily, Pennsylvanians don't need to search too far to find the perfect pumpkin for their jack-o'-lanterns. Pennsylvania is one of the top 5 pumpkin-growing states in the nation and produced more than 81.9 million pounds of pumpkins in 2009. The value of Pennsylvania's pumpkin crop was \$12.7 million (see Figure 1). Ohio lead all states in 2009 with \$22.5 million in pumpkin crop value; the remaining states in the top 5 include New York (\$21.8 million), California (\$20.6 million) and Illinois (\$14.9 million).

## Candy and Costumes

A fully loaded candy bowl will need to be on hand for this year's celebration. Americans consumed about 24.3 pounds of candy per capita in 2009, and it is believed that children consume much of this around Halloween.

In Pennsylvania, the production of chocolate, cocoa, and other candy products is an important part of the manufacturing industry. According to the 2007 Economic Census, the commonwealth was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in number of chocolate and cocoa product manufacturing establishments (121). These businesses employed 8,590 people. An additional 27 establishments employed 1,395 workers in the manufacture of nonchocolate confectionary products. Overall, Pennsylvania's sugar and confectionary industry shipped nearly 5 billion dollars in goods in 2007.

Costume shops can also look forward to a boost in business around Halloween. In 2007, 81 formal wear and costume rental establishments in Pennsylvania employed 448 people and grossed 38.8 million dollars. An additional 32 non-employer formal wear and costume rental establishments earned just over \$1.7 million.

Figure 1. Value of Pumpkin Production, 2009		
State Rank	State	Value of Production (dollars)
1	Ohio	\$ 22,513,000
2	New York	\$ 21,750,000
3	California	\$ 20,558,000
4	Illinois	\$ 14,896,000
5	Pennsylvania	\$ 12,695,000

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates, 2009; Economic Census, 2007; U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's National State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.

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