The maps and tables in this publication were prepared using PCensus 7.06 for MapInfo and MapInfo Professional 7.0.
Lawrence County is located in South Central Indiana. It is bordered by the following counties: Monroe to the north, Jackson to the east, Washington to the southeast, Orange to the south, Martin to the west, and Greene to the northeast. U.S. Highway 50 and Interstate Highways 37 and 58 cross the county. Elevation is 500-800 feet. The terrain is nearly flat in the vicinity of the East Fork of the White River water system. There are moderately steep slopes in the central region and very steep slopes along most of the county’s borders. The landscape features oak and hickory trees. Most of the county pertains to the Highland Rim and Pennyroyal land resource area. But some areas in the west and east pertain to the Kentucky and Indiana Sandstone and Shale Hills and Valleys land resource area.

Lawrence county is in the Eastern Time Zone and observes DST. Average daily temperatures are 19°/38° in January and 63°/87° in July. Annual precipitation is about 43 and snowfall about 16 inches. The first freeze of the season typically occurs sometime between October 10-20, but the date of the last freeze varies depending upon whether you are in the southern part of the county (April 25-30) or the north (April 20-25). The growing season lasts about 163-183 days.

Agricultural activity is focused on corn for grain and livestock. About half of the land is farmland, and about a third of that is in cash crops. Sweet corn is an important vegetable. Tobacco is a special crop. Livestock include cattle/calves and hogs/pigs. Natural resources include cement, crushed stone, petroleum, common clay, dimension limestone, and forestland. Water resources include Ken-Ray Lake, Spring Mill Park Lake, William Slough; and the East Fork of the White River.

Communities include the cities of Bedford (the county seat) and Mitchell; and the town of Oolitic.
3. Location and Historical Notes

Lawrence County Tobacco Production & Revenue:

Source: the Strategic Development Group’s “Alternative Agricultural Strategy” (Bloomington, March 15, 2001) report, which is part of Governor Joseph E. Kernan’s “Recipient Final Reports for Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture Grant Programs” (http://www.in.gov/oca/grants/valueadd/VAFinalReports.html):

According to the above-named source, Lawrence County is 16th in the State in acres (63) devoted to tobacco production and ranked 21st for the number of farms (8) producing tobacco. Lawrence ranked 23rd in the percentage of farms (0.9%) producing tobacco. Lawrence ranked 5th for tobacco income as a percent of average household income for the county; average tobacco income for each farm producing tobacco ($20,959) represented 58.3% of the figure for average household income ($35,933) in the county that year (1997).

Latest figures (from 1997 USDA Census):
- Rank for acres in tobacco production: 16th
- Acres in tobacco production: 63
- Number of farms producing tobacco: 8
- As a Percent of all farms: 0.9%
- Rank in IN for percent of all farms: 23rd
- Tobacco income per farm producing: $20,959
- Percent of County’s Ave. Household Income: 58.3%

[See appendices for more information.]

Famous Sons and Daughters of Lawrence County:

Virgil “Gus” Grissom (1926-1966, astronaut on the second manned Mercury space flight, was officially the second American to go into space. He flew a Gemini spacecraft in 1965 and was the first person to make two space flights. His death came in the tragic explosion of the Apollo I, which he was commanding. Two other Hoosiers, Ed White and Roger Chafee, both Purdue graduates, died in the same incident.