

# Emery County Agriculture Profile

## Emery County

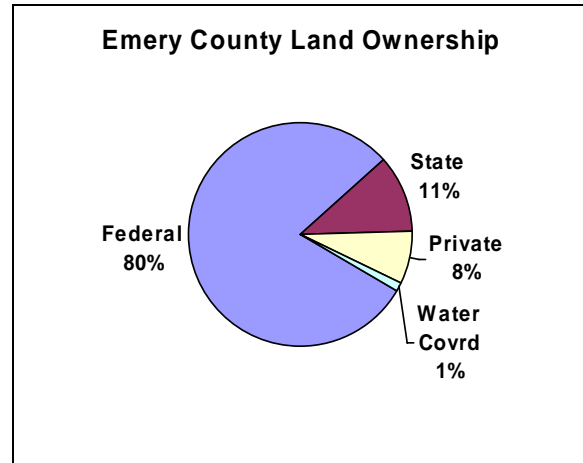
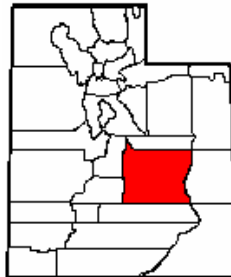
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Area: 4,452 square miles  
(2,849,280 acres)

Population: 10,651  
(U.S. Census Bureau  
Estimate, 2003)

County seat: Castle Dale



Source: (Utah County Fact Book, 2002)

## Description

Emery County in southeastern Utah is bordered on the north by Carbon County, on the west by the Wasatch Plateau, on the south by the remote artificial boundary with Wayne County, and on the east by the Green River—the natural boundary with Grand County.

Emery County includes three geographical areas: the mountains of the Wasatch Plateau; Castle Valley, where the major settlements are located; and the desert of the San Rafael Swell, the San Rafael Reef, Cedar Mountain, and the remote stretches of land west of the Green River. Emery County's economy is electric power generating, coal mining, and livestock.

## Land Ownership

The land ownership within the county is divided as follows:

The majority of the federally-owned ground is under the jurisdiction of the US Forest Service (USFS) and the by Bureau of Land Management (BLM). A small portion is part of a national park. The state owned ground is wildlife preserves with a sizable portion under the jurisdiction of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA). The private ground is primarily farm ground and grazing areas.

The 1997 Census of Agriculture indicated that there were 158,798 acres in farms or ranches with an average size of 353 acres. The 2002 Census listed the average value at \$861 per acre. The county had 57,900 acres in cropland of which 17,208 acres were harvested and 33,099 were irrigated. The value of livestock and crops produced was listed at \$11,400,000.

## Agricultural Snapshot

The major crops grown in Emery County with 2004 yields and total acres harvested were (see following page):

2004 Primary Crops	Yields	Total harvested acres	Average yield/acre
All alfalfa hay	53,000 tons	15,500	3.4 tons
Other hay	6,000 tons	3,000	2.0 tons
Corn silage	6,500 tons	400	16 tons
Corn grain	66,000 bu	500	132 bu

Typical ground preparation for planting alfalfa ground is begun by plowing the ground and then disking. The ground is then land planed and planted. The procedure is the same for planting small grains and corn.

The most prevalent crop rotation that producers practice is to leave alfalfa in for seven years, plant oats for two to three years and then replant alfalfa. Producers typically get three cuttings of alfalfa each year. In Emery County about half of the alfalfa producers bale with a one-ton baler and the other half use a small baler.

There are two main agriculture areas in Emery County. One of the areas is thirty miles northeast of Castle Dale and the other is in the eastern part of the county along the Green River.

Emery County has watermelon growers along the Green River. The watermelon is marketed all over the western United States.

The majority (about 80%) of the irrigation water available in Emery County is from reservoirs. Joes Valley, Cleveland, Huntington, and Mill site are the major reservoirs. The other 20% is drawn from the Green River. The majority of the farmers use

flood irrigation. Sprinkler systems are slowly becoming more prevalent in the county.

## Growing Season

The growing season in Emery County averages four months. Following are some of the details on climatology in three areas of Emery County.

Emery County locations	Climate Characteristics			
	Annul Precip.	Last spring freeze	First fall freeze	Frost-free period
Castle Dale	6.29 in	May 21	Sept. 23	126 days
Emery 15 SW	14.67 in	June 19	Sept. 14	87 days
Green River Aviation	7.66 in	May 2	Oct. 4	157 days

The major classes of livestock produced in the county along with their associated inventories as of January 2004 were:

Livestock Type	Number of Head
All Cattle & Calves	26,000
Beef Cows	15,500
Sheep & Lambs	2,400

For more information visit these Web sites:

<http://utahreach.org/emery/visitor/about.htm>

<http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/htmlfiles/ut/ut.ppt.html>

<http://climate.usu.edu/utahclim/freeze/default.htm>

<http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/summary/listut.html>

[http://www.utahweather.org/UWC/utahs\\_climate/climate\\_of\\_utah.html](http://www.utahweather.org/UWC/utahs_climate/climate_of_utah.html)

<http://biology.usgs.gov/s+t/SNT/noframe/gb150.htm>

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