

Cache County Agriculture Profile

Economics Department

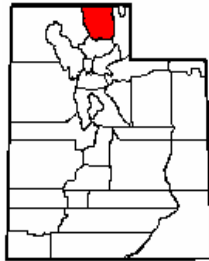
Cache County

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Area: 1,165 square miles
 (745,600 acres)

Population: 95,664
 (U.S. Census Bureau
 Estimate, 2003)



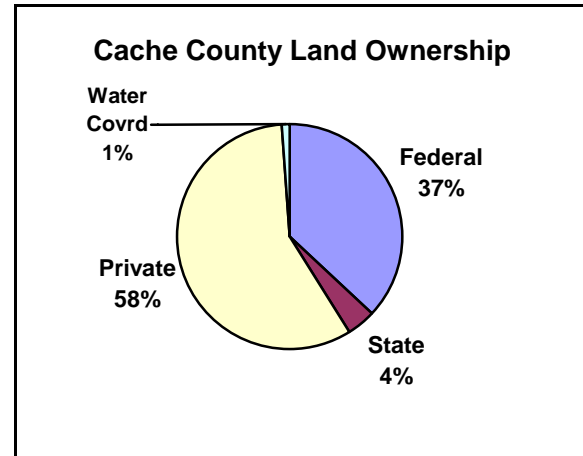
County seat: Logan

Location

Cache County is located in northern Utah and shares its northern border with Idaho. Agriculture plays a large part in the county's economy since it ranks as one of the highest contributors of agricultural products in the state. It contributes beef, milk, and cheese products from various production and processing facilities. Cache County is the home of Utah State University which is the state's land-grant university and also the largest employer in the area.

Land Ownership

The land ownership within the county is divided as follows:



Source: (Utah County Fact Book, 2002)

Almost all of the federally owned ground, about 81%, is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The state owned ground is under the jurisdiction of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA) and the Utah State Wildlife Reserves. The private ground is primarily residential living space, farmland and grazing areas.

The 2002 Census of Agriculture indicated that there were 246,586 acres in farms or ranches in the county with an average size of 207 acres and an average value of \$1878 per acre. The county had 145,751 acres in cropland of which 105,203 were harvested and 83,945 were irrigated. The value of livestock produced was listed at \$96,600,000.

Agricultural Snapshot

Cache County is one of the primary agricultural production regions in the state. In 2003 county production statistics (2004 Utah Agricultural Statistics), it led the state in barley production. The county was

second in the production of the following commodities: Winter wheat, spring wheat, dry beans, corn for silage, and apples. It ranked third in production of alfalfa hay.

The county has the second largest inventory of cattle and calves and has the largest number of milk cows. Cache County was ranked fifth in total cash receipts and third in livestock cash receipts and crops cash receipts according to data published in the 2004 Utah Department of Food and Agriculture Annual Report.

The major crops grown in Cache County with 2004 yields and total acres harvested were:

2004 Primary Crops	Countywide Yields	Total harvested acres	Average yield/acre
All alfalfa hay	192,000 tons	54,000	3.6 tons
Other hay	24,000 tons	8,500	2.8 tons
Corn for silage	122,000 tons	5,300	23 tons
Corn for grain	115,000 tons	700	164 bu
Barley	873,500 bu	9,600	91 bu
Oats	45,900 bu	600	77 bu
All wheat	631,000 bu	7,400	85 bu

The most prevalent method of crop rotation that producers practice is to leave alfalfa in for four to five years, after which it will be plowed up and corn silage will be planted for two years. The rotation will finish by planting some type of small grains for a year before replanting alfalfa. Producers typically get three cuttings of alfalfa each year.

Much of the dryland grain in the county is planted utilizing no-till drilling systems. Typical preparation for planting irrigated grain is done by moldboard plowing ground removed from the production of alfalfa. The land is then disced and harrowed before drilling. Land-leveling is often done before alfalfa is replanted to provide a smooth and level surface. About 87% of wheat planted is winter wheat and 13% is spring wheat.

About 85% of all seed is purchased locally while the remaining 15% is bought in neighboring counties. About 99% of all fertilizer, pesticides, etc. is bought within the county. The majority of the farming within the county is done in the northern end near the Idaho border, the west central part of the valley and the extreme southern end. The majority of all grazing in the county is done in the south end of the valley.

Cache County producers raise various alternate crops. There is some canola raised for oil and some farms raise edible dry beans for human consumption. An increasing number of farmers are growing safflower because the majority of its water requirements occur early in the season when there is more water available. After water dependent stage, the crop needs very little water to mature.

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

Livestock Type	Number of Head
All Cattle & Calves	72,000
Beef Cows	9,000
Dairy Cows	19,400
Sheep & Lambs	3,700

There is also a substantial mink-raising industry in Cache County. Some 68,000 pelts were harvested in 2003.

About 75% of the irrigation water available in Cache County is from river water and runoff. The rivers most used for irrigation include the Cub, Logan, and Blacksmith Fork. Reservoirs in the area contribute another 15% while deep wells provide the remaining 10% of needed irrigation water.

Growing Season

The growing season in Cache County averages about 4-5 months. The table gives information about climatic conditions at selected locations in the county:

Cache	Climate Characteristics			
	County locations	Annual Precip.	Last spring freeze	First fall freeze
Logan USU	17.58 inches	May 6	Oct. 10	159 days
Logan Radio KVNU	16.47 inches	May 15	Sept. 27	135 days
Lewiston	17.35 inches	May 25	Sept. 15	113 days

For more information visit these Web sites:

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

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

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

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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