

# Salt Lake County Agriculture Profile

Economics Department

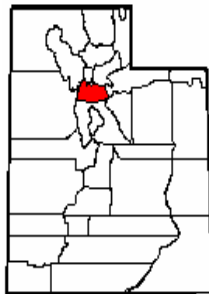
**Salt Lake County**

AG/Econ/county-2005-21

E. Bruce Godfrey, Extension Specialist  
 Earl Jackson, Salt Lake County Agent  
 Dale Baker and Spencer Parkinson,  
 Research Assistants

Area: 737 square miles  
 (471,680 acres)

Population: 924,247  
 (U.S. Census Bureau  
 Estimate, 2003)



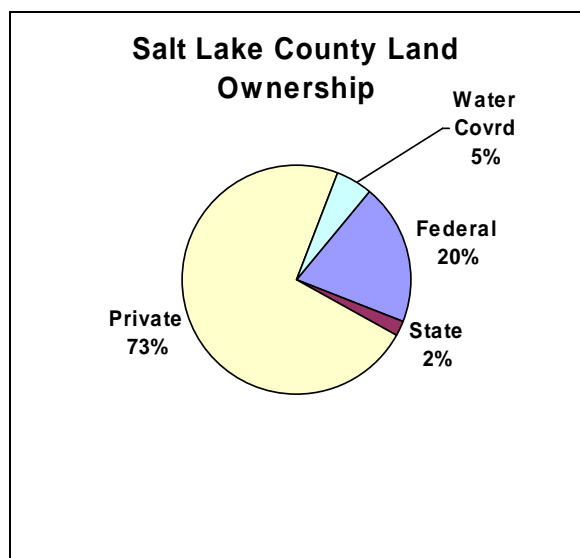
County seat: Salt Lake City

## Location

Salt Lake County contains the state capital. It is located in the northern part of the state and borders the Great Salt Lake.

## Land Ownership

The land ownership within the county is divided as follows:



Source: (Utah County Fact Book, 2002)

The federally-owned ground is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the military. The state owned ground is primarily wildlife preserves and Utah state parks and recreational areas. A small portion is under the jurisdiction of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA). The private ground is primarily farm ground and grazing areas.

The 2002 Census of Agriculture indicated that there were 82,267 acres in farms or ranches in the county with an average size of 116 acres and an average value of \$4743 per acre. The county had 29,303 acres in cropland of which 11,591 acres were harvested and 9,889 were irrigated. The value of livestock and crops produced was listed at \$19,300,000.

## Agricultural Snapshot

In 2003 county production statistics (2004 Utah Agricultural Statistics) Salt Lake County ranked fifth in production of winter wheat.

Major crops grown in Salt Lake County with 2004 yield and acres harvested were:

2004 Primary Crops	Yields	Total harvested acres	Average yield/acre
All alfalfa hay	14,000 tons	3,500	4.0 tons
Other hay	1,800 tons	1,000	1.8 tons
Barley	42,500 bu	500	85 bu

Typical ground preparation for planting alfalfa is begun by spraying Roundup in the fall or early spring to kill the quack grass prior to disking. The ground is then harrowed and planted. The procedure is the same for planting small grains except Roundup is not typically used prior to planting grains. About 98% of all grain is planted in the spring of the year.

The most prevalent crop rotation that producers practice is to leave alfalfa in for seven years, plant oats for two years, then replant alfalfa. Producers typically get two to three cuttings of alfalfa each year. About 25% of all inputs (e.g., seed, fertilizer, pesticides, etc.) are purchased locally while the remaining 75% is bought in a neighboring county.

Much of the irrigation water used in the county comes from diversion of the Jordan River.

### Growing Season

The growing season in Salt Lake County is one of the longest in Utah. It averages about five and a half months. Following are some of the details on climatology in three areas of Salt Lake County.

Salt Lake County locations	Climate Characteristics			
	Annual Precip.	Last spring freeze	First fall freeze	Freeze -free period
Alta	54.72 in	June 15	Sept. 11	89 days
Draper, point of the mountain	15.51 in	April 26	Oct. 17	177 days
University of Utah	18.46 in	May 1	Oct. 20	175 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	10,000
Beef Cows	4,500
Sheep	1,400

There is also a substantial mink-raising industry in Salt Lake County. Some 34,000 pelts were harvested in 2003.

For more information visit these Web sites:

<http://utahreach.org/salt%20lake/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>

Utah State University is committed to providing an environment free from harassment and other forms of illegal discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age (40 and older), disability, and veteran's status. USU's policy also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment and academic related practices and decisions.

Utah State University employees and students cannot, because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran's status, refuse to hire; discharge; promote; demote; terminate; discriminate in compensation; or discriminate regarding terms, privileges, or conditions of employment, against any person otherwise qualified. Employees and students also cannot discriminate in the classroom, residence halls, or in on/off campus, USU-sponsored events and activities.

This publication is issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work. Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jack M. Payne, Vice President and Director, Cooperative Extension Service, Utah State University.