

## Duchesne County Agriculture Profile

Economics Department

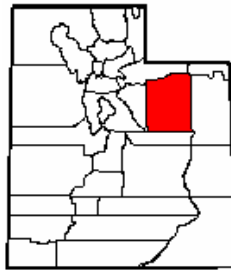
**Duchesne County**

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Area: 3,238 square miles  
 (2,072,320 acres)

Population: 14,846  
 (U.S. Census Bureau  
 Estimate, 2003)



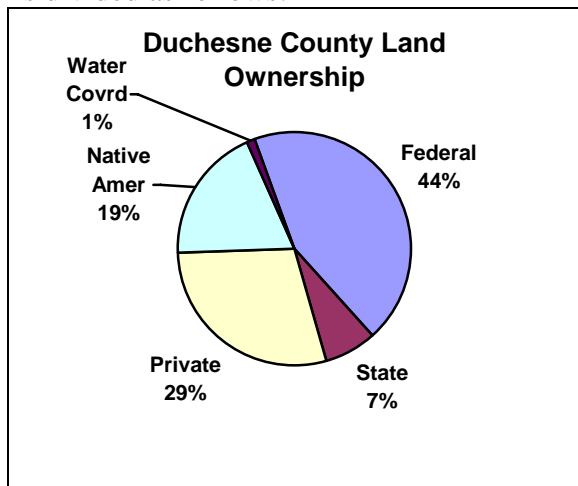
County seat: Duchesne City

### Location

Duchesne County is located in the north eastern part of the state. The state's highest mountain, Kings Peak (13,528 feet), is located in the county's Uinta Mountains. Its economy is livestock, alfalfa, oil, and natural gas.

### Land Ownership

The land ownership within the county is divided as follows:



Source: (Utah County Fact Book, 2002)

The majority of the federally-owned ground is under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The state owned ground is primarily wildlife preserves with a 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 Census of Agriculture indicated that there were 1,304,716 acres in farms or ranches in the county with an average size of 1400 acres and an average value of \$369 per acre. The county had 133,874 acres in cropland of which 50,093 acres were harvested and 94,723 were irrigated. The value of livestock and crops produced was listed at \$46,000,000.

### Agricultural Snapshot

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

| 2004 Primary Crops | Yields       | Total harvested acres | Average yield/acre |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| All alfalfa hay    | 128,000 tons | 35,500                | 3.6 tons           |
| Other hay          | 29,000 tons  | 14,000                | 2.1 tons           |
| Corn silage        | 25,500 tons  | 1,500                 | 17 tons            |
| Corn grain         | 107,000 bu   | 800                   | 134 bu             |
| Oats               | 33,800 bu    | 400                   | 85 bu              |
| Barley             | 92,500 bu    | 900                   | 103 bu             |

Data in the 2004 issue of Agricultural Statistics indicated that Duchesne County was ranked first in honey production. It was third highest producer of “Other” hay and in fifth place in both oats and corn for grain. The county had the second highest inventory of beef cattle in the state.

The agricultural area of Duchesne County can be broken into two general areas. One of the geographical areas is south of Myton in Pleasant Valley and along the Duchesne River from Duchesne to Roosevelt. This is the area where most of the corn is grown. A typical farm rotation in this area is to leave alfalfa in for four to five years and then plant corn for two years. Farmers generally get three to four cuttings of alfalfa in this area. The second geographical area is located north of Duchesne and Roosevelt and is generally a grass hay culture. The grass is usually cut once for hay and then beef cattle graze off the re-growth in the fall. Farmers that sell alfalfa hay generally use midsize square balers. Farmers that feed their alfalfa and grass hay to livestock generally use round balers.

Typical ground preparation for planting alfalfa is plowing and then discing. The ground is then cultipacked and planted. The procedure is the same for planting small grains and corn. The majority of farmers use sprinkler systems with wheel lines being the most common. Pivots are starting to become more popular in Duchesne County. Some specialty crops (e.g., a corn maze near Bluebell and pumpkins) are also grown in the county.

About 60% of the irrigation water available in Duchesne County is from reservoirs. Moon Lake, Big Sand Wash, and Starvation are the most prominent reservoirs. The other 40% is drawn from the Duchesne and Strawberry rivers.

## Growing Season

The growing season in Duchesne County averages about three and a half months. Following are some of the details on climatology in four areas of Duchesne County.

| Duchesne         | Climate Characteristics |                    |                   |                    |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| County locations | Annual Precip.          | Last spring freeze | First fall freeze | Freeze-free period |
| Altamont         | 9.11 in                 | June 2             | Sept. 2           | 111 days           |
| Duchesne         | 9.5 in                  | May 22             | Sept. 22          | 123 days           |
| Hanna            | 11.83 in                | June 13            | Sept. 7           | 87 days            |
| Myton            | 6.66 in                 | May 20             | Sept. 29          | 133 days           |

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

| Livestock Type      | Number of Head |
|---------------------|----------------|
| All Cattle & Calves | 57,000         |
| Beef Cows           | 28,500         |
| Milk Cows           | 3,000          |
| Sheep & Lambs       | 3,100          |

For more information visit these websites:

<http://utahreach.org/duchesne/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)

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