Wasatch County Agriculture Profile

E. Bruce Godfrey, Extension Specialist
Sterling Banks, Wasatch County Agent
Dale Baker and Spencer Parkinson,
Research Assistants

Area: 1,177 square miles
(753,280 acres)

Population: 17,509
(U.S. Census Bureau
Estimate, 2003)

County seat: Heber City

Location
Wasatch County is located in the
north east quadrant of the state.

Land Ownership
The land ownership within the
county is divided as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Ownership</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Amer</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Covrd</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Utah County Fact Book, 2002)

The majority of the federally-owned
ground, or about 99%, is under the jurisdiction
of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The state
owned ground is primarily part of Utah state
parks, recreational areas, and wildlife
preserves. A portion is also 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 69,612 acres in
farms or ranches in the county with an
average size of 183 acres and an average
value of $2936 per acre. The county had
15,196 acres in cropland of which 8,332
acres were harvested and 13,787 were
irrigated. The value of livestock and crops
produced was listed at $5,600,000.

Agricultural Snapshot

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2004 Primary Crops</th>
<th>Yields</th>
<th>Total harvested acres</th>
<th>Average yield/acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All alfalfa hay</td>
<td>22,000 tons</td>
<td>6,300</td>
<td>3.5 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other hay</td>
<td>4,400 tons</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>2.4 tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typical ground preparation for
planting alfalfa ground 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.

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.

Irrigation water comes from various sources including the Provo River and its tributaries.

**Growing Season**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wasatch County locations</th>
<th>Annual Precip.</th>
<th>Last spring freeze</th>
<th>First fall freeze</th>
<th>Freeze-free period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deer Creek Dam</td>
<td>22.05 in</td>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>94 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heber</td>
<td>16.01 in</td>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>86 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier Summit</td>
<td>14.55 In</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td>53 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livestock Type</th>
<th>Number of Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Cattle &amp; Calves</td>
<td>11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep &amp; Lambs</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information visit these Web sites:

- [http://climate.usu.edu/utahclim/ freeze/default.htm](http://climate.usu.edu/utahclim/ freeze/default.htm)
- [http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/summary/listut.html](http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/summary/listut.html)