Sanpete County Agriculture Profile

Economics Department

Sanpete County                                    AG/Econ/county-2005-23

E. Bruce Godfrey, Extension Specialist
Matt Palmer, Sanpete County Agent
Dale Baker and Spencer Parkinson,
Research Assistants

Area: 1,588 square miles (1,016,320 acres)

Population: 23,689
(U.S. Census Bureau Estimate, 2003)

County seat: Manti

Location
Sanpete County is located in the center of Utah.

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

- Federal: 51%
- State: 5%
- Private: 42%
- Water: 2%

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 under the jurisdiction of the Utah School and Institutional Trust Land Administration (SITLA) and a portion is wildlife preserves. The private ground is primarily farm ground and grazing areas.

The 2002 Census of Agriculture indicated that there were 357,184 acres in farms or ranches in the county with an average size of 471 acres and an average value of $1,220 per acre. The county had 113,647 acres in cropland of which 48,892 were harvested and 65,367 were irrigated. The value of livestock and crops produced was listed at $93,600,000.

Agricultural Snapshot
Sanpete County is one of the primary agricultural production regions in the state. In 2003 county production statistics (2004 Utah Agricultural Statistics), the county ranked first in the production of turkeys and had the largest inventory of sheep in the state. It was second in the production of “other hay” and fifth in barley. Sanpete County had the largest inventory of sheep and was fifth for milk cows.

The county ranked second in cash receipts from livestock sales and fourth in total revenue from agricultural production.

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

Sources of irrigation water include the Sevier River and its tributaries.

**Growing Season**

The growing season in Sanpete County averages about four months. Following are some climatology data for three areas in the county:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanpete</th>
<th>Climate Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County locations</td>
<td>Annual Precip.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manti</td>
<td>12.85 in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni</td>
<td>9.58 in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunnison</td>
<td>8.93 in</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>49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef Cows</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk Cows</td>
<td>6,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information visit these Web sites:

- [http://utahreach.org/sanpete/visitor/about.htm](http://utahreach.org/sanpete/visitor/about.htm)
- [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)