

A Look at Utah Agriculture



Utah

Capital: Salt Lake City
Population: 2,469,585
Founded: January 4, 1896 (45th state)
State Bird: California Seagull
State Tree: Blue Spruce
State Flower: Segoe Lily
State Animal: Rocky Mountain Elk
Number of Counties: 29
Largest City: Salt Lake City **Population:** 178,097
Nickname: Beehive State
Area: 84,916 square miles,
65% owned by the federal government

Climate

- Utah is the rooftop of the U.S. The average elevation of the tallest peaks in each of Utah's counties is 11,222 feet above sea level—higher than the same average in any other state.
- The growing season ranges from 60 days in Northern Utah to 190 days in the southern part of the state.
- Annual precipitation is 15.3". Utah is the second driest state in the nation.



Soil

- Irrigation of the rich, but arid land has long been crucial to agricultural development. Utah's agriculture is dependent upon numerous reservoirs and vast reclamation projects.
- Lake Bonneville was Utah's Ice Age Lake. The water formed a huge lake that spread over the flat land of the Great Basin. It covered much of Utah, spreading through canyons and mountain valleys.
- After the recession of Lake Bonneville, the mountain streams flowed down to the lake, carrying loads of sediment. These sediments formed wide areas of loose soil, gravel, and sand, and are now some of the best soil and gravel deposits in the state. These soils are located along the Wasatch Front.
- Average topsoil depth ranges from 1" in the south to 12" in the northern part of the state.



Crops

- Utah grows barley, wheat, dry edible beans, potatoes, onions and corn. Crop production accounts for 24%, or 241 million, in cash receipts.
- Utah is well known for its homegrown sweet corn and tomatoes, which are sold across the state at local farmers' markets.
- Nationally, Utah ranks second in tart cherries, third in apricots, fifth in sweet cherries, ninth in pears, eighteenth in peaches, and eighteenth in apple production.



General

- The Great Salt Lake encompasses 1,060,000 acres; Utah is the top producer of brine shrimp. Utah had 15,300 farms in 2005.
- Utah has 11.73 million acres in farm and ranch production; it produced \$1.3 billion in cash receipts for crops, livestock, produce, and aquaculture in 2005.
- The average size of a farm is 768 acres.



Animals

- 36% of Utah's cash receipts, \$475 million—the largest portion, come from cattle sales.
- 69% of the state's cash receipts, \$908.8 million, come from the combined total of all livestock and livestock products (including sheep and wool, cattle, milk, eggs, hogs, and other products).
- Utah relies heavily on grazing allotments on public land (BLM) to support its range cattle industry.
- Nationally, Utah ranks second in mink, seventh in sheep, and thirteenth in trout production.



Utah Agriculture in the Classroom
2315 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-2315
(435) 797-1657
www.agclassroom.org/ut