

Yavapai County, AZ

Arizona County Agricultural Economy Profiles University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

Overview

Yavapai County is located in north-central Arizona, bordered to the north by Coconino County, to the west by Mohave and La Paz counties, to the south by Maricopa County, and to the east by Gila County. As of 2018, the population of Yavapai County was nearly 232,000, with approximately one-third of the county's population residing in rural areas. Major population centers include Prescott, Sedona, and Cottonwood.

Top industries in Yavapai County include mining, manufacturing, and tourism. The county is also home to several institutions of higher education including Yavapai College, Prescott College, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

On-farm agriculture accounts for approximately one-tenth of 1% of the county's GDP and less than 1% of all private industry jobs. Only approximately 16% of county land is in farms. Yavapai County accounts for about 1% of Arizona's total agricultural cash receipts.



Map of Yavapai County, Arizona

Indicator	Yavapai County	Arizona
Land Area (square miles)	8,128	113,990
Land in Farms (Crops, Grazing) (square miles)	1,284	40,822
Population (2018)	231,993	7,171,646
Annual Average Population Growth Rate (2010-18)	1.2%	1.4%
Percent of Population Over 65 (2018)	31.6%	17.5%
Percent Population Rural (2010)	33.2%	10.2%
Total Employment (2018)	64,683	2,826,095
Share Federal, State, & Local Government Employment (2018)	16.5%	13.8%
GDP (2018)	\$7.2 billion	\$348.3 billion
Ag, Forestry, & Hunting GDP (on-farm only) (2018)	\$6.9 million	\$2.3 billion

Industry	Location Quotient
Dimension stone mining and quarrying	28.23
Bed-and-breakfast inns	13.89
Postal service	10.91
Rv parks and campgrounds	10.17
Art dealers	8.42
Other automotive mechanical and elec. repair	8.22
Outpatient mental health centers	7.44
Wineries	7.43
Beef cattle ranching and farming	7.02
Water supply and irrigation systems	5.32

Top 10 Private Industries in Yavapai County by Employment LQ, 2018

An economy can be characterized by the industries that make up the “base” of the economy. A common way to measure this is with location quotients (LQs), which measure the ratio of a particular industry's share of employment within a region to the same industry's share of national employment. An industry with a LQ greater than 1.25 is considered part of the economic base, exporting goods and services and bringing money into the region. LQs also help identify a region's areas of specialization. Higher LQs indicate greater specialization. Of the top 10 most concentrated private industries in Yavapai County, 3 are agricultural or agriculture-related industries, including wineries (7.43 more concentrated employment than the national average), beef cattle ranching and farming (7.02), and water supply and irrigation systems (5.32).

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Every 5 years, U.S. Department of Agriculture releases the Census of Agriculture, which provides the most comprehensive source of information on agricultural production by county. The Census provides information on the number of farms, types of crops and livestock produced, and farm characteristics, among other information. A farm is defined as any establishment that produced and sold, or could have sold, more than \$1,000 or more of agricultural products in the Census year. The following information comes from the most recent 2017 Census of Agriculture.

Farms

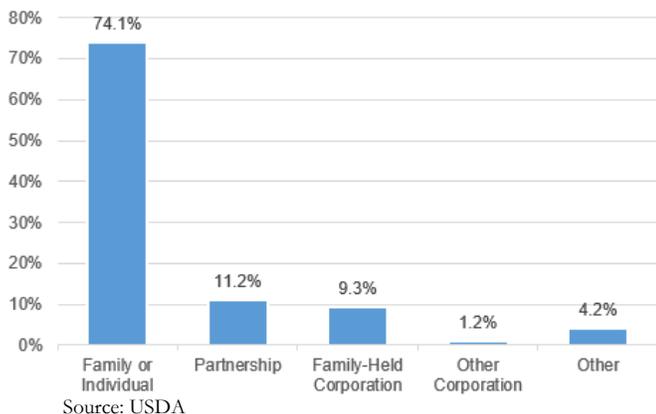
There were 850 farms in Yavapai County in 2017, covering 3,312 acres of cropland (90% irrigated) and 796,113 acres of pastureland (<1% irrigated). The average farm size was 967 acres, larger than the national average of 441 acres, with the top 6% of farms accounting for 91% of county acreage.

Of 850 farms, 292 had less than \$1,000 in sales and 9 farms had more than \$500,000 in sales. A large majority of county farms (74%) are family- or individually-held farms, 11% are partnerships, 9% are family-held corporations, and 1.2% of farms are non-family-held corporate farms.

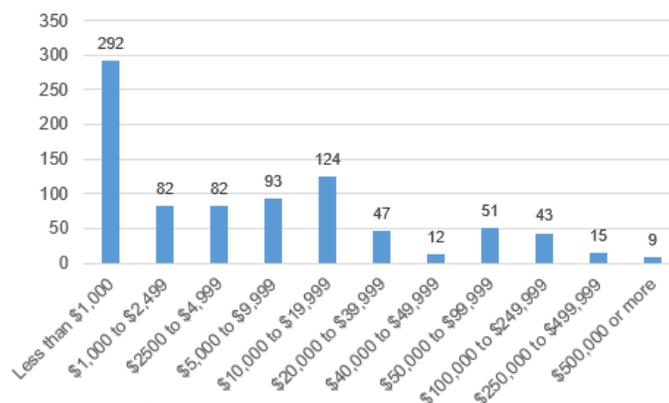
Farms are classified by the type of agricultural products they produce. When a farm or ranch produces more than one agricultural product, they are classified by the product that constitutes more than 50% of their sales. The most common type of operation in Yavapai County is aquaculture and other animal production* (295 farms), followed by beef cattle ranching and farming (266 farms), and fruit and tree nut farming (94 farms).

While the number of farms is helpful in understanding how many farms “specialize” in different types of agricultural production, it does not reflect the magnitude or scale of production by commodity, which is better captured by sales or cash receipts (next page).

Yavapai County Farms by Legal Organization, 2017



Yavapai County Farms by Annual Sales, 2017



Yavapai County Farms by Industry

Category	Farms
Total farms	850
Oilseed and grain farming	1
Vegetable and melon farming	51
Fruit and tree nut farming	94
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	26
Other crop farming	37
Cotton farming	0
Hay and all other crop farming	37
Beef cattle ranching and farming	266
Cattle feedlots	7
Dairy cattle and milk production	0
Hog and pig farming	6
Poultry and egg production	22
Sheep and goat farming	45
Aquaculture and other animal production	295

* Includes farms where no single type of livestock accounts for more than 50% of farm sales.

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Production & Marketing

Yavapai County is a livestock-dominant county, with 60% of county cash receipts originating from sales of livestock, and 40% from crops.

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, major agricultural commodities by sales include **cattle and calves** (\$17.6 million), **nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod** (\$11.1 million), and **horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys** (\$3.1 million).

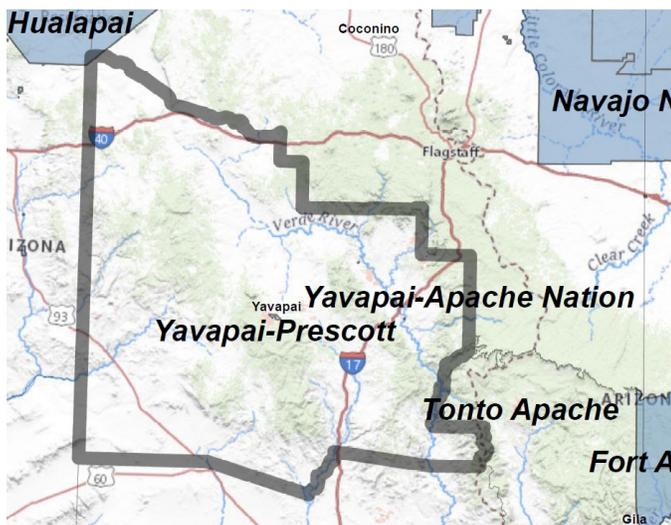
Local marketing represents roughly 10% of county cash receipts. There were 4 farms with reported sales of organic production.

The most common type of operation in Yavapai County is aquaculture and other animal production, which includes equine production. The county ranks in the top 5% of counties for sales of horses and ponies.

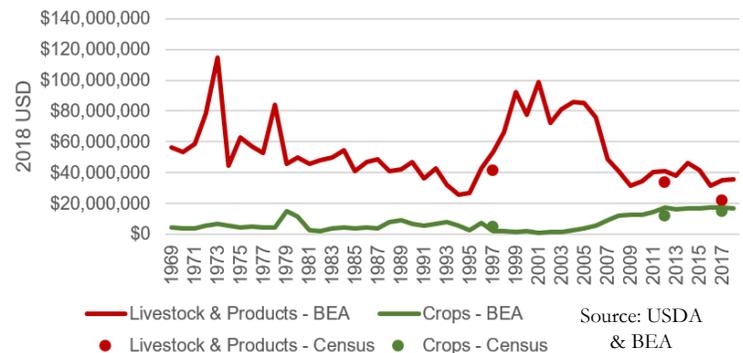
Tribal Agriculture

Yavapai County contains the Yavapai-Apache Nation, the Yavapai-Prescott Reservation, and a very small portion of the Hualapai Reservation. The Census of Agriculture did not report agricultural production in either the Yavapai-Apache Nation or the Yavapai-Prescott Reservation.

Yavapai County Tribal Areas



Yavapai County Agricultural Cash Receipts for Crops & Livestock, 1969 to 2018



Enology & Viticulture in Yavapai County

Yavapai County has a growing specialization in viticulture (grape cultivation) and enology (wine making).

As of 2017, Yavapai County had more than 150 acres of grape production, accounting for roughly 10% of the state's total acreage. Nonetheless, it is the county with the most grape-producing farms in the state, with 52 farms.

Yavapai County plays a large role in Arizona's wine industry. In 2019, the county had the most winery permittees in the state, accounting for 34 of 121 permittees, and as of 2018, 62% of the state's employment in wineries was in Yavapai County, followed by Cochise County (14%) and Santa Cruz County (9%). Though Arizona's two American Viticultural Areas (AVAs), or areas that have been designated and recognized as wine grape-growing regions, are located in southern and southeastern Arizona, an AVA for the Verde Valley area has been proposed.

Furthermore, the county is home to Yavapai College and the Southwest Wine Center which serves as a resource to Arizona's wine industry, offering certificates in viticulture and enology.

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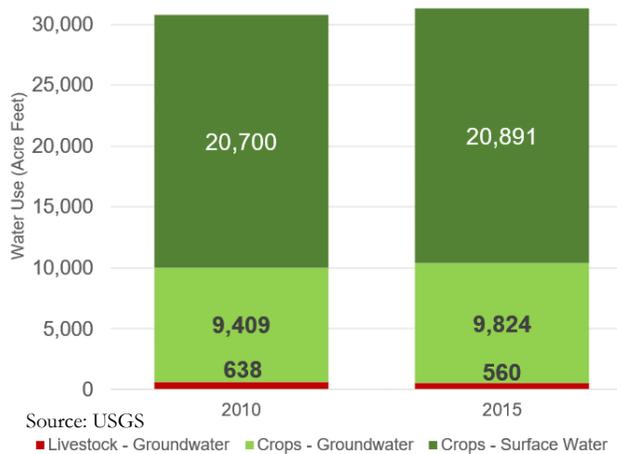
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Irrigation Water Use

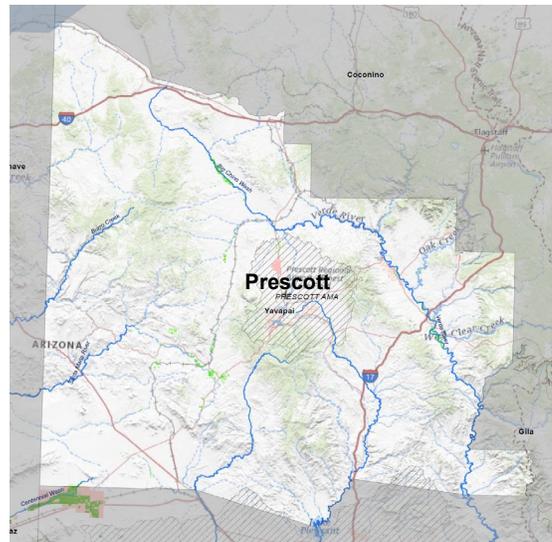
In Arizona, agriculture accounts for about 75% of the state's water use. More than half of withdrawals for agricultural uses in the state are from surface water. In some areas of the state with high demand, groundwater withdrawals for irrigated agriculture are limited by the 1980 Groundwater Management Act. This legislation established five Active Management Areas (AMA) as well as other Irrigation Non-Expansion Areas (INA) where groundwater pumping and expansion of irrigated agriculture are limited. Yavapai County has land in the Prescott AMA (5.9% of county land) and the Phoenix AMA (0.7% of county land), under the Groundwater Management Act. Data available for AMAs from the Arizona Department of Water Resources show that total water demand in the Prescott AMA has declined since 1985, and the share of water used by agriculture has fallen steeply from 79% in 1985 to 8.2% in 2017.

Based on 2015 USGS estimate of water use, agriculture accounts for 50.7% of Yavapai County water withdrawals. Agricultural irrigation water use in Yavapai County is dominated by production of crops, sourced from surface water. In 2015, an estimated 20,891 acre-feet (AF) was sourced from surface water for agricultural production and 10,384 AF was sourced from groundwater. An acre-foot is the amount of water required to cover one acre one foot deep in water. Irrigated crop production is scattered throughout the county. Irrigation water use was relatively stable between 2010 and 2015, and the share of irrigated acres by irrigation technology remained unchanged.

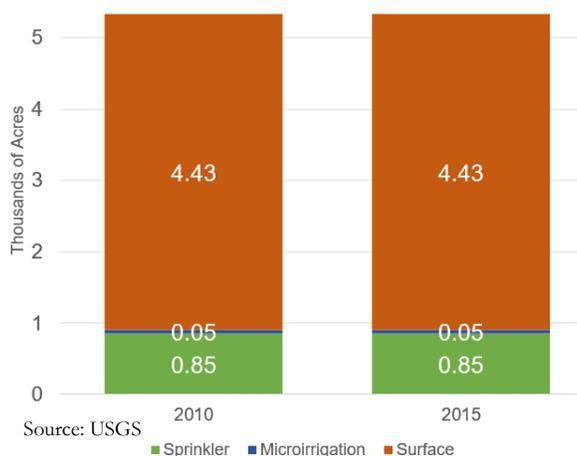
Yavapai County Agricultural Water Use by Use and Source



Yavapai County Water Map



Yavapai County Irrigated Acres by Irrigation Technology



Prescott AMA Water Demand, 1985-2017

