

# A Look at Utah Agriculture

Capital: Salt Lake City

Population: 2,784,572

Founded: January 4, 1896 (45<sup>th</sup>)

State Bird: California Seagull

State Tree: Blue Spruce

State Flower: Segoe Lily

Number of Counties: 29

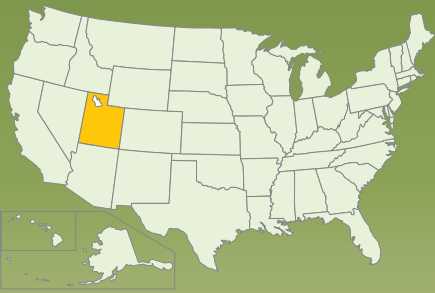
Largest City: Salt Lake City - 183,171

Nickname: Beehive State

Number of Farms: 16,500

Average Farm Size: 664 acres

Total Farmland: 11 million acres



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## Climate & Soil

- 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.
- Due to its geographic diversity, annual precipitation varies greatly. In most of Utah, the annual precipitation is 10"-15". Utah is the second driest state in the nation.
- 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 southern part of the state to 12" in the northern part.

## Crops & Livestock

- Utah grows barley, wheat, dry edible beans, potatoes, onions, and corn. Crop production accounts for 35%, or \$527 million, in farm cash receipts.
- Utah is well known for its homegrown sweet corn and tomatoes that are sold across the state at local farmers' markets.
- Nationally, Utah ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in tart cherries, 3<sup>rd</sup> in apricots, 8<sup>th</sup> in sweet cherries, 9<sup>th</sup> in pears, and 18<sup>th</sup> in peaches.
- Thirty-two percent of Utah's farm cash receipts, \$487 million, the largest portion, come from meat sales (beef, hog, and sheep).
- Sixty-five percent of the state's farm cash receipts, \$994 million, come from the combined total of all livestock and livestock products (including sheep, wool, cattle, milk, eggs, hogs, and other products).
- Utah relies heavily on grazing allotments on public land (Bureau of Land Management) to support its range cattle industry.
- Nationally, Utah ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in mink, 6<sup>th</sup> in sheep, and 15<sup>th</sup> in trout production.

## General

- The Great Salt Lake encompasses 1,060,000 acres; Utah is the top producer of brine shrimp.
- Utah produced \$1.5 billion in cash receipts for crops, livestock, produce, and aquaculture in 2008.
- Utah encompasses 84,916 square miles, 65 percent of that land is owned by the federal government for national parks, military facilities, mining, public land and other entities.