

Mohave County, AZ

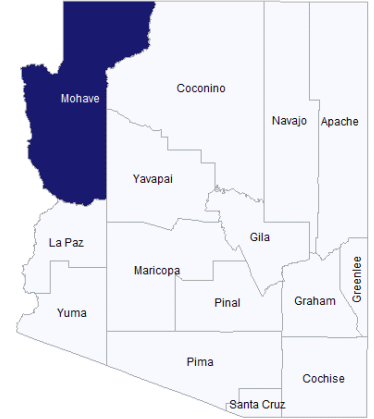
Arizona County Agricultural Economy Profiles
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

Overview

Mohave County is located at Arizona’s northwest corner bordered to the west by the Colorado River, to the east by Coconino and Yavapai counties, and to the south by La Paz County. As of 2022, the population in Mohave County was more than 220,000, with 24% of the county’s population residing in rural areas. Major population centers include Lake Havasu City, Kingman, and Bullhead City.

Top industries in Mohave County are linked with outdoor recreation and water sports as the county is an access point to a number of large reservoirs along the Colorado River, including Lake Mead, Lake Mohave, and Lake Havasu.

On-farm agriculture in Mohave County accounts for less than 1% of all private industry jobs and less than 1% of county GDP. Approximately 9% of county land is in farms. That said, Mohave County is a significant producer of alfalfa hay, ranking in the top 2% of counties nationally in terms of its production. Mohave County accounts for 1% of Arizona’s total agricultural cash receipts.



Map of Mohave County, Arizona

Indicator	Mohave County	Arizona
Land Area (square miles)	13,311	113,591
Land in Farms (Crops, Grazing) (square miles) (2022)	1,178	39,883
Population (2022)	220,816	7,359,197
Annual Average Population Growth Rate (2010-22)	0.9%	1.2%
Percent of Population Over 65 (2022)	32.4%	18.8%
Percent Population Rural (2020)	23.9%	10.7%
Total Employment (2022)	54,756	3,075,427
Share Federal, State, & Local Government Employment (2022)	14.44%	13.5%
GDP (2022)	\$7.7 billion	\$475.7 billion
Ag, Forestry, & Hunting GDP (on-farm only) (2022)	\$49.6 million	\$2.6 billion

Industry	Location Quotient
Telecommunications resellers	10.59
Recreational goods rental	10.05
Motorcycle, bicycle, and parts manufacturing	7.91
Residential framing contractors	7.38
Motorcycle, atv, and all other motor vehicle dealers	5.54
Recreational vehicle dealers	5.13
Boat dealers	5.13
Dental laboratories	4.90
Convention and trade show organizers	4.84
Other personal and household goods repair and maintenance	4.19

Top 10 Private Industries in Mohave County by Employment LQ, 2022

An economy can be characterized by the industries that make up its “base”. A common way to measure this is with location quotients (LQs), 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 industries in Mohave County, agriculture does not rank among them. Mohave County has a very high concentration of alfalfa production, however 2022 employment data are not disclosed.

Mohave County, AZ

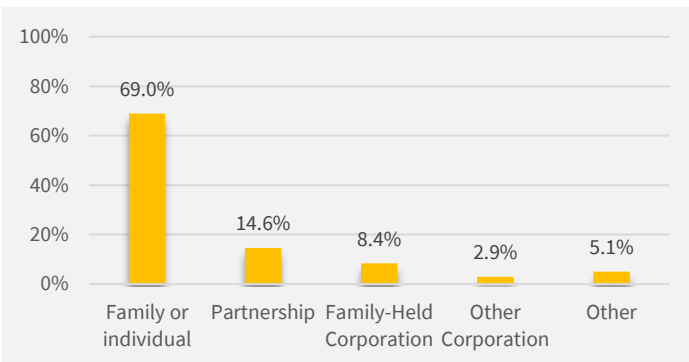
Every 5 years, U.S. Department of Agriculture releases the Census of Agriculture, the most comprehensive source of information on agricultural production by county. The Census provides information on the number of farms, types of crops and livestock produced, and farm characteristics, among other information. A farm is defined as any establishment that produced and sold, or could have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural products in the Census year. The following information comes from the most recent 2022 Census of Agriculture.

Farms

There were 274 farms in Mohave County in 2022, covering 33,338 acres of cropland and 720,461 acres of pastureland (data on irrigated acreage not disclosed). The average farm size was 2,751 acres, significantly larger than the state average of 1,528 acres, with the top 15% of farms accounting for 94% of county acreage. Of 274 farms, 131 had less than \$2,500 in sales and 35 farms had more than \$100,000 in sales. A majority of county farms (69%) are family- or individually-held, 15% are partnerships, and 8% are family-held corporations.

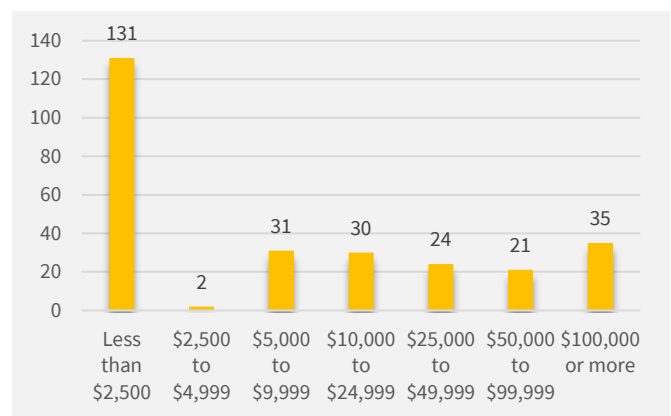
Farms are classified by the type of agricultural products they produce. When a farm or ranch produces more than one agricultural product, they are classified by the product that constitutes more than 50% of their sales. The most common type of operation in Mohave County is beef cattle ranching and farming (129 farms), followed by aquaculture and other animal production (40 farms), and fruit and tree nut farming (30 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).

Mohave County Farms by Legal Organization, 2022



Source: USDA

Mohave County Farms by Annual Sales, 2022



Source: USDA

Mohave County Farms by Industry, 2022

Category	Farms
Total farms	274
Oilseed and grain farming	0
Vegetable and melon farming	2
Fruit and tree nut farming	30
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	11
Other crop farming	28
Cotton farming	0
Sugarcane farming, hay farming, and all other crop farming	28
Beef cattle ranching and farming	129
Cattle feedlots	1
Dairy cattle and milk production	2
Hog and pig farming	2
Poultry and egg production	12
Sheep and goat farming	17
Aquaculture and other animal production	40

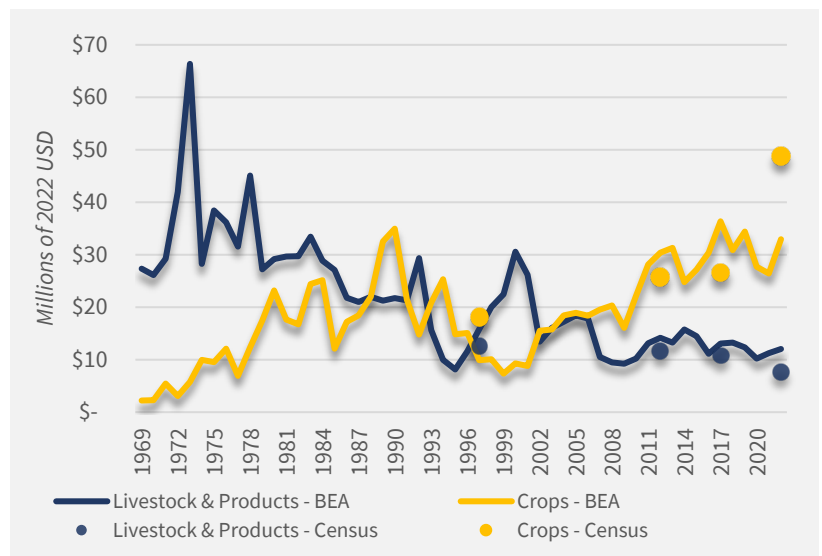
Source: USDA

Mohave County, AZ

Production & Marketing

Mohave County is a crop-dominant county, with an estimated 86% of county cash receipts originating from sales of crops. This hasn't always been the case, however. In the 1970s and earlier, county agriculture cash receipts were primarily from sales of livestock and livestock products, but the inflation-adjusted value of livestock sales has gradually declined over time while the value of crop sales has increased, crossing in the mid-2000s. From the 2017 Census to the 2022 Census, cash receipts from crops more than doubled, most of which is due to a sharp increase in sales of alfalfa hay. Additionally, the county has seen an influx of new orchard plantings, principally pistachios and other tree nuts. As of 2022, the county ranks 15th nationally in combined bearing and non-bearing acreage of pistachios.

Mohave County Agricultural Cash Receipts, Crops & Livestock, 1969-2022



Source: USDA & BEA

Hay Production in Mohave County

Hay is, by far, the top agricultural commodity produced in Mohave County. It accounts for approximately 75% of county crop sales, and 65% of total agricultural sales. In 2022, there were 28 farms in the county that produced other crops and hay. 19,574 acres county-wide were dedicated to production of forage and hay, of which 15,810 were used for production of alfalfa.

Ranching & Public Lands

Sales of cattle and calves account for 91% of livestock and livestock product sales in Mohave County. Cattle ranching in the county relies in-part on leasing of grazing rights on public lands.

The county contains 5.7 million acres of federal land (66.5% of the county's area), of which 4.5 million acres are managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Ranching on public lands presents a series of unique considerations for producers, including coordinating with one or many land managers, complying with federal or state regulation, obtaining permits, and paying fees. These considerations have implications for operations and the cost of doing business (Arizona Ranching Budgets: 2016, Teegerstrom & Tronstad, 2017).

Mohave County, AZ

Irrigation Water Use

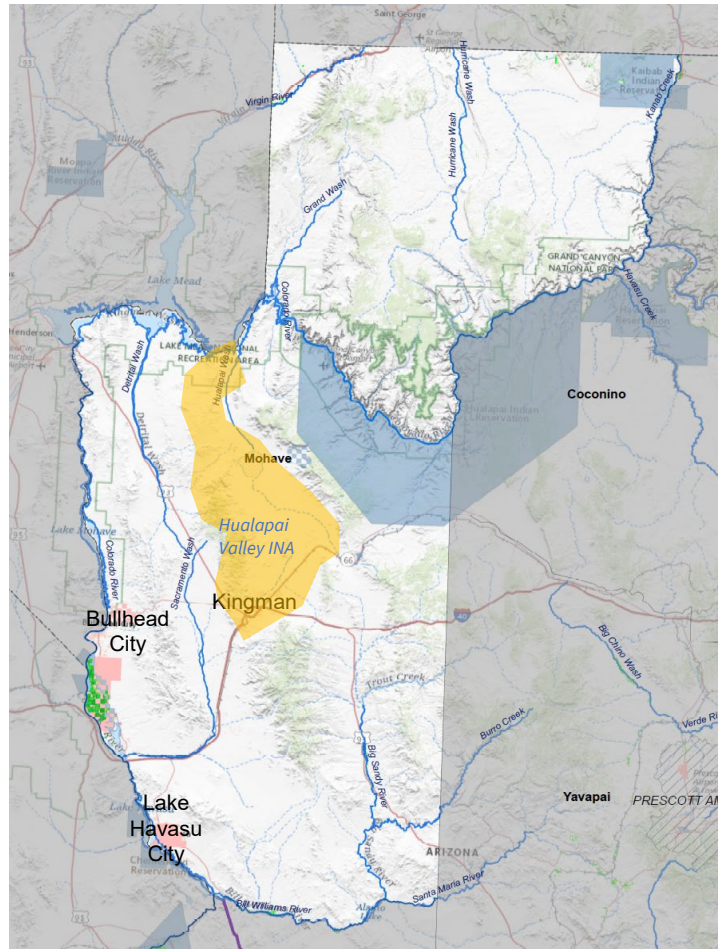
In Arizona, agriculture accounts for about 75% of the state's water use. More than half of withdrawals for agricultural uses in the state are from surface water. In some areas of the state with high demand, groundwater withdrawals for irrigated agriculture are limited by the 1980 Groundwater Management 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.

Mohave County is home to the state's newest INA, the Hualapai Valley INA. This INA is aimed at maintaining groundwater withdrawals at a level that protects existing irrigators, domestic wells, and municipal water supplies. This area of the county has seen rapid expansion of irrigated agriculture, including new tree nut orchard plantings. This prompted calls to put limits on further expansion of irrigated agriculture in this basin utilizing mechanisms under the state's Groundwater Management Act.

For more information on water in Mohave County, please visit the University of Arizona Water Resource Research Center county water factsheets by clicking [here](#) or scanning the QR code →



Mohave County Water Map



About Us

Extension Regional Economic Analysis Program

The Extension Regional Economic Analysis Program (EREAP) conducts applied research and economic analysis addressing economic development issues around Arizona. We work serving the needs of Cooperative Extension and its stakeholders, such as Arizona agricultural and agribusiness industries, natural resource users and organizations, and regional economic groups, to provide specialized analysis and targeted information. For more information or to contact us, please click [here](#) or scan the QR code to visit our site →

