

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 2022, the population of Yavapai County was over 246,000, 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 13% 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)	8,124	113,591
Land in Farms (Crops, Grazing) (square miles) (2022)	1,034	39,883
Population (2022)	246,191	7,359,197
Annual Average Population Growth Rate (2010-22)	1.4%	1.2%
Percent of Population Over 65 (2022)	34.2%	18.8%
Percent Population Rural (2020)	32.0%	10.7%
Total Employment (2022)	67,528	3,075,427
Share Federal, State, & Local Government Employment (2022)	15.73%	13.5%
GDP (2022)	\$9.8 billion	\$475.7 billion
Ag, Forestry, & Hunting GDP (on-farm only) (2022)	\$4.1 million	\$2.6 billion

Industry	Location Quotient
Dimension stone mining and quarrying	23.26
RV (recreational vehicle) parks and campgrounds	11.95
Sewage treatment facilities	9.59
Wineries	8.96
Trust, fiduciary, and custody activities	8.16
Art dealers	8.07
Other food crops grown under cover	7.49
Recreational goods rental	7.11
Flight training	7.04
Residential site preparation contractors	7.02

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 private industries in Yavapai County, 2 are agricultural or agriculture-related industries: wineries (8.96 times more concentrated employment than the national average), and other food crops grown under cover (7.49).

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

Yavapai County, AZ

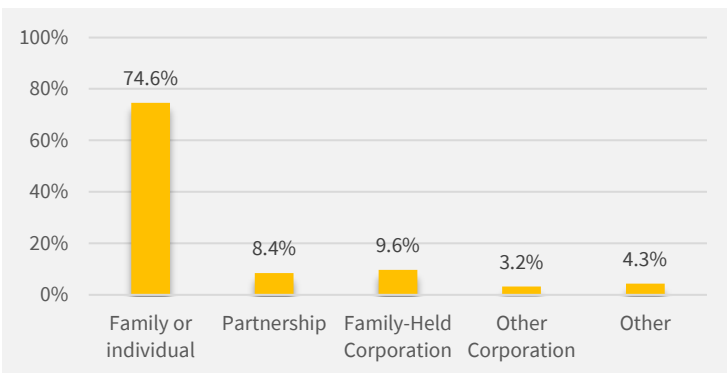
Every 5 years, U.S. Department of Agriculture releases the Census of Agriculture, the most comprehensive source of information on agricultural production by county. The Census provides information on the number of farms, types of crops and livestock produced, and farm characteristics, among other information. 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 727 farms in Yavapai County in 2022, covering 7,714 acres of cropland (100% of harvested acreage irrigated) and 653,929 acres of pastureland (<1% irrigated). The average farm size was 910 acres, smaller than the state average of 1,528 acres, with the top 6% of farms accounting for 83% of county acreage. Of 727 farms, 334 had less than \$2,500 in sales and 74 farms had more than \$100,000 in sales. A large majority of county farms (75%) are family- or individually-held farms, 8% are partnerships, 10% are family-held corporations, and 7% of farms have other forms of legal organizations.

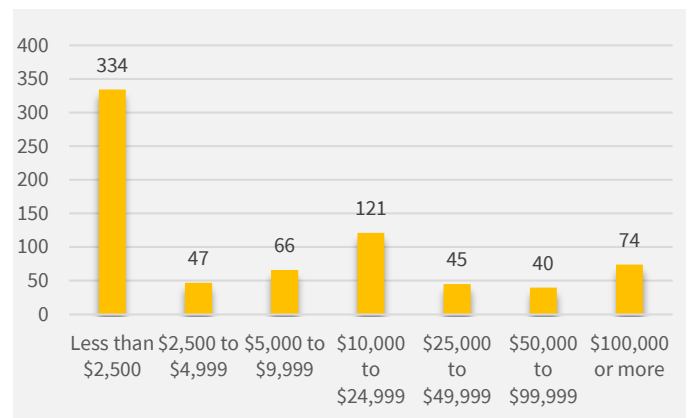
Farms are classified by the type of agricultural products they produce. When a farm or ranch produces more than one agricultural product, they are classified by the product that constitutes more than 50% of their sales. The most common type of operation in Yavapai County is aquaculture and other animal production (282 farms), followed by beef cattle ranching and farming (199 farms), and fruit and tree nut farming (112 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, 2022



Source: USDA

Yavapai County Farms by Annual Sales, 2022



Source: USDA

Yavapai County Farms by Industry, 2022

Category	Farms
Total farms	727
Oilseed and grain farming	7
Vegetable and melon farming	25
Fruit and tree nut farming	112
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	21
Other crop farming	21
Cotton farming	0
Sugarcane farming, hay farming, and all other crop farming	21
Beef cattle ranching and farming	199
Cattle feedlots	4
Dairy cattle and milk production	0
Hog and pig farming	6
Poultry and egg production	20
Sheep and goat farming	30
Aquaculture and other animal production	282

Source: USDA

Yavapai County, AZ

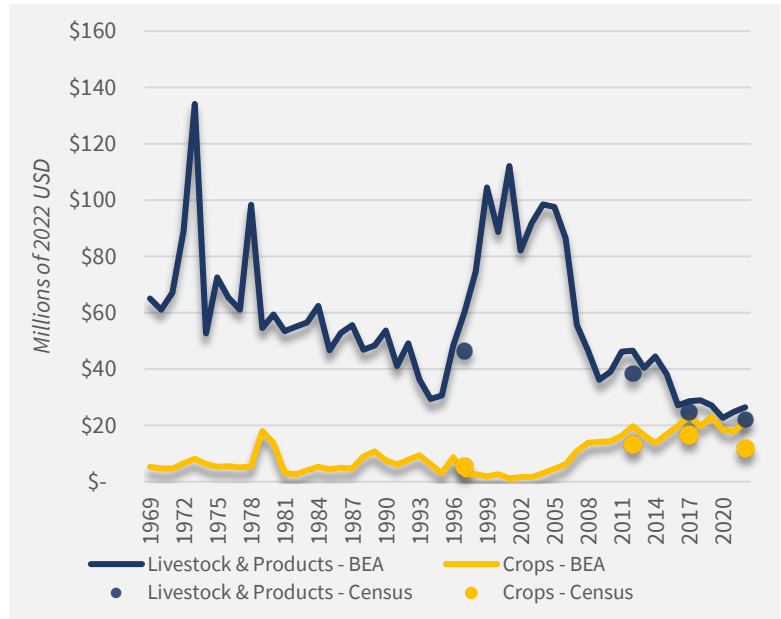
Arizona County Agricultural Economy Profiles
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

Production & Marketing

Yavapai County is a livestock-dominant county, with an estimated 65% of county cash receipts originating from sales of livestock. Agricultural cash receipts for the county have declined over time, however, due to significant declines in livestock sales.

Major agricultural commodities sold by Yavapai County producers include cattle and calves (\$18 million) and horses and ponies (\$3.4 million). While few data on crop production are disclosed, nursery production has been an important source of crop revenues in past census years, as well as wine grape production, discussed below.

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



Source: USDA & BEA

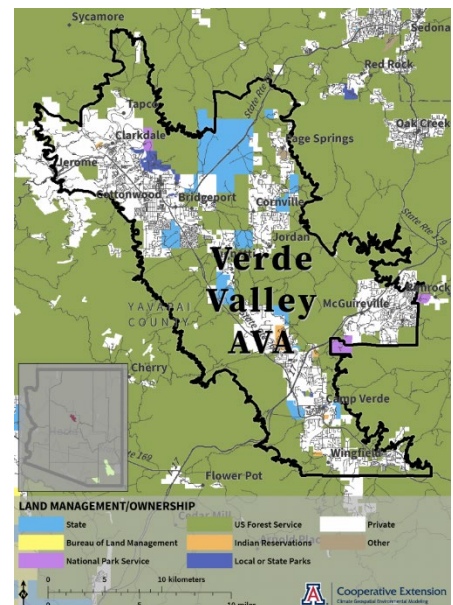
Enology & Viticulture in Yavapai County

Yavapai County has a growing specialization in viticulture (grape cultivation) and enology (wine making). As of 2022, the county had 239 acres of grape production, accounting for roughly 13% of the state's total acreage, on 61 grape-growing farms.

Yavapai County plays a large role in Arizona's wine industry. In 2022, the county had the most winery permittees in the state, accounting for 35 of 115 permittees, and as of 2022, 58% of the state's employment in wineries was in Yavapai County, followed by Cochise County (15%) and Santa Cruz County (13%).

The Verde Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA) was formally established in 2021, the third AVA in Arizona. AVAs are federally recognized wine growing regions in the United States. 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.

Verde Valley AVA Map



Source: Jeremy Weiss

Yavapai County, AZ

Arizona County Agricultural Economy Profiles
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension

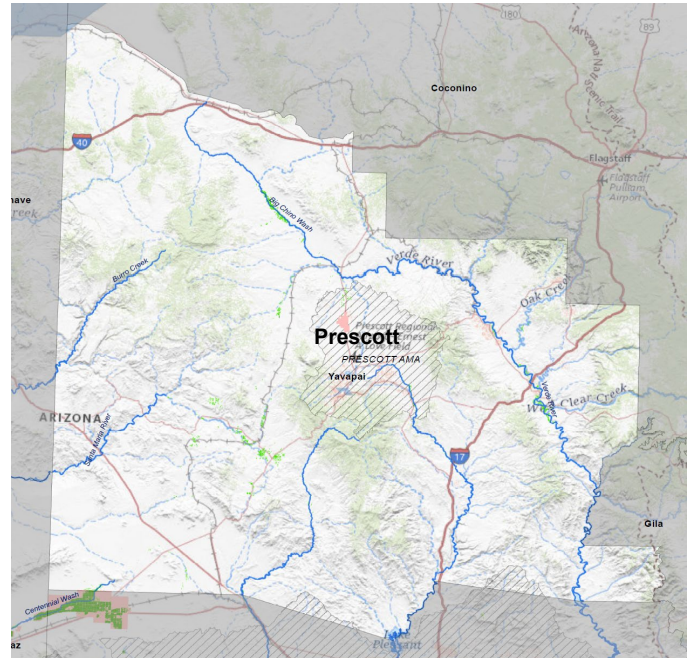
Irrigation Water Use

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 remained relatively stable since 1985. The share of water used by agriculture has fallen steeply from 79% in 1985 to 7% in 2021. Meanwhile, municipal demand has increased from 18% to 84% of total demand over the same period.

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



Yavapai 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 →

