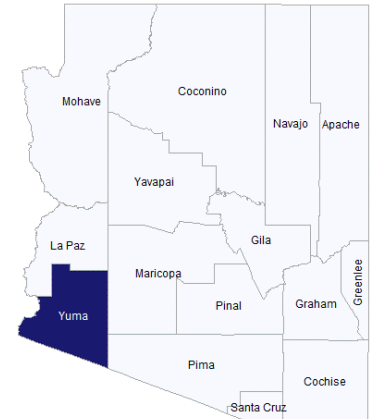


Yuma County, AZ

Overview

Yuma County is located at the southwest corner of Arizona and is bordered to the west by California and the Colorado River, to the north by La Paz County, and to the east by Maricopa and Pima counties. The county is the sixth most populous county in the state, with nearly 85% of the population living in urban areas, such as the city of Yuma. Top industries in Yuma County include agriculture and tourism. Yuma is a popular destination for seasonal visitors because of its mild winter temperatures. The county is home to two military bases, another important source of employment. In fact, federal, state, and local government employment accounts for over 20% of county employment, significantly higher than the state average.

Despite having a small share (6%) of county land in farms, agriculture plays a critical role in the Yuma County economy. In fact, on-farm agriculture accounts for more than 14% of the county's GDP and directly generates at least one-fifth of all private industry jobs. Yuma County accounts for about one-third of Arizona's total agricultural cash receipts, and over 50% of Arizona's agricultural GDP (on-farm agriculture).



Map of Yuma County, Arizona

Indicator	Yuma County	Arizona
Land Area (square miles)	5,514	113,591
Land in Farms (Crops, Grazing) (square miles) (2022)	331	39,883
Population (2022)	207,842	7,359,197
Annual Average Population Growth Rate (2010-22)	0.5%	1.2%
Percent of Population Over 65 (2022)	20.5%	18.8%
Percent Population Rural (2020)	15.1%	10.7%
Total Employment (2022)	70,648	3,075,427
Share Federal, State, & Local Government Employment (2022)	20.3%	13.5%
GDP (2022)	\$9.9 billion	\$475.7 billion
Ag, Forestry, & Hunting GDP (on-farm only) (2022)	\$1.4 billion	\$2.6 billion

Industry	Location Quotient
Crop harvesting, primarily by machine	93.77
Other vegetable (except potato) and melon farming	71.86
Postharvest crop activities (except cotton ginning)	51.37
Farm labor contractors and crew leaders	49.71
Recreational vehicle dealers	25.47
Soil preparation, planting, and cultivating	23.26
RV (recreational vehicle) parks and campgrounds	14.75
Perishable prepared food manufacturing	13.46
Facilities support services	9.14
Lessors of other real estate property	8.41

Top 10 Private Industries in Yuma 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 private industries in Yuma County, six are agricultural industries, reflecting not only employment on-farm, but also industries that prepare the land and are involved in harvest and postharvest activities. For example, the share of employment in crop harvesting in Yuma County is 93.77 times the national average.

Yuma County, AZ

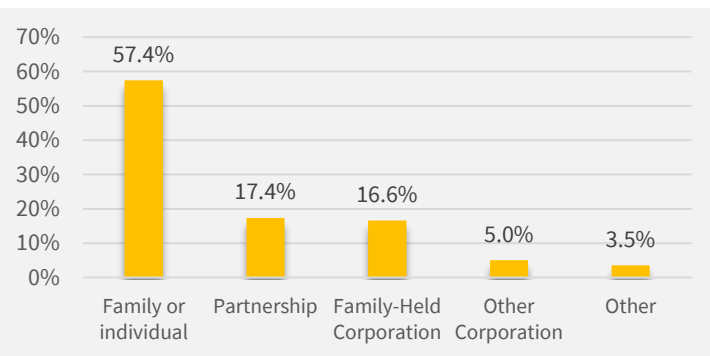
Every 5 years, U.S. Department of Agriculture releases the Census of Agriculture, the most comprehensive source of information on agricultural production by county. The Census provides information on the number of farms, types of crops and livestock produced, and farm characteristics, among other information. 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 397 farms in Yuma County in 2022, covering 201,881 acres of cropland (100% of harvested acreage irrigated) and 2,842 acres of pastureland (2% irrigated). The average farm size was 534 acres, smaller than the state average of 1,528 acres, with the top 9% of farms accounting for 68% of county acreage. Of total farms, 68 had less than \$2,500 in sales and 163 farms had more than \$100,000 in sales. The majority of county farms in Yuma County were family- or individually-held (57%). Another 17% were partnerships and 17% were family-held corporations.

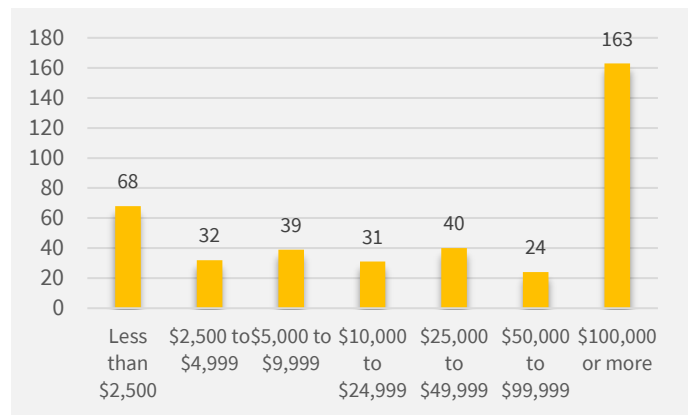
Farms are classified by the type of agricultural products they produce. When a farm or ranch produces more than one agricultural product, they are classified by the product that constitutes more than 50% of their sales. The most common type of operation in Yuma County are farms producing fruit and tree nuts (112 farms), followed by sugarcane farming, hay farming, and all other crop farming (100 farms), and vegetable and melon farming (61 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).

Yuma County Farms by Legal Organization, 2022



Source: USDA

Yuma County Farms by Annual Sales, 2022



Source: USDA

Yuma County Farms by Industry, 2022

Category	Farms
Total farms	397
Oilseed and grain farming	15
Vegetable and melon farming	61
Fruit and tree nut farming	112
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	7
Other crop farming	110
Cotton farming	10
Sugarcane farming, hay farming, and all other crop farming	100
Beef cattle ranching and farming	9
Cattle feedlots	1
Dairy cattle and milk production	1
Hog and pig farming	2
Poultry and egg production	10
Sheep and goat farming	26
Aquaculture and other animal production	43

Source: USDA

Yuma County, AZ

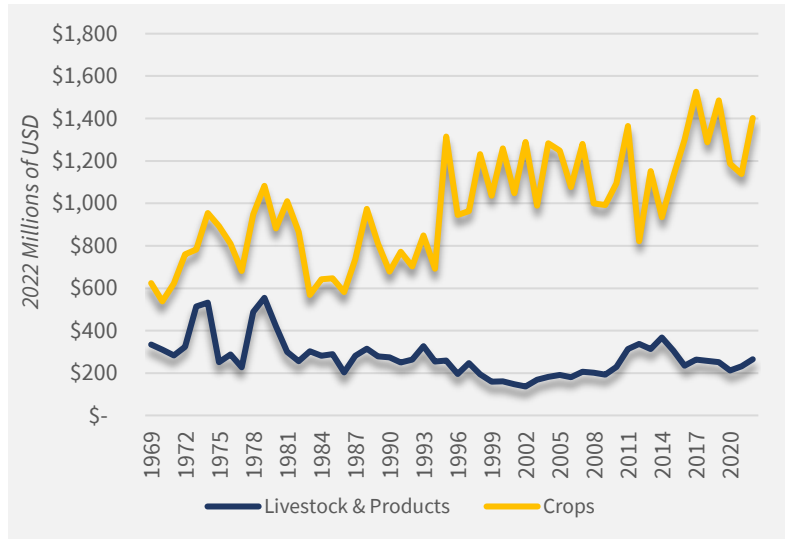
Production & Marketing

Yuma County is a crop-dominant county, with an estimated 84% of county cash receipts originating from sales of crops. Sales of vegetables, melons, potatoes, and sweet potatoes (\$1.13 billion) dominate, ranking Yuma County as the third-largest vegetable and melon producing county in the U.S., and 13th largest crop-producing county in the country. Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, and dry peas, particularly wheat, are commonly grown as rotational crops, generating \$55 million in sales. Other major agricultural products include fruit, tree nuts, and berries (\$56.6 million) and other crops and hay (\$84.4 million). Sales for cattle and calves are not disclosed for Yuma County, but the county is the second largest producer in the state by sales. For individual commodities, Yuma County ranks among the top counties for measures of production and sales, including sales of vegetable seeds (1st), acres of fresh market cauliflower harvested (1st), acres of fresh market spinach harvested (2nd), acres of irrigated wheat harvested (3rd), and acres of fresh market cabbage and celery harvested (4th for both).

Leafy Greens

With its arable land, warm winter temperatures, and access to Colorado River water for irrigation, Yuma County is one of the nation's largest producers of winter vegetables, particularly leafy greens such as Romaine, iceberg, and red leaf and green leaf lettuce. Production of leafy greens rotates seasonally between the Yuma area in the winter and central California in the summer, jointly fulfilling a large majority of national supply. During peak weeks in December, leafy greens from Yuma can represent between 80% to 95% of U.S. weekly shipments.

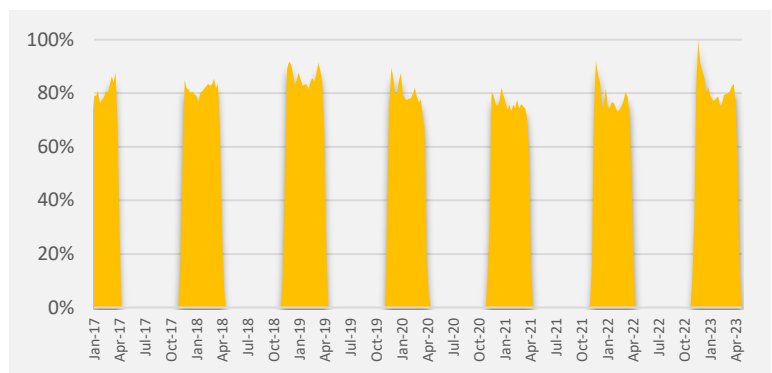
Yuma County Agricultural Cash Receipts, Crops & Livestock, 1969-2022*



Source: BEA

* La Paz County separated from Yuma County in 1983, at which time it was generating roughly \$150 million (\$2022) in agricultural cash receipts, principally from crops. A corresponding drop in crop cash receipts can be noticed in Yuma County's data. Prior to 1983, agricultural data for Yuma County reflect production occurring in both Yuma and La Paz Counties.

Western Arizona Percent of Weekly U.S. Lettuce Movements (All Types) 2017-2023



Source: USDA AMS

Yuma County, AZ

Irrigation Water Use

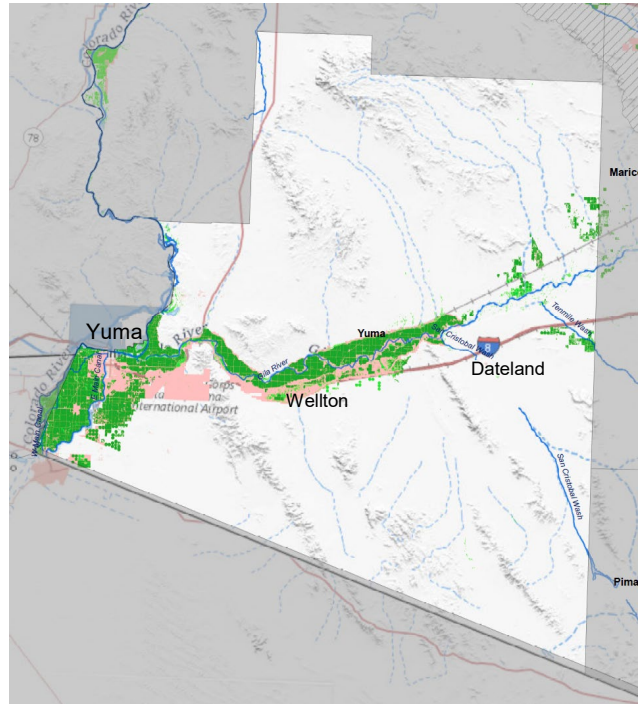
In Arizona, agriculture accounts for about 75% of the state's water use. More than half of withdrawals for agricultural uses in the state are from surface water. In some areas of the state with high demand, groundwater withdrawals for irrigated agriculture are limited by the 1980 Groundwater Management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

There is no land in Yuma County within an AMA or INA. Yuma County is situated along the mainstem of the Colorado River and many Yuma County irrigators have high seniority rights to Colorado River water.

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



Yuma 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 →

