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# A Portrait of Agriculture in Utah

Utah farm operations sold \$2.3 billion worth of animal products and crops in 2022, with production concentrated in seven counties.

**December 2025** 





# A Portrait of Agriculture in Utah

### **Analysis in Brief**

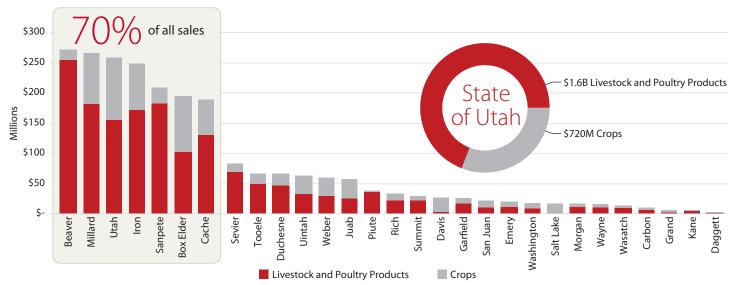
Utah's 17,386 farm operations sold a variety of products totaling \$2.3 billion in 2022. While the sales of agricultural products represented a small share of the state's overall economy, agriculture plays an important role in many rural areas and covers nearly one-fifth of all land statewide.

### **Key Findings**

- Seven counties produced the bulk of Utah's \$2.3 billion in agricultural sales - Beaver, Millard, Utah, Iron, Sanpete, Box Elder, and Cache counties accounted for 70.0% of all agricultural product sales.
- Many small operations Nearly one-third (32.8%) of Utah's farms operated on less than 10 acres in 2022. Utah farms averaged \$30,809 in net cash farm income and half (51.7%) sold less than \$5,000 worth of agricultural products.
- Farming is not a primary job for most producers -Nearly 7 out of every 10 (69.0%) producers in the state held a different primary job other than farming.

- **Aging producers** The average producer in Utah was 56.6 years old in 2022, and over one-third (35.0%) of producers were 65 years or older.
- Farm operations employed over 16,000 people A little less than half (45.1%) of this hired labor worked more than 150 days per year and the remainder worked less than 150 days. Additionally, 8.3% of farm operations hired contract labor.
- Large footprint Utah's agricultural land covered 10.5 million acres, nearly one-fifth of the state's total land area. This total does not include public land grazing allotments.
- Since the 2022 census Smithfield Foods, the largest pork producer in Utah, ended contracts with 26 Utah hog farms in 2023; beef prices reached an all-time high in 2025; and farm operations are experiencing rising input prices.

### Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold by County, 2022



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

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### Introduction

Utah was home to 17,386 farm operations in 2022, 41.0% of which were concentrated in five counties. These operations harvested 849,000 acres of cropland in addition to raising livestock and poultry products, with sales totaling \$2.3 billion.

This report presents a comprehensive state and county snapshot of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 2022 Census of Agriculture for Utah's farm operations, including livestock and crop production, sales and income, employment, producer demographics, and land use.1

### **Farm Characteristics**

Utah had 17,386 farms in 2022. Five counties (Utah, Cache, Box Elder, Weber, and Uintah) each contained over 1,000 farms and collectively accounted for 41.0% of all farms in the state (Figure 1). Utah County contained the most farms (2,322), nearly 1,000 more than Cache County, which ranked second with 1,378. Only two counties (Grand and Daggett) contained fewer than 100 farms.

### Farm Operations by Size

Nearly one-third of Utah's farms operated on 1 to 9 acres in 2022 (32.8%), another 32.1% operated on 10 to 49 acres, and the remaining 35.1% operated on more than 50 acres (Figure 2). Statewide, only 7.0% of farm operations covered 1,000 acres or more.

Several counties contained a high share of small farms (1 to 9 acres). Salt Lake County had the highest share of these small farms (70.0%), followed by Davis (58.4%), Weber (48.4%), and Wasatch (41.3%) counties.

Other counties had a high share of larger farms (greater than 500 acres). In Rich County, nearly half (46.9%) of farms operated on more than 500 acres. These large farm sizes also accounted for a fifth of all farms in Grand, Millard, Kane, Juab, and Iron counties.

### **Production**

Field Crops and Vegetables

Utah's farms harvested 849,000 acres of cropland in 2022 (Figure 3).<sup>2</sup> Feed for livestock in the form of hay, haylage, and grain silage accounted for the largest share of harvested cropland, covering over 677,000 acres. Grain accounted for the second largest category, covering more than 141,000 acres. Wheat led the grain category, totaling 99,000 acres (made up of 92,000 acres of winter wheat and 6,800 acres of spring wheat). Corn (25,000 acres), barley (15,000 acres), and triticale (2,600 acres) also had significant acreages. Utah farms also harvested 1,095 acres of sorghum (833 acres for silage and 262 acres for grain) and 510 acres of oats, though these accounted for a small share of total harvested cropland.

Vegetables accounted for 6,100 acres of harvested cropland across the state. Onions (1,602 acres), pumpkins (1,004 acres), sweet corn (833 acres), and potatoes (756 acres) each covered

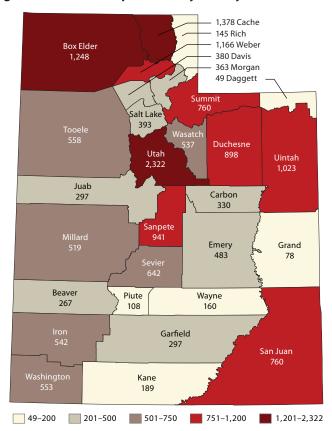
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# What counts as a "farm operation" in the Census of Agriculture?

The Census of Agriculture defines farm operations as "any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year." This definition captures a wide range of agricultural producers, from the largest commercial farms to very small producers selling products from their homes.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture, Appendix A. Census of Agriculture Methodology

Figure 1: Utah Farm Operations by County, 2022



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

over 500 acres. Farm operations also harvested 14,000 acres of safflower, grown primarily for oil production from its seeds.

Nine counties accounted for the bulk of harvested cropland used for livestock feed. Box Elder, Iron, Cache, and Millard counties each harvested greater than 50,000 acres of feed. Utah, Sanpete, Duchesne, Uintah, and Rich each harvested between 30,000 and 50,000 acres. Collectively, these nine counties accounted for nearly 70% of total land harvested for livestock feed.

Figure 2: Utah Farm Operations by Size and County, 2022

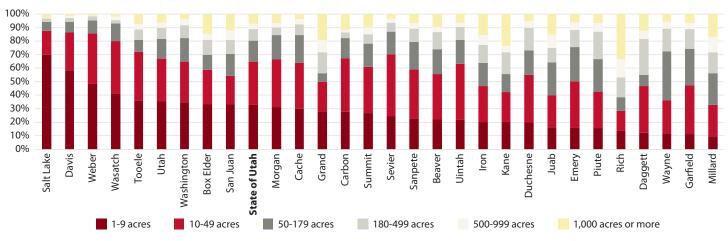
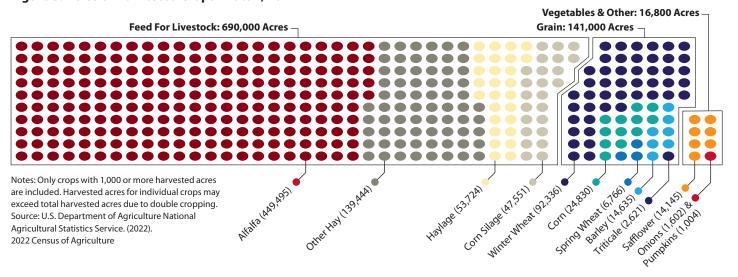


Figure 3: Acres of Harvested Crops in Utah, 2022



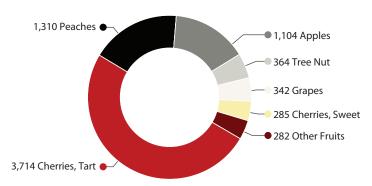
Three counties accounted for over half (56.6%) of the harvested cropland used to grow vegetables: Box Elder (1,595 acres), Weber (1,030 acres), and Cache (849 acres). Only five other counties harvested more than 100 acres of vegetables (Davis, Utah, Sanpete, Uintah, and Washington).

### Fruit and Tree Nuts

Fruit and tree nut farms covered more than 7,400 acres across the state in 2022 (Figure 4). Tart cherries alone accounted for half of this acreage, peaches made up 17.7%, and apples 14.9%. All other fruit and nut tree farms accounted for less than 5% of this total acreage. Tree nut acreage combined covered 4.9% of all land used for fruit or tree nuts.

Utah had 647 farm operations recording sales of fruit or tree nuts in 2022. While every county aside from Piute County contained at least one fruit or tree nut operation, only seven counties had more than 30 operations. Utah County ranked first with the highest number of operations (160), followed by Box Elder (89), Washington (72), and Cache (50) counties.

Figure 4: Total Acres of Fruit and Tree Nuts, 2022



Note: Total acres of fruit and nut trees include both the acreages of producing and non-producing plants.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

### **Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold**

The market value of agricultural products sold in Utah totaled \$2.3 billion in 2022, led by \$1.6 billion from livestock and poultry products and \$718 million from crops (including nurseries and greenhouses) (Figure 5). Seven counties account for the majority of these sales (70.0%). Total sales included \$6.5 million of onfarm value-added products like cheese.<sup>3</sup>

Beaver, Sanpete, Millard, Iron, Utah, Cache, and Box Elder counties recorded the most livestock and poultry product sales in the state, each of which sold over \$100 million. All but seven counties (Washington, Carbon, Kane, Davis, Grand, Salt Lake, and Daggett) sold more than \$10 million in livestock and poultry products.

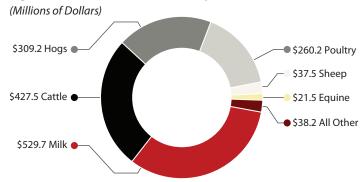
Utah County was the only county that sold more than \$100 million in crops, though four other counties each sold over \$50 million (Box Elder, Millard, Iron, and Cache). Only Kane County sold less than \$1 million in crops in 2022.

### Livestock and Poultry Product Sales

Milk sales made up the largest share of sales in the livestock, poultry, and related products category, totaling \$530 million (Figure 6). Cattle (\$428 million), hogs (\$309 million), and poultry (\$260 million) were the next three largest segments in terms of sales.

The six largest milk-producing counties each sold over \$40 million worth of milk in 2022 (Utah, Iron, Cache, Millard, Box Elder, and Sanpete). Sevier, Duchesne, and Weber counties each sold between \$15 and \$20 million.

Figure 6: Sales of Livestock, Poultry, and Their Products, 2022



Note: Poultry sales include egg sales.
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022).
2022 Census of Agriculture

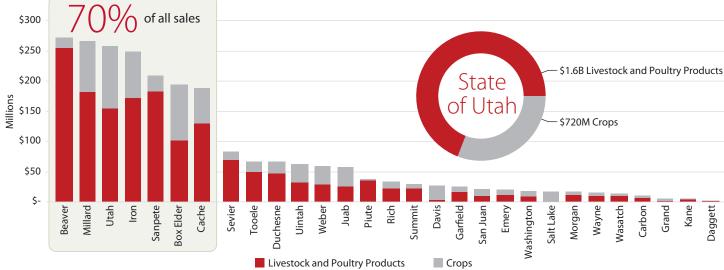
Cattle sales totaled over \$20 million in nine counties, led by Box Elder (\$46.9 million), Sevier (\$42.7 million), and Sanpete (\$32.7 million) counties. Beaver County accounted for the majority (76.2%) of hog sales in the state, totaling \$235.6 million.<sup>4</sup>

For counties with available data on poultry products, Sanpete ranked first, recording \$92.3 million in sales.

### Crop Sales

Of the \$718 million in crop sales in 2022, \$106 million came from grain sales, \$50.2 million came from vegetable sales, and \$33.4 million came from fruit and tree nut sales. Data on hay, haylage, and grain silage sales are not available.





Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Figure 7: Utah Farm Operations by Value of Sales by County, 2022

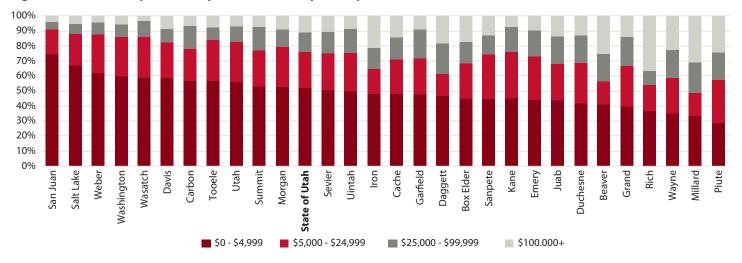
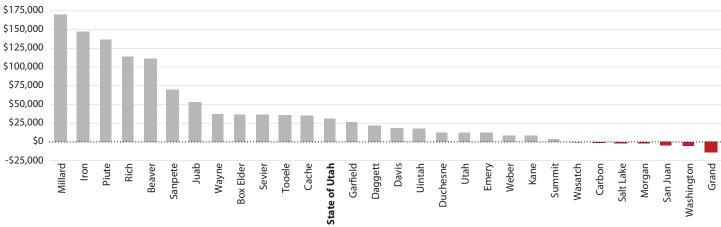


Figure 8: Average Net Cash Farm Income by County, 2022



Note: Net cash farm income represents the income after subtracting cash expenses from agricultural product sales, government payments, and other farm-related income. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Box Elder County led the state in grain sales, totaling \$30.3 million. Cache, Utah, San Juan, and Uintah counties each sold between \$5 million and \$13 million in grain.

Box Elder County accounted for over one-third (37.9%) of all vegetable sales, totaling \$19.0 million. Weber, Cache, and Davis counties were the only other counties for which data were available that sold over \$1 million in vegetables.

Utah County led the state in fruit and tree nut sales at \$21.4 million, nearly two-thirds (64.2%) of all sales in this category. Cache and Washington counties each sold between \$1 million and \$2 million worth of fruit and tree nuts.

### **Farms by Value of Sales**

Half (51.7%) of Utah's farm operations sold less than \$5,000 worth of products in 2022 (Figure 7). One quarter (24.3%) sold between \$5,000 and \$24,999, 13.0% sold between \$25,000 and \$99,999, and 11.0% sold more than \$100,000.

Five counties had more than 20% of their farm operations with \$100,000 in sales or more, led by Rich County, where over one-third (36.6%) of its operations sold more than \$100,000. In three counties, over 60% of farm operations sold less than \$5,000 of products (San Juan, Salt Lake, and Weber).

### **Net Cash Farm Income**

The average net cash farm income for Utah's farm operations was \$30,809 in 2022 (Figure 8). Five counties had net cash farm incomes between \$110,000 and \$175,000 (Millard, Iron, Piute, Rich, and Beaver). Only two other counties had average net cash farm income above \$50,000 (Sanpete and Juab). Three counties had average net cash farm incomes below \$10,000 (Weber, Kane, and Summit), and in seven counties, average net cash farm income was negative, with Grand County being the lowest (\$-14,428).

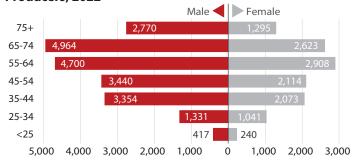
### **Producer Characteristics**

The Census of Agriculture defines producers as those who make decisions on the farm, including owners or hired managers. Demographic data on producers are only collected for up to four producers per farm.

### Age and Sex

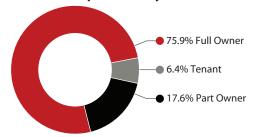
The average age of producers statewide was 56.6 in 2022, ranging from a low of 53.9 in Emery County to a high of 60.0 in Salt Lake County. Over half of all Utah producers were 55 years or older (57.9%), and over one-third were 65 years or older (35.0%) (Figure 9). Less than 10% of producers in the state were 34 years or younger. Beaver and Piute counties contain the smallest share of producers age 55 or older, both of which were just below one-half. Thirteen counties had greater than 60% of producers age 55 or older, led by Daggett County at 71.6%.

Figure 9: Population Pyramid of Utah's Agricultural Producers, 2022



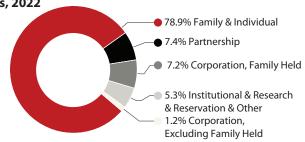
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Figure 10: Utah Farm Operations by Tenure, 2022



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Figure 11: Utah Farm Operation Organization for Tax Purposes, 2022



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Across the state, 62.5% of producers were men and 37.5% were women, with most counties having similar shares. In San Juan County male and female producers are nearly equal (52.8% of producers were men and 47.2% were women). Piute County contains the highest share of male producers (69.5%).

Farm producers in Utah were predominantly white in 2022 (94.4%), with small shares of producers who identified as American Indian (3.2%) and Hispanic (1.6%). White producers comprised over 92% of producers in all counties aside from San Juan County, where 63.3% of producers identified as American Indian. Carbon County contained the highest share of producers who identified as Hispanic 4.4%.

#### **Tenure**

Three-quarters (75.9%) of farm operations in the state were fully owned by farm operators in 2022, 17.6% were partially owned, and 6.4% of operations were run by tenants (Figure 10). Producers fully owned over 80% of farm operations in eight counties, led by Salt Lake County at 85.0%. Four counties had shares of farm operations with full-ownership below 70%, led by San Juan County, where 46.2% of operations were fully owned by producers and 45.4% of farm operations rented land.

### **Operation Organization for Tax Purposes**

Families or individuals owned nearly 8 out of every 10 (78.9%) of Utah's farm operations in 2022. Corporations owned 8.2% of operations (85.5% were family-held corporations), partnerships owned 7.2%, and institutions, research organizations, reservations, or "other" owned 5.3%. San Juan County contained the highest rate of institutional, research, reservation, and other ownership at 32.0%. Grand, Beaver, and Salt Lake counties had the highest share of farm operations owned by corporations that were not family held, ranging from 3.6% in Salt Lake County to 6.4% in Grand County.

### **Employment**

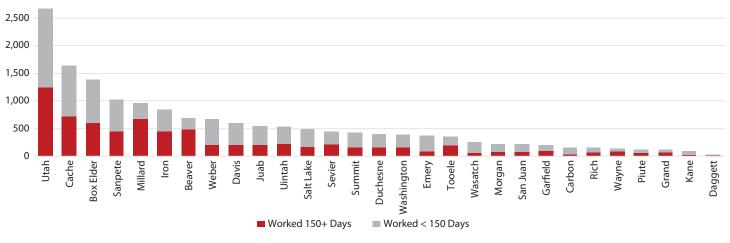
Hired Labor

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Utah farms hired 16,186 workers in 2022. Less than half (45.1%) of the hired labor worked less than 150 days in the year, while the remaining 54.9% worked more than 150 days (Figure 12). Onefifth of total farm operations across the state hired labor (20.2%).

Six counties accounted for over half (52.7%) of all farm labor hired in the state (Utah, Cache, Box Elder, Sanpete, Millard, and Iron). The share of farm labor working more than 150 days per year varies widely by county. In four counties, greater than 60% of hired labor worked more than 150 days (Millard, Beaver, Wayne, and Grand). Conversely, less than 30% of farm labor worked more than 150 days in Kane, Carbon, Wasatch, and Emery counties in 2022.

Figure 12: Utah Farm Operation Hired Workers by Days Worked, 2022



### Contract Labor

Statewide, 8.3% of farm operations recorded contract labor expenses. In seven counties (Iron, Box Elder, Juab, Sanpete, Wayne, Millard, and Grand), 10% or more of all farm operations hired contract labor, led by Grand County (16.7%). Dagget County was the only county where less than 5% of operations recorded contract labor expense.

### **Primary Occupation**

Nearly 7 out of every 10 (69.0%) producers in Utah had a primary occupation other than farming in 2022. This share was higher than 75% in two counties (Wasatch and Washington). Only three counties had shares below 60% (Grand, Piute, and San Juan). Only 44.6% of producers held a primary job other than farming in San Juan.

### Land Use

Utah's farms encompassed 10.5 million acres of land across the state in 2022, or 19.3% of the state's total land area.<sup>5</sup> Dedicated pastureland comprised the majority of farmland in the state (80.1%), while cropland represented 13.8% (Figure 13). Irrigated farmland covered 853,000 acres (8.1% of total farmland).

Agricultural land classified as woodland (both pastured and not pastured) accounted for 3.4% of total farmland. Farmsteads, buildings, and facilities represented a small portion (2.8%).

### **Farmland by County**

Uintah, San Juan, Box Elder, and Duchesne counties each contained more than one million acres of farmland and collectively accounted for 54.9% of the state's farmland in 2022.<sup>6</sup> Eighteen of Utah's counties contained between 100,000-500,000 acres of farmland. Seven counties included less than 100,000 acres (Garfield, Weber, Salt Lake, Davis, Piute, and Wayne).

Farmland comprised more than 50% of total county land in Morgan, Rich, and Duchesne counties. Farmland accounted for 20-50% of total county land in an additional eight counties and less than 5% of land in five counties (Wayne, Garfield, Daggett, Emery, and Kane).

### Cropland

Box Elder County led the state in terms of total cropland with 239,338 acres, though only 85,487 acres were irrigated. San Juan,

Cache, Millard, and Utah counties each contained over 100,000 acres of cropland. Only three counties—Grand, Daggett, and Salt Lake—contained less than 10,000 acres of cropland.

### **Dedicated Pastureland**

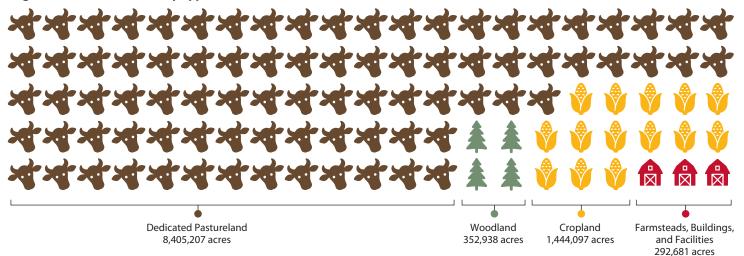
Uintah, San Juan, Duchesne, and Box Elder counties accounted for nearly 60% of all dedicated pastureland in the state, each with over 870,000 acres. Thirteen counties contained between 100,000 and 360,000 acres. Twelve counties contained less than 100,000 acres. Dedicated pastureland excludes cropland and woodland used for pasture.

### **Declining Farmland**

Utah lost 1.2 million acres of farmland between 2002 and 2022. Declining cropland accounted for 50.4% of this total, while decreasing dedicated pastureland accounted for 48.7%. Five counties lost over 100,000 acres of farmland each (Duchesne, Box Elder, Rich, Washington, and Tooele). Duchesne County lost 249,000 acres of farmland alone.

Grand and San Juan counties each gained over 100,000 acres of farmland during this period. Data on farmland loss during this period was not available for five counties (Daggett, Emery, Morgan, Piute, and Uintah), though collectively these counties lost 398,000 acres of farmland.

Figure 13: Utah Farmland by Type, 2022



### Additional Data and Changes since the 2022 Census of Agriculture

Several important developments occurred in Utah's agricultural sector since the 2022 census. While the Census of Agriculture provides the most detailed information about farm operations, producers, and land use, this section relies on supplemental data to highlight other aspects of agricultural production in the state and changes in the industry since 2022.

### **Hog Production**

Smithfield Foods, the largest pork producer in Utah, ended contracts with 26 hog farms in the state in late 2023.7 Hog production represented nearly one-fifth (19.0%) of all livestock and poultry product sales in Utah during 2022. While hog sales data is not available for Utah since 2022, data do show the inventory of hogs declined sharply, falling from a high of over one million hogs in September 2020 to 105,000 in September 2024 (Figure 14).8

### **Beef Prices**

Cattle sales represented 26.3% of Utah's livestock and poultry product sales in 2022 (\$427.5 million). The average price of one pound of ground beef cost \$1.71 nationally that same year. Since then, ground beef prices increased significantly, reaching a record high of \$6.32 in August 2025 (Figure 15).9 Declining cattle inventories, sustained demand, and rising input prices are drive the price increase.10 While producers benefit from higher beef prices in the short term, they are faced with higher costs to rebuild their herds in the long term.

### **Increasing Input Costs and Volatility in Commodity Prices**

Input prices have been increasing since 2020 across all U.S. farm products (crops and livestock) (Figure 16). While the prices farmers receive for their products have also been increasing, the increases are more volatile. For example, the prices paid index for crops has been relatively stable since 2022, while the prices received dropped from 2022 through early 2025 before recovering slightly. For livestock, the prices paid index steadily rose from 2020 through 2025, while the prices received index grew more rapidly over this period.<sup>11</sup>

Figure 14: Utah Inventory of Hogs, 2020-2024



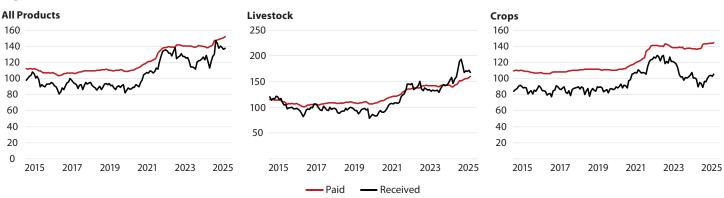
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2025). Survey Program

Figure 15: U.S. Average Price of Ground Beef (1 lb.), 2000-2024



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2025). Ground Beef, 100% Beef (Cost per Pound), U.S. City Average

Figure 16: U.S. Prices Received and Paid Indices, 2015-2025



Note: The USDA's Price Index Program measures changes in the prices farmers pay for input costs (prices paid index) in addition to what they receive for selling agricultural commodities (prices received index). The relative change between these two indices represents the purchasing power of farmers.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2025). Prices Paid and Received: All Farm/Crop Farm/Livestock Farm Index by Month, U.S.

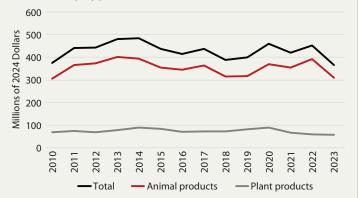
## What about Utah International Agricultural Exports?

Utah exported an estimated \$365.8 million worth of agricultural products internationally in 2023, not including processed foods.<sup>13,14</sup> Animal products accounted for 84.6% of exports and crop products accounted for 15.4%. The monetary value of agricultural exports declined 20.4% since the 2020 peak of \$459.6 million.

Dairy products (20.7% of total exports), beef and veal (20.1%), other livestock products (16.5%), pork (12.6%), and animal feed (10.5%) accounted for nearly all agricultural product exports.

Reliable data tracking agricultural exports to the state of production are not available. To fill this data gap, the U.S. Department of Agriculture produces state-level estimates of agricultural product exports. The estimate methodology takes a state's share of national cash receipts for a given commodity, then multiplies it by the national export value for that commodity. While this method provides reasonable estimates of state-level exports, the data should not be viewed as actual export values.<sup>15</sup>

Figure 17: Utah's International Export of Agricultural Products by Type, 2010-2023



Note: Processed foods and value-added commodities are subtracted from export data to conform with 2022 Census of Agriculture data.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. (2025). State

**Exports, Cash Receipts Estimates** 

### Census of Agriculture Methodology Notes

The USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) administers the Census of Agriculture every four years to survey all farms that produce and sell, or would normally sell, \$1,000 or more agricultural products in a given year. All Census of Agriculture data used in this report come from the NASS Quick Stats database.12

The Census of Agriculture does not capture value-added products that occur outside of a farm operation. However, value-added products produced on farm operations are included in the total market value of agricultural products sold. For example, if a farm operation produces milk and sells it to a dairy that produces cheese, the value-added operations from the cheese production is not included. However, if the operation produces milk and then produces their own cheese on the operation, this value-added product is included.

#### **Error Measurement**

The census is administered through a mail survey, which recorded a 61.0% response rate in 2022. This response rate has been declining since the 2012 census, when the response rate was 74.6%. Coefficients of variation (CV) are reported for all variables at the national and state level and generalized coefficients of variation are reported at the county level. Coefficients of variation for variables used in this report can be retrieved from USDA's Quick Stats database.

While the Census of Agriculture does not provide guidelines on interpreting CVs, its sister publication, the Census of Aquaculture provides the following guidance:

- High reliability CV less than 15%
- Medium reliability CV between 15-29.9%
- Low reliability CV 30% or higher

#### **Endnotes**

- 1. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) releases a Census of Agriculture every four years, which provides detailed information on the nation's farm operations.
- 2. Multiple crops can be harvested from the same plot of land in a given year (known as double cropping), so individual totals of harvested crops do not sum to the total harvested cropland in the state.
- 3. Total sales only includes value-added agricultural products if the value-added occurred on the farm operation. Value-added products take raw commodities as inputs, which undergo processing, and are worth more than the original inputs (see "Census of Agriculture Methodology Notes" section for more information).
- 4. Data for the other largest hog-producing counties were suppressed to avoid disclosing data for a single operation. See "Census of Agriculture Methodology Notes" for more information.
- 5. Land in farms covers privately owned land used for agriculture and does not include federal and state land leased for grazing. Most farmland acreage is reported directly by farm operators. However, on American Indian reservations, the Census of Agriculture counts all land used for agriculture or with the potential for grazing. This leads to large — and likely inflated — pastureland totals in counties with significant tribal land (San Juan, Duchesne, Uintah, and Grand).
- Total farmland in the Census of Agriculture is respondent reported and not independently verified by USDA. In two counties, Uintah and Duchesne, the total reported land in farms is greater than all private and tribal land in those counties. Additionally, if a farm operates in multiple counties, all acreage is reported in the principal county of operation.

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- 14. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's State Exports dataset covers a wider range of agricultural products than the 2022 Census of Agriculture. To conform with 2022 Census of Agriculture data, processed foods and value-added goods are subtracted from export totals.
- 15. For more information on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's State Exports, Cash Receipts Estimates Methodology see https://www.ers.usda. gov/data-products/state-agricultural-trade-data/documentation.



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