

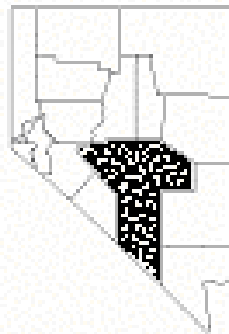
# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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Fact Sheet FS-02-21

## 2000-2001 Nye County Agricultural Statistics

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Nye County Nevada, like many other rural Nevada counties, has experienced a historical “Boom and Bust” economy since its establishment in 1864. Although mining has been a large player of the county’s historical economy, government activity from the Nellis Test and Training Range (formerly named Nellis Airforce Range), Nevada Test Site, and the Tonopah Test Range have been a significant economic factor. However, each of these industries have contributed to the “Boom and Bust” economy. The agricultural sector of Nye County has historically maintained its economic viability and provides a economic foundation for the county’s communities. This fact sheet provides an overview of important snapshot statistics about Nye County’s agricultural sector.

Nye County ranks sixth of Nevada’s seventeen counties in population, most of the estimated 32,704 residents live in the town of Pahrump. The county covers 18,147 square miles (11,614,080 acres) of land, of which 92.66 percent

is administered by the federal government. These federally administered lands contribute significantly to the agricultural sector as they provide seasonal grazing for resident livestock herds. Privately owned land in farms cover 0.7 percent of Nye County. The 1997 Census of Agriculture, the most recent census, reported 144 farms and ranches within the county on 85,534 acres. The average farm size is 594 acres (Table 1).

Nye County is the largest county in Nevada and is larger than four U.S. states. It stretches from central to southern Nevada and includes both the Great Basin and Mojave desert. Key areas of agricultural production include Big Smoky Valley in the north central part of the county, Railroad Valley in the northeast, and Amargosa and Pahrump Valley in the south.

Table 1. Demographics, Area and Agricultural Data

Population	34,704
Size (acres)	11,614,080
Number of farms and ranches	144
Land in farms (acres)	85,534
Average size (acres)	594
Cropland (acres)	27,813
Irrigated farm land (acres)	16,759

Figure 1 and Table 2 summarize Nye County's agricultural sector for the 2000 to 2001 production period. Milk third largest agricultural commodity in Nevada in terms of cash receipts, is the county's leading agricultural commodity. It contributed for \$16,897,100 or 60% of agricultural sales. All milk in the county is produced from only two dairies located in Amargosa and Pahrump Valley, ranking Nye County the second largest milk producing county in Nevada at 153.61 million pounds. Average milk production per cow was 19,200 pounds.

Cattle and calves were the county's second largest contributor with \$7,526,838 or 27% of the county's agricultural sales. Current statistics show the January 1 cattle and calf inventory for Nye County at 23,000.

Ranking third in commodity sales is alfalfa hay with a value of \$3,003,000, 11% of total sales. Alfalfa hay is produced on 7,000 acres in the county with an average of 4.7 tons/acre. The 33,000 tons annually produced are marketed as high quality dairy and export grade hay.

Ranking fourth was "other hay" with a value of \$672,000, or 2% of total sales. "Other hay" includes native hay, improved grasses, and Timothy. Production occurs on approximately 4000 acres, at a rate of 1.8 tons per acre (7000 total tons). Note, that this average is for all "other hays." Timothy hay is not reported as a separate hay enterprise, nor are data for this enterprise gathered separately.

According to 1997 Census of Agriculture Data, several small farms produce commodities other than livestock and hay. With annual sales of

\$10,000 or more, two farms produce vegetables and/or melons, and two farms produce fruit and/or nuts. Three of these four farms are located in the southern part of Nye County where temperatures are warmer and the growing season is longer.

Alfalfa Hay	\$3,003,000
Other Hay	\$672,000
<b>Total Hay</b>	<b>\$3,675,000</b>
Cattle and Calves	\$7,526,838
Milk	\$16,897,100
<b>Total Livestock</b>	<b>\$24,423,938</b>
<b>Total Hay and Livestock</b>	<b>\$28,098,938</b>

Information to compile this fact sheet was obtained from the 2000-2001 Nevada Agricultural Statistics Service's Annual Report and the 1997 Census of Agriculture. Data is collected in the spring and published in the fall following the production period, thus the one year lag in timeframe. These agencies appreciate the support of Nye County producers that provide survey information. Questions regarding statistics used in this fact sheet should be directed to the author.

### References

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