

## PART VI

## Livestock, Dairying and Poultry

General Importance

Livestock farming, dairying and poultry farming are secondary activities in Klickitat County compared to the production of commercial crops. However, the livestock enterprise of the county accounts for about one-third of farm income. One out of every four farms in the county specializes in livestock, dairy or poultry farming. Three out of four keep some animals as a supplementary source of income. Klickitat County farmers received \$2,453,000 from the sale of livestock and their products in 1954 which represented 32 percent of the total sales of farm products.

The total marketable value of livestock and poultry kept on farms in 1954 approximated \$4,938,815 with cattle and calves, including dairy cattle, accounting for 95 percent of the inventory value. Sheep, valued at \$222,000, ranked second in 1954. Horses and mules ranked third in importance followed closely by hogs. The inventory value of poultry was the smallest.

Total Value of Klickitat County Livestock: \$4,938,815

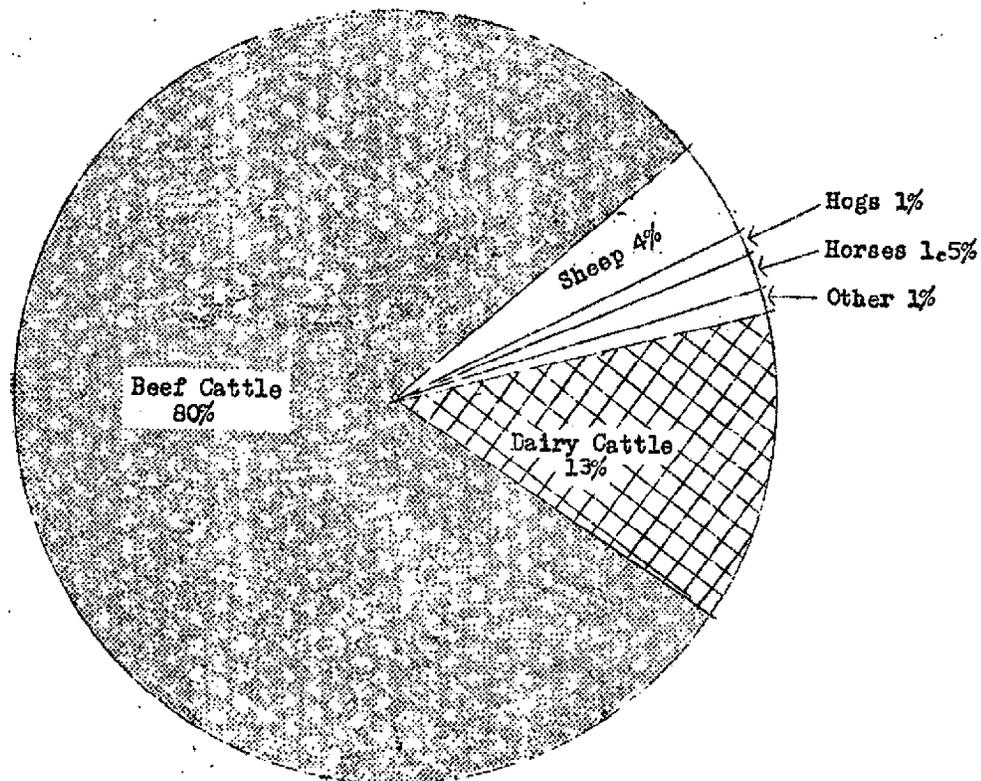


Figure 11.- Value of Livestock on Farms  
Klickitat County, 1954  
(Based on U.S. Census, Agriculture)

Livestock Trends

Several major trends have occurred in the livestock enterprise of Klickitat County since 1939. Value of all livestock increased 36 percent between 1950 and 1954. A most marked trend has been the doubling of beef cattle numbers between 1939 and 1956. While this was happening, dairy cattle numbers dropped to one-half of the peak reached in 1942. Milk production was highest in the early 1940's and then declined slightly but has remained at about the same level during recent years. Chickens kept on farms reached a high in the early 1940's, then declined sharply after 1945. Horses and mules on Klickitat County farms have declined steadily in the last 20 years and in 1954 there were only one-fourth as many horses and mules as during 1939. Sheep numbers have declined greatly since 1939 and only one-half as many sheep were enumerated by the Census in 1954 as in 1939. There has been a continuous decline in hog numbers since 1920 with about 10,600 head reported in that year compared with 2,900 head in 1954.

Cattle: Beef and Dairy Farming

Raising beef cattle is the leading type of livestock farming. Numbers have increased two-fold since 1939 and now outnumber dairy cattle by about 8 to 1 with the largest increase after 1950. About 680 farms mainly in the Klickitat and White Salmon Valleys kept cattle in 1954 and 580 sold cattle. Cattle and calves are the most important source of income for Klickitat County livestock producers with the 15,600 head of cattle and calves sold in 1954 returning \$1,774,000 to cattlemen and general farmers. This represented 72 percent of the total value of the sales of all livestock and livestock products.

Table 23.- Livestock Numbers on Farms  
Klickitat County, 1939-1956

Year	January 1 Numbers on Farms		
	All Cattle (head)	Beef Cattle (head)	Dairy Cattle (head)
1939	23,000	16,100	6,900
1940	24,700	17,800	6,900
1941	27,400	19,400	8,000
1942	28,100	20,000	8,100
1943	29,000	21,400	7,600
1944	29,200	22,100	7,100
1945	27,000	20,400	6,600
1946	27,800	20,900	6,900
1947	27,800	22,300	5,500
1948	27,000	21,500	5,500
1949	27,500	22,000	5,500
1950	27,200	21,600	5,600
1951	31,800	26,300	5,500
1952	33,100	28,700	4,400
1953	33,500	29,100	4,400
1954	34,000	29,800	4,200
1955	34,600	30,400	4,200
1956	37,900	33,800	4,100

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Estimates Division  
State of Washington

Dairying is a secondary part of the cattle industry in the county. The number of dairy cattle increased during the early 1940's, reaching a peak of about 8,000 head in 1942 but thereafter there was a steady decline. Only 4,100 head were estimated in 1956. Milk production increased by almost 80 percent between 1939 and 1944. Although a sharp decline occurred after 1944, milk production has remained considerably above the prewar level. Production has continued at high levels because of increased output per cow and the rapid shift which occurred from cream to whole milk production. Cream production has declined since the 1930's with the 63,500 pounds of cream produced in 1954 only one-fifth of the 1939 total. Dairying was the second ranking source of income in the livestock enterprise in 1954 and sales of milk and cream totaled \$363,400 in that year.

Table 24.- Dairy Products Sold From Farms  
Klickitat County, 1939-1954

Year	Whole Milk Sold From Farms		Cream Sold From Farms		Butter Sold From Farms	
	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)
1939	5,505,557	\$119,471	293,340	\$73,335	2,503	\$750
1944	9,833,085	317,609	169,022	84,511	--	--
1949	7,682,660	324,978	88,727	54,123	--	--
1954	7,801,211	329,070	63,481	34,393	--	--

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

### Sheep

Historically, Klickitat County has been one of the major sheep raising areas of the state. Sheep numbers, however, have declined during the last 30 years and the 14,800 head reported in 1954 were only half of the 1939 total. In 1920 the Census recorded 49,000 head. Since 1939 numbers have fluctuated widely. The very sharp drop in sheep numbers after 1939 was followed by a substantial increase in the late 1940's followed by another decline in recent years. As crop farming has become more important, fewer large range bands of sheep have been grazed in the Horse Heaven Hills and Cascade slopes of Klickitat County. Cattle production has also become more popular and more livestockmen have switched from sheep raising. Even so, Klickitat County is still an important sheep area and ranked sixth among the counties of Washington in sheep numbers during 1954.

Despite the decline in numbers of sheep between 1949 and 1954 the number of farms keeping sheep increased from 80 to 130. Many farms now have small farm flocks instead of a few farms having large range bands which were once common. The number of farms selling sheep has almost doubled during recent years. A total of 194 farms sold 18,200 head of sheep for \$273,200 during 1954. Klickitat County sheep producers also sold 101,000 pounds of wool in 1954, ranking seventh in state commercial wool.

### Hogs

Hog production has declined steadily in importance over the years. In 1920 about 10,600 head were kept on Klickitat County farms compared with 6,600

in 1939 and 2,900 in 1954. Production has dropped off sharply during recent years. Only 96 farms sold hogs in 1954 in place of the 220 farms which produced hogs for sale in 1949. The 2,600 head which were sold in 1954 returned \$80,100 to hog producers. A decreasing number of farms feed hogs for home or custom butchering for their own household use--a common practice prior to 1939. Klickitat County ranked fifteenth among the counties of Washington in hog production in 1954.

Table 25.- Hogs, Sheep, Horses and Mules  
Klickitat County, 1939-1954

Census Year	Hogs (head)	Sheep (head)	Horses and Mules (head)
1939	6,564	29,118	4,465
1944	5,142	18,112	2,789
1949	3,012	13,716	1,581
1954	2,852	14,802	1,122

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

#### Horses and Mules

The advance of mechanized farming has caused a sharp decline in the horse and mule population. Between 1939 and 1954 the number of horses and mules dropped from 4,500 head to 1,100 head. During years gone by the use of horses and mules for wheat farming, herding and transportation was common. By 1954, horses and mules were kept on only 410 farms. The few head kept today are mainly for riding and packing in mountain areas and are found two or three head per farm. Some of the larger cattle and sheep ranches may keep several head. Only 57 farms reported horses or mules alone for work power in 1954 and commercial trade in horses is limited to a few head. Not recorded by the Census is a trade in wild horses by Yakima Reservation Indians. Wild horses were once common in the Horse Heaven Hills and some small bands still range in remote districts.

#### Poultry Farming

Poultry farming in total has declined since 1939. About 345 farms sold poultry and poultry products during 1954 but only ten of these were classed as commercial poultry farms. The number of chickens kept on Klickitat County farms increased rapidly during World War II but has fallen off to a point below the prewar level since 1945. Sales of poultry and poultry products totaled \$266,000 in 1954.

The most important part of the poultry industry in Klickitat County is the production of turkeys and Klickitat County ranks eleventh among the counties of Washington in turkey production. In 1939 about 50 farms were producing turkeys in small flocks with a total of 3,300 birds reported. This enterprise expanded rapidly in the early 1940's. About 56 farms produced 19,800 turkeys in 1944. These large commercial flocks produce turkeys for sale throughout the state. During 1954 about 19,200 turkeys were raised with a sales value of \$121,400. Heavy breeds are the most popular and are found mainly in large commercial flocks.

Egg production is the second major part of the poultry enterprise. Sales of eggs increased slightly between 1949 and 1954. The value of egg sales was about \$117,200 in 1954 and almost 210 farms sold eggs in that year. One farm specialized in broiler (fryer chicken) production in 1954, selling 20,500 birds to local outlets but most other chickens sold are culls from laying flocks. The value of live chicken sales totaled \$40,700 during 1954.

Table 26.- Chickens, Egg Production and Turkeys  
Klickitat County, 1939-1954

Year	Chickens (birds)	Egg Production (dozens)	Turkeys Raised (birds)
1939	37,737	256,190	3,253
1944	45,935	384,810	19,940
1949	33,104	255,729 1/	19,904
1954	31,220	301,916 1/	19,195

1/ Eggs sold only; does not include farm-used eggs.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

### Small Animal Industry

Small animal industry is relatively minor in importance. Bee keeping is the most important specialty. Large acreages of fruit and alfalfa have encouraged bee keeping during recent years since bees are valuable for fruit and alfalfa pollinizing. The Census of Agriculture in 1920 reported 50 bee hives in the county with honey production totaling 1,300 pounds. By 1957 there were 600 hives and 9,000 pounds of honey were produced.

Between 1949 and 1954 the number of farms keeping goats declined from 41 to 27. About 380 goats were reported on Klickitat County farms in 1954 and seventy-five of these were Angora goats. Rabbits are raised on about 65 farms in 1949. Sales from small animal industries totaled about \$11,100 in 1949.