

PART V

Crops

Major Crops

Agriculture in Garfield County is not widely diversified. Over nine-tenths of the harvested cropland is in two crops. Wheat is the most important crop in the county. In 1954, a total of about 76,300 acres of wheat was harvested. This was slightly over two-thirds of the cropland. The second ranking crop was barley which was grown for grain on 27,300 acres--24 percent of the harvested cropland. The third largest crop was vegetables (mostly green peas) harvested on 4,400 acres or 4 percent of the cropland. Small grains cut for hay with 1,700 acres ranked fourth in 1954. Alfalfa, the fifth largest crop, was cut for hay on 1,100 acres. Oats were cut for grain on 700 acres. All other crops covered only 1,400 acres during 1954.

Crop Trends

Changes within a farming region are reflected by the crop history of the region. In Garfield County the land in all crops except wheat declined in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Wheat accounted for well over nine-tenths of

Total Acres of Land Harvested, 1954: 112,747 Acres

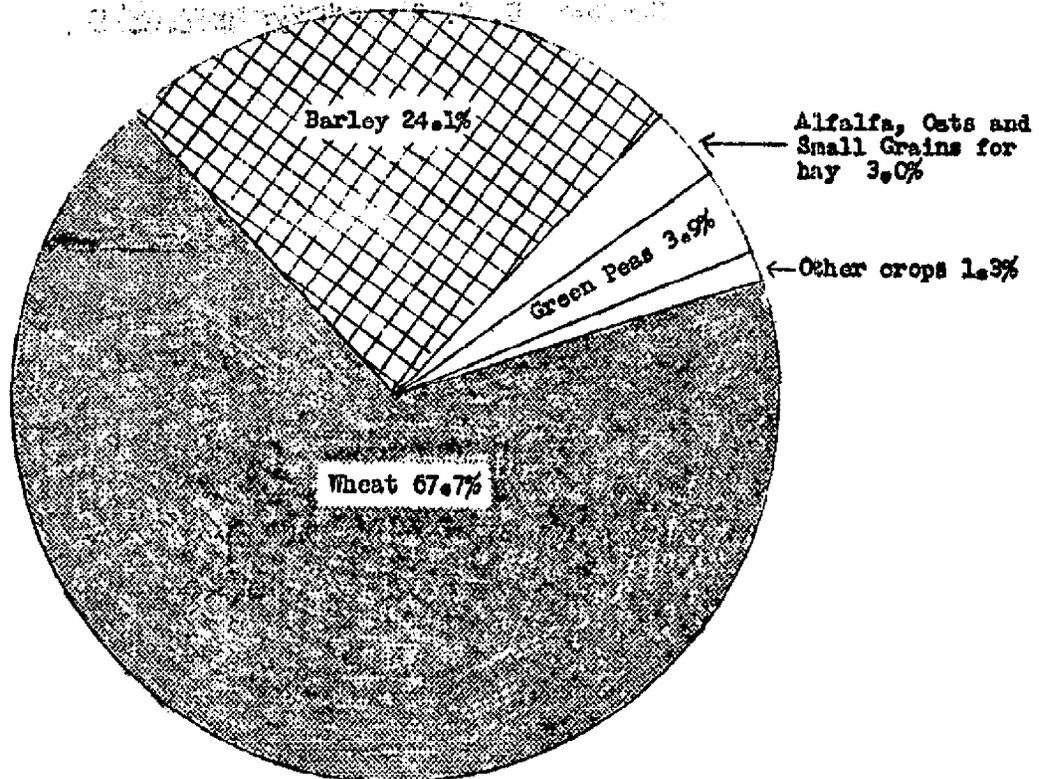


Figure 11.-- Percent of Total Cropland in Leading Crops
Garfield County, 1954
(Based on U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1954)

the harvested cropland. In 1953 the acreage of wheat remained constant compared to 1952 while the acreages in most other crops began to increase. The Acreage Allotment program caused great shifts in 1954. Over ten times as much barley was harvested as in 1953. Slight increases came in hay crops and oats. Wheat acreage declined to about 70 percent of the peak acreage reached in 1953. Some specialty cash crops are being grown on newly irrigated land. The Federal Acreage Allotment program has brought some increased diversification although barley has taken up most of the land taken out of wheat.

Wheat Farming

For many years, the most important crop from the acreage standpoint has been wheat. It was the first important commercial crop grown by the pioneer farmers. Wheat is grown almost entirely on dry lands by use of the summer fallow dry farming system. Only a small amount is irrigated. While both spring and winter wheat are planted, winter wheat is preferred. The county ranked tenth among the 39 counties of the state in wheat acreage in 1954 with 76,300 acres.

The acreage devoted to wheat has varied from a low of 55,000 acres in 1942 to a high of 102,200 acres in 1952 and 1953. Production has ranged from 1,729,000 bushels in 1939 to 3,668,600 bushels in 1952. At the same time, variations in climatic conditions and fertilization practices have resulted in yields ranging from a low of 27 bushels per acre in 1945 to a peak of 41.5 bushels per acre in 1954. The average yield of wheat in the county has usually been over 30 bushels per acre. Wheat acreage declined sharply after 1954 as a result of the Wheat Acreage Allotment program. Wheat is still the county's most important crop.

Table 17.- Varieties of Wheat Grown
in Garfield County, 1957

	Production (bushels)	Percent of Total Crop
<u>White Club Wheats</u>		
Elmar-----	1,114,700	40.6
Omar-----	536,200	19.0
Jenkins-----	2,300	.1
<u>Common-White Wheats</u>		
Brevor-----	777,800	39.8
Requa-----	180,900	27.6
Golden-----	54,800	6.4
Idaed-----	52,300	1.9
Marfed-----	45,900	1.9
Burt-----	11,500	1.6
Baart-----	300	.4
<u>Hard-Red Winter Wheats</u>		
Turkey and Rio-----	10,900	.3
Yogo-----	1,700	.1
Columbia-----	1,600	.1
Total all classes and varieties	2,820,800	

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

Table 18.- Wheat and Barley: Acreage, Yield and Production
Garfield County, 1939-1958

Year	All Wheat			Barley		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	57,000	30.3	1,729,500	7,900	34.5	272,700
1940	64,000	29.5	1,888,000	12,300	30.0	369,000
1941	62,000	38.1	2,362,200	12,600	40.0	504,000
1942	55,000	35.8	1,969,000	35,800	43.5	1,556,600
1943	62,500	32.3	2,020,000	28,000	44.5	1,246,000
1944	71,900	34.2	2,461,000	14,700	43.0	632,300
1945	77,700	27.2	2,112,200	13,400	40.0	536,200
1946	82,400	33.9	2,996,400	7,700	43.5	335,000
1947	82,000	30.5	2,498,500	5,900	36.0	212,300
1948	91,500	33.0	3,019,000	5,200	37.0	192,400
1949	85,100	27.4	2,334,100	2,700	34.0	91,700
1950	93,700	29.0	2,717,300	6,400	37.0	237,000
1951	93,000	39.2	3,645,000	2,300	38.0	87,400
1952	102,200	35.9	3,668,600	1,900	35.0	66,500
1953	102,200	31.8	3,246,600	2,600	39.0	101,500
1954	74,800	39.6	2,963,400	27,900	43.0	1,200,000
1955	64,100	36.9	2,367,800	34,000	28.0	952,000
1956	66,500	38.3	2,545,200	NA	NA	NA
1957	66,400	43.4	2,884,800	NA	NA	NA
1958	66,400	44.9	2,979,200	NA	NA	NA

NA - not available

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

Table 19.- Spring Wheat and Winter Wheat: Acreage, Yield and Production
Garfield County, 1939-1958

Year	Spring Wheat			Winter Wheat		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	2,200	26.6	58,500	54,800	30.5	1,671,000
1940	10,000	22.0	220,000	54,000	30.9	1,668,000
1941	2,000	35.0	70,000	60,000	38.2	2,292,000
1942	1,000	34.0	34,000	54,000	35.8	1,935,000
1943	10,300	39.0	402,000	52,200	31.0	1,618,000
1944	6,300	31.4	198,000	65,600	34.5	2,263,000
1945	11,800	22.6	267,000	65,900	28.0	1,845,200
1946	11,600	30.5	353,800	70,800	34.5	2,442,600
1947	11,500	21.0	241,500	70,500	32.0	2,257,000
1948	12,500	26.0	325,000	79,000	34.1	2,694,000
1949	6,100	26.5	161,600	79,000	27.5	2,172,500
1950	10,700	29.0	310,300	83,000	29.0	2,407,000
1951	28,000	35.0	980,000	65,000	41.0	2,665,000
1952	17,200	25.5	438,600	85,000	38.0	3,230,000
1953	31,500	29.0	913,500	70,700	33.0	2,333,100
1954	8,800	33.0	290,400	66,000	40.5	2,673,000
1955	4,000	21.0	84,000	60,100	38.0	2,283,800
1956	5,200	41.5	215,800	61,300	38.0	2,329,400
1957	2,400	42.0	100,800	64,000	43.5	2,784,000
1958	1,100	37.0	40,700	65,300	45.0	2,938,500

Both winter and spring wheat are planted. Winter wheat acreage in 1954 totaled 68,000 acres while spring wheat was 8,300 acres. There is a strong preference for winter wheat because of the generally higher yields obtained from fall-sown fields. Fall moisture is usually favorable for germination and the snow cover is sufficient to protect the wheat against extreme cold temperatures. Fields of winter wheat that may be damaged by winter-kill, erosion or other climatic causes are usually reseeded to spring wheat. About 98 percent of the wheat grown is sold as a cash crop.

Garfield County farmers have experimented with numerous varieties to obtain higher yields. In 1957 soft white club wheats made up three-fifths of the crop. Elmar, with 1,144,700 bushels—40 percent of the total produced—was the leading variety followed by Brevor with 39 percent and Requa with 27 percent. Hard-red winter wheat of the Turkey and Rio varieties were minor types grown.

Barley, Oats and Rye

Barley is the second most important crop in Garfield County and the county ranks seventh in the state in barley acreage. Barley has always been grown mainly as a cash crop. Barley acreage was quite high during the early 1940's. There was a gradual decline from the peak of 35,800 reached in 1942 to a low of 1,900 acres in 1952. Most of the land taken out of wheat under the wheat acreage allotment act was placed in barley. There were 34,000 acres harvested

Table 20.—Oats and Rye: Acreage, Yield and Production
Garfield County, 1939-1956

Year	Oats (grain)			Rye (for grain)		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	320	27.5	8,800	60	25.0	1,500
1940	300	30.0	9,000	100	20.0	2,000
1941	270	32.0	8,640	140	12.9	1,800
1942	350	47.0	16,450	90	12.2	1,100
1943	310	47.0	14,570	60	12.0	720
1944	230	50.0	11,500	—	—	—
1945	200	50.0	10,000	—	—	—
1946	180	49.0	8,820	—	—	—
1947	180	44.5	8,010	—	—	—
1948	150	42.0	6,300	—	—	—
1949	170	37.0	6,290	—	—	—
1950	350	48.0	16,790	—	—	—
1951	320	47.0	15,040	—	—	—
1952	400	37.0	14,800	—	—	—
1953	410	36.1	14,800	—	—	—
1954	740	44.5	32,930	—	—	—
1955	980	39.0	38,220	—	—	—
1956	200	67.0	13,400	—	—	—

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

In 1955. Yields have been high. The peak yield was 44.5 bushels per acre in 1943. A low of 28 bushels per acre in 1955 was the first average yield below 30 bushels per acre. Production has varied from 66,500 bushels in 1952 to 1,556,600 bushels in 1942. A total of 119 farms grew barley in 1954 compared with 9 in 1949.

Oats are a popular feed grain. Despite the increases in acreage during recent years only about half of the crop was sold from the farms where it was grown in 1954. Until 1954 oat acreage averaged about 200-300 acres per year. Over 700 acres of oats were harvested in 1954 and about 1,000 acres in 1955. Yields have been high with a low of 27 bushels per acre in 1939 and a peak of 51 bushels per acre in 1944 and 1945. A total of 28 of the county's farmers grew oats in 1954.

Rye was once grown on a few acres in the county. An average of about 100 acres per year was harvested up to 1943. Yields in earlier years were quite high with an average of 25 bushels per acre in 1939. No rye has been reported since 1943.

Hay and Silage Crops

Garfield County is a hay deficit area. In 1954 only 7,800 tons of hay were grown. During this same year, there were 13,500 head of cattle on the county's farms. Alfalfa, grown mainly on irrigated land, is the leading hay crop. A total of 1,200 acres produced 4,000 tons of hay in 1954. Some 770

Table 21.-- Clover-Timothy Hay and Alfalfa Hay
Acreage, Yield and Production
Garfield County, 1939-1955

Year	Clover and Timothy Hay			Alfalfa Hay		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (tons per acre)	Production (tons)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (tons per acre)	Production (tons)
1939	--	--	--	1,740	2.0	3,500
1940	--	--	--	1,780	2.0	3,600
1941	60	2.7	160	1,900	2.2	4,100
1942	80	2.4	190	1,750	1.8	3,200
1943	100	1.2	120	1,630	1.7	2,770
1944	130	1.6	210	1,530	1.9	2,900
1945	140	1.3	180	1,470	2.0	3,000
1946	150	1.5	220	1,160	2.5	2,900
1947	170	1.6	280	1,030	2.0	2,100
1948	160	1.8	290	950	2.9	2,800
1949	150	1.2	180	840	2.6	2,200
1950	140	1.2	170	800	2.8	2,200
1951	100	1.9	190	960	2.5	2,400
1952	120	1.3	160	980	2.6	2,500
1953	60	2.7	160	1,040	2.5	2,600
1954	40	1.0	40	1,160	3.4	4,000
1955	50	1.6	80	1,310	3.0	3,900

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

acres of this was irrigated land. The acreage in alfalfa reached a peak in 1941 with 1,900 acres. A gradual decline followed with a low of 800 acres reached in 1950. Since 1950 there has been a steady increase in alfalfa acreage with 1,300 acres estimated for 1955. Alfalfa was grown on 66 of the county's farms in 1954. About one-eighth of the crop was sold in that year.

The second most important hay crop is small grains cut for hay with 1,700 acres reported in 1954. This was a decline from 3,000 acres in 1949. With the increase of irrigation alfalfa has passed small grains in importance as a hay crop. Production totaled 2,800 tons in 1954 with only 165 being sold. There were 109 farms cutting small grains for hay in 1954 compared to 204 in 1949. Other hay was cut on 300 acres during 1954. Small acreages of wild hay, vetch or peas, and clover and timothy, are usually cut for hay.

Vegetables: Green Peas, Potatoes and Home Gardens

The green pea crop is the third major crop in Garfield County. The county ranks seventh in the state in acreage devoted to vegetable crops. In 1954 there were 4,400 acres of green peas harvested on two farms in the county. This represented an increase from 3,500 acres on four farms in 1949.

Potatoes are not grown extensively as a commercial crop in the county. In 1954 a total of 13 acres were harvested on 59 farms.

The percentage of Garfield County farmers growing home gardens has declined in recent years. There were 165 farm places harvesting vegetables for home use during 1954. Nine farms sold vegetables. Snap beans, sweet corn and tomatoes were the main vegetables besides green peas sold by farms.

Other Field Crops: Dry Field and Seed Peas, Field Corn and Fescue Seed

Three other field crops are of minor importance in Garfield County. The most important of these is dry field and seed peas. Two farms harvested 178 acres with a total production of 77,400 pounds in 1954. This was a decline from 1949 when five farms produced 529,000 pounds on 1,000 acres. Fescue seed is another minor crop. One farm harvested 26 acres with a total crop of 7,000 pounds in 1954. No grass seed was grown in 1949. Four farms also grew field corn during 1954. All of the field corn reported was harvested for grain. A total of 2,100 bushels were harvested from 18 acres.

Tree Fruits and Grapes

Interest in fruit farming has waned in all types of fruit. There were 92 acres of fruit in Garfield County in 1954 compared with 314 acres in 1950. Also there were 14 farms classified as fruit and nut farms by the Census of 1950 compared with none in 1954. Sales totaled \$22,700 in 1954, just half the 1949 total. Peaches are the most important fruit crop followed by apricots, pears, plums and prunes, apples and cherries in order of importance.

Table 22.- Bearing Fruit Trees
Garfield County, 1890-1954.

Year	Numbers of Bearing Trees					
	Apples	Apricots	Cherries	Peaches	Pears	Prunes & Plums
1890	10,782	1,460	1,514	11,488	2,982	6,921
1900	37,495	1,729	7,607	15,267	10,109	11,850
1910	14,251	908	3,108	24,911	4,547	5,893
1920	4,281	2	1,125	9,608	6,494	6,193
1930	2,202	1,989	1,587	9,397	3,625	9,125
1940	444	2,441	1,633	9,579	1,374	1,056
1950	378	982	1,518	9,338	753	273
1954	145	648	19	6,158	422	242

Sources: Washington Tree Fruits, Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, U.S.D.A. and Washington State Dept. of Agriculture, Cooperating, 1952. U. S. Censuses of Agriculture, 1890-1954.