

PART VII

Farm Marketing and Level of Living

Location for Marketing

Situated near the center of Washington State on a major cross-state highway and served by two transcontinental railways, Kittitas County producers are well located for marketing crops and livestock over a wide trading region. Kittitas Valley products assembled at Ellensburg, Kittitas, Thorp, Thrall and Cle Elum are within economic trucking distance of the Seattle-Tacoma Puget Sound marketing area and the Yakima Valley. Both of these areas have large food handling, processing and marketing facilities which are supplied in part by the farm production of Kittitas County. Favored by good railroad service, Kittitas producers and buyers assemble products into carload lots for state-wide and interstate commerce.

The Kittitas area with its population of 21,700 is not a major local consuming market for farm products. The area is a surplus producer of hay, grain, livestock, wholemilk and processing vegetable crops. Its economy is vitally dependent on the sale of agricultural surpluses to nearby and distant markets, particularly in the greater Seattle metropolitan area with its population of 735,000 and greater Tacoma with 280,000.

Transportation Facilities

Railroad and highway facilities for collecting, assembling and exporting Kittitas commodities have become excellent during the last 25 years. Year-round railroad connections to Puget Sound cities are well-improved by modern tunnels and lowered grades over the Cascade Mountains. The Northern Pacific and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railways serve the area. These two main lines run parallel through the Kittitas Valley converging at Ellensburg. Numerous sidings and spurs with storage warehouses and stockyards are available. Northern Pacific connects the area with the Yakima Valley to the eastern United States. Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific route crosses the county with its mainline between Tacoma and Spokane traversing the Badger Pocket district of eastern Kittitas County.

Highways vital to truck shipment of farm products out of the Kittitas Valley are U.S. 10 and U.S. 97. U.S. 10 is the major east-west cross-state route by which hay, wholemilk, potatoes and live animals are trucked over the Snoqualmie Pass to the Puget Sound trade area. Recent engineering has widened, shortened and made this road of more economical and year-round freighting service. Ellensburg is about 100 to 130 miles from the major markets in the populous Seattle-Tacoma area and their surrounding dairy farming belt where hay is sold. U.S. 10 also leads eastward through the Columbia Basin and to the Spokane market area 180 miles distant. U.S. 97 provides north-south routes for trucking livestock, hay and cash crops to Yakima and Wenatchee handlers and processors. Yakima is only 30 to 40 miles away from Kittitas farms.

Secondary or county highways permit extensive use of motor trucks to collect or ship livestock and crops to the salesyards and markets. The total

highway mileage available for farm to market service amounts to 582 miles. ^{1/} Classified by types, this includes 96 miles of surfaced roads and 405 miles of gravelled year-round roads. There are 81 miles of partially improved country and forest access roads available for dry season use to transport live animals, cash crops and forest products.

Total Value of All Farm Products Sold, 1954: \$9,716,000

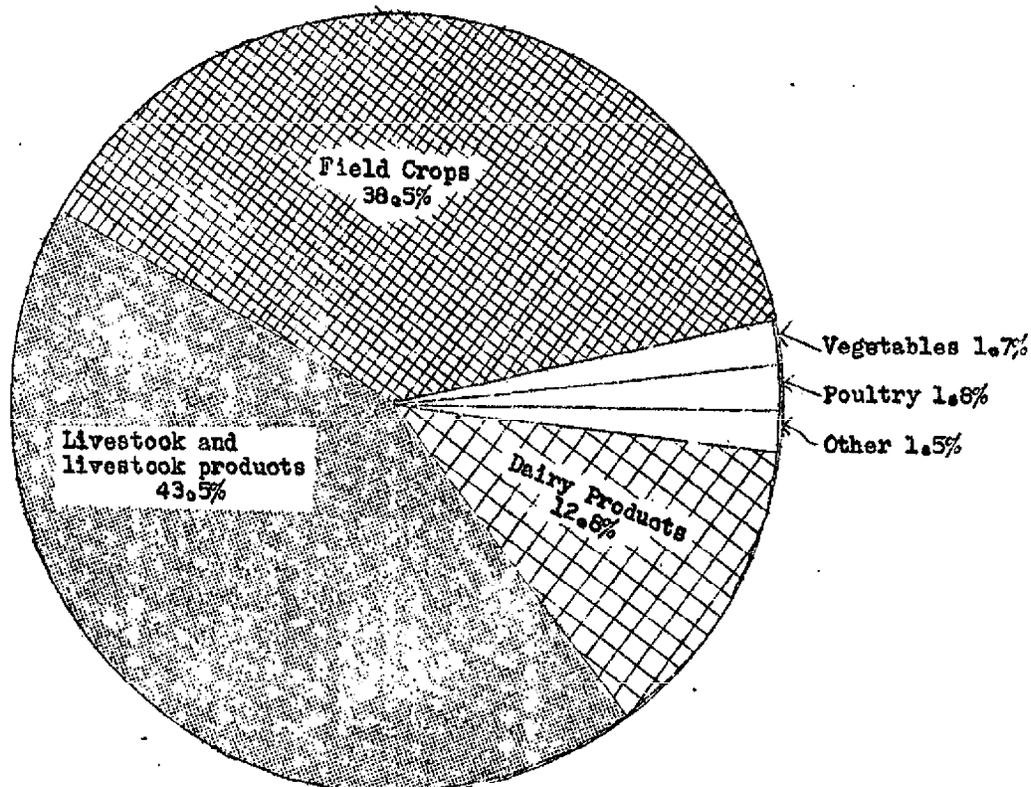


Figure 12,- Sources of Cash Income, Kittitas County Farms, 1954.
(Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture)

Gross Farm Income, Value of Products Sold

United States Census of Agriculture data on the value of all products sold directly off farms in 1954 indicates these sales amounted to \$9,716,000. This placed Kittitas County seventeenth among Washington counties in gross income received by farmers for their products. Livestock sold as feeders and for slaughter and breeding purposes was the leading source of income. Livestock sales have been exceeding \$4,000,000 annually in recent years.

Field crops, mainly commercial hay, grain and potatoes are nearly equal to livestock as sources of dollars for farms. In recent years crops have been bringing in over \$3,700,000 per year, about two-fifths of all sales by farmers.

^{1/} "County Gas Tax Allocation Study". Report of Washington State Council For Highway Research, 1954. Olympia, Washington.

Gross yearly income from sales averages about \$8,100 per farm. The sales, however, are made by 920 commercial farms of different income classes. There are 280 non-commercial farms of the residential and part-time type that sell less than \$250 worth of agricultural products. The county ranked seventeenth in the state in numbers of high gross income farms with 194 farms grossing \$10,000 to \$24,999 each. Farms grossing between \$5,000 to \$9,999 before expenses numbered 273. About one-fourth of Kittitas farms are lower income units marketing between \$250 to \$4,999 worth of products per year.

Marketing Crops

Most Kittitas producers of commercial crops sell directly to buyers, jobbers and processors in the local area who assemble, grade, box package and ship the products to state and out-of-state wholesale, retail or processor outlets. There is considerable local between-farm trade in feeder cattle and hay and grains for livestock feed. Depending on demands of dairy and livestock farms in western Washington, the export trade in hay both by rail and truck is of large volume. The specialty timothy-alfalfa type moves coastwise as far as California. Kittitas hay growers have developed a good market for this type of hay with race horse stables.

Enterprises and facilities for handling hay and grain for export or for milling feeds are good. In Ellensburg there are four grain dealers, three hay and grain firms, a major grain elevator and a feed mill. In Ellensburg there are five state licensed grain warehouses with a total storage capacity of 863,000 bushels. Other state licensed granaries are two large units at Easton and a feed company at Kittitas which operates a plant with 107,520 bushel storage capacity. Total grain storage capacity in Kittitas County assembly and shipping points amounts to 1,740,000 bushels. 1/

Food processing plants which can and freeze perishable vegetable products are limited in number in the Kittitas Valley because of the relatively small volume of commercial vegetables generally grown. There is one national freezing and canning company plant operating at Ellensburg which is a market outlet for sweet corn. Some Kittitas sweet corn is trucked to freezing plants in Yakima and Wenatchee. Kittitas is an important assembly point for corn.

While marketed in smaller volume than during the 1930's and 1940's, potatoes are a major item shipped out of Kittitas County. Major shipping points for potatoes and their volume of carloads moved during 1956 are Ellensburg, 161; Thrall, 122; and Kittitas, 87. Shipping 371 carloads containing 133,500 hundredweight, Kittitas County potato handlers marketed about 4 percent of the total state commercial potato crop in 1956. Kittitas potato growers sell their crop under regulations of the State of Washington Potato Committee which established grades, packages and methods of selling to wholesalers and processors.

1/ Washington State Department of Agriculture, Olympia, Washington. Public Grain Warehouses. (Mimeographed directory) July 31, 1957.

Table 31.- Crops Marketed From Kittitas County Farms, 1954.

Type of Crop Sold	Amount Received By Farmers	Percent All Crops Sold
Field Crops (alfalfa, oats, barley, field corn, hay, grass seed, sugar beets, potatoes)	\$3,745,112	93.3
Vegetables (sweet corn, green peas, etc.)	166,828	4.2
Fruits (apples, pears)	78,119	2.0
Horticultural Specialties (cut flowers, potted and bedding plants, trees)	<u>20,777</u>	<u>.5</u>
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$4,010,836	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Marketing Live Animals and Wool

Organization and facilities for marketing live beef animals, lambs and wool are well developed in Kittitas County. This activity is of primary importance in the agricultural economy of the area. Producers receive \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 per year for their products. The Kittitas County Cattlemen's Association is active in organizing auction sales of feeder and slaughter cattle and breeding stock as well as developing and promoting markets. The Woolgrowers Association aids in organizing pools for the sales of wool.

Local outlets for feeder and slaughter cattle and lambs are good. There are two community livestock auction yards holding weekly sales at Ellensburg. Livestockmen can also truck animals to community yards at Toppenish and Wapato in Yakima County. In Ellensburg there are two slaughter and packing companies and several livestock dealers who buy directly off farms. There is a livestock company in Kittitas. By use of rail and truck shipments, livestockmen and dealers market a large volume of live beef animals and lambs to larger terminal stockyards and packing houses in Seattle, Auburn and Tacoma. Some live animals are also sold to the Yakima area's meat packing industry. Sheep livestockmen through their association pool wool and fulfill sales orders in Portland, Oregon. A number of livestock hauling firms based in Ellensburg and Yakima service the Kittitas livestock industry.

Comparison of Census figures shows that the volume of sales in Kittitas County ranks high in the state's commerce in live animals. In recent years sales of cattle and calves have ranged between \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000 annually for 25,000 to 30,000 head purchased each year from cattlemen. Cattle and calf sales account for nearly a tenth of the state total. Kittitas County ranks second to Yakima in annual returns from beef cattle. Sales of sheep, lambs and wool ranging between \$300,000 to \$400,000 annually is about one-twelfth of the total state volume, placing the county fifth among the major producing counties of Washington.

Marketing Dairy Products

The marketing of whole milk and dairy products from Kittitas County is based on supplying a local trade area and also operating as part of the Seattle milkshed under regulations of the Puget Sound Milk Marketing Area. Many producers of wholemilk participate in the Kittitas Dairymen's Association marketing cooperative. In 1957 there were 73 dairy producers in Kittitas County pooling milk which is shipped over the Cascades to the Seattle-Tacoma metropolitan area. About 60 percent of the milk is shipped by tanks and 40 percent in cans. Long distance tank shipment is a recent trend. Kittitas producers have their milk assembled at a handling plant in Ellensburg before it is hauled in tankers over Snoqualmie Pass. A large volume terminates at Issaquah, east of Seattle, for bottling and distribution.

Local milk marketing of Grade A and factory milk is centered at Ellensburg and Cle Elum. The Dairymen's Association plant at Ellensburg processes milk into butter, ice cream and dried milk and distributes Grade A milk. A private plant at Cle Elum distributes wholemilk and makes ice cream and butter.

Kittitas dairymen operating in the marketing pool administered by the Puget Sound Milk Marketing Area order sold 17,923,000 pounds of Grade A and factory milk for which they received over \$800,000 during 1956. Kittitas dairy farms at latest report supply about 2 percent of the Grade A milk handled under the Federal Milk Order in the Puget Sound Washington Milk Marketing area. Since 1953 Kittitas has advanced from twelfth to tenth position among the fifteen counties supplying Grade A milk to this market area. 1/

The total returns to producers of Kittitas dairying exceeds one million dollars annually. Whole milk is third behind cattle and alfalfa as a source of income to Kittitas agriculture.

Marketing Poultry and Eggs

The poultry industry is on a minor scale, being more for home and local markets than a wide spread commercial market. A formerly important turkey industry of the 1940's has declined. In the most recent census year poultry producers were only marketing about \$175,000 worth of products, eggs being the major cash item. The Kittitas Valley and the Ellensburg trade area is supplied partly with eggs, frozen chickens and turkeys shipped in from western and eastern Washington counties.

Market outlets and facilities for handling locally produced eggs and poultry are located in Ellensburg. There are three dealers in poultry in Ellensburg. The statewide poultry cooperative, Washington Cooperative Farmers Association, operates a buying and wholesaling station for eggs in Ellensburg.

1/ Nicholas L. Keyock, Market Administrator, 200 Bigelow Bldg., 4th & Pike St., Seattle 1, Washington. Marketing Service Information for the Puget Sound, Washington, Milk Marketing Area. Information Report of May 1957.

Table 33.- Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed
Kittitas County, 1954.

Class of Livestock Products Sold	Quantity Marketed	Amount Received By Farmers
<u>Dairy Products</u>		
Whole milk-----	30,949,000 lbs.	\$1,151,000
Butterfat-----	225,000 lbs.	102,500
Total all dairy products		\$1,253,500
<u>Poultry and poultry products</u>		
Chickens-----	17,650 birds	\$ 18,000
Eggs-----	419,000 dozen	153,000
Turkeys, ducks, geese-----	--	54,000
Total all poultry & poultry products		\$ 175,000
<u>Animals sold alive</u>		
Cattle-----	23,140 head	\$3,405,000
Calves-----	6,460 head	419,500
Hogs and pigs-----	1,250 head	41,600
Sheep and lambs-----	16,590 head	266,000
Horses and mules-----	84 head	10,000
Total all animals sold alive		\$4,142,100
<u>Other livestock and livestock products sold</u>		
Wool-----	169,000 lbs.	\$ 85,000
Fur animals & pelts, honey	--	\$ 30,000
Total amount received for livestock and livestock products-----		\$5,685,000

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Marketing Farm Forest Products

Western Kittitas County farmers located in the eastern Cascade Mountain slope belt of ponderosa pine have been selling an increasing volume of forest products. In 1954 there were 17 farm units which sold over \$48,000 worth of woodland products. The Cle Elum, Easton and Thorp districts have four lumber mills where saw logs are sold for manufacturing into lumber and box shooks. Rail and truck loading sidings are numerous in this mountain district where piling, poles, pulpwood and firewood can be loaded for shipment to eastern Washington mills or over the Cascades to Puget Sound. There is also some minor trade in fence posts and tree props trucked to the irrigated basins and orchard districts of the lower Yakima Valley and the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project. Some sell timber during the winter season. Some edible forest products such as wild blackberries, huckleberries and elderberries are marketed to fruit processors.

Table 34.- Forest Products on Farms, Kittitas County, 1954

Type of Product	Farms Reporting	Quantity
Firewood and fuelwood cut-----	22	204 cords
Fence posts cut-----	9	2,031 posts
Sawlogs and veneer logs cut-----	15	2,642 M bd. ft.
Pulpwood cut-----	1	2,000 cords
Total value of farm forest products sold and used on the farm-----	17	\$48,227

Sources: U.S. Census, Agriculture.
Washington Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

Specified Farm Expenditures

In the 1954 Census of Agriculture, Kittitas farmers reported expenditures related to their farming operations. These figures show the major costs of farming. Subtracted from gross sales of farm products, they show the net income of farming operations. Because of its specialization in cattle and dairying, the major expense is for hay and grain. Over a thousand farms purchased feed, buying a total of over a million dollars worth annually. Farmers spend over \$3,360,000 annually for services, labor and supplies. Farm labor is paid over \$1,000,000 per year in Kittitas agriculture.

Table 35.- Specified Farm Expenditures in 1954, Kittitas County

Type of Expenditure	Number of Farms Reporting	Expenditure of all Farms	Average Per Farm
Machine hire.....	703	\$ 427,448	\$ 608.03
Hired labor.....	638	1,068,348	1,674.53
Feed for livestock and poultry	1,022	1,162,130	1,137.11
Gasoline, petroleum fuel & oil	993	512,673	516.28
Commercial fertilizer.....	370	189,159	511.24
Lime and liming materials.....	--	--	--
Total production costs.....		\$3,359,758	

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture.

Since 1950 Kittitas farmers have reduced their expenditures for labor by using more machinery in hay harvesting. Farm labor demands have fallen off recently because of decreasing acreage in sweet corn and processor crops which required hand labor. In 1949 over \$1,900,000 was spent for farm labor compared with \$1,068,000 in 1954.

The servicing and supplying of Kittitas County's 1,130 farms is a major basis of business in Ellensburg, Kittitas, Cle Elum and other towns. This farm trade area is a market for nearly \$3,500,000 worth of services and goods per year.

Agricultural Income Compared to Other Income Sources

Agriculture is the most important source of income in Kittitas County. Net income from farm operations makes up over one-fourth of the total from all occupations. Net profit or income from the sales of livestock and crops and other farm products has been trending upward since 1950. It has gone up from nearly \$8,000,000 to over \$9,000,000 per year. Agriculture exceeds employment in retailing and wholesaling as well as government payrolls as a source of salaries and as returns from invested capital.

Table 36.- Types and Sources of Income 1950-1952, Kittitas County ^{1/}

Type and Source of Income	Income in Dollars By Years			Percentage of County Income by Years		
	1950	1951	1952	1950	1951	1952
Agriculture	\$ 7,932,000	\$ 7,476,000	\$ 9,006,000	24.6	23.5	26.1
Construction	1,258,000	1,445,000	1,455,000	3.9	4.5	4.2
Government	3,028,000	2,858,000	3,145,000	9.4	9.0	9.1
Manufacturing	2,316,000	2,485,000	2,807,000	7.2	7.8	8.1
Service	2,450,000	2,299,000	2,445,000	7.6	7.2	7.1
Transportation Communication and Utilities	2,035,000	2,161,000	2,234,000	6.3	6.8	6.4
Trade	4,409,000	4,653,000	4,589,000	13.7	14.6	13.3
Miscellaneous	3,313,000	3,571,000	3,752,000	10.3	11.2	10.9
Property Income	2,526,000	2,675,000	2,780,000	7.9	8.4	8.1
Other Income	2,932,000	2,249,000	2,318,000	9.1	7.0	6.7
Total	\$32,199,000	\$31,872,000	\$34,531,000	100.0	100.0	100.0

^{1/} John A. Guthrie and Stanley E. Boyle, County Income Payments in Washington, 1950-1952. Pullman, Wash. Washington State College, Bulletin No. 26.

Level of Living on Kittitas County Farms

On the whole, farm people have not enjoyed as high a level of living as city people. Farm incomes are lower on the average than urban incomes. Because of the isolation of many farms, such conveniences as electricity, hot and cold running water and telephones have not been as easily available to farm families throughout America.

In Washington State and Kittitas County, however, the farm population compares quite favorably with other population groups with respect to factors used to judge levels of living. Table 35 shows findings of a study of farm operator level-of-living for the State of Washington compared to national standards. This index is based on the prevalence of electricity, telephones, automobiles, etc., and the average value of products sold on each of the farms.

Table 37.- Indices of Level of Living of Kittitas County Farm Families, 1950 Compared with State and National Averages.

Index Items	Percentage of total farm families with listed index items		
	United States	Washington	Kittitas County
Farm Family Level-of-Living	122	154	159
Median Income per Family	\$1,567	\$2,380	\$2,265
Electricity	78.3%	92.5%	85.5%
Electric Hot Water Heater	17.4%	49.1%	53.1%
Electric Washing Machine	58.7%	85.4%	78.7%
Home Freezers	12.1%	14.5%	9.1%
Mech. Refrigerators	62.7%	77.4%	81.8%
Telephone	38.2%	57.5%	67.8%
Hot and Cold Water Plumbing	23.8%	70.4%	76.0%
Central Heating	18.1%	17.8%	13.0%
Houses with More than One Person per Room	22.3%	15.7%	15.6%
Automobiles	63.0%	77.6%	72.8%
Travel 10 Miles or More to Trading Center	21.4%	20.5%	23.3%

Source: Walter L. Slocum and Carol L. Stone, The Farm People of Washington at Mid-Century. State College of Washington, Washington Agric. Exp. Stations. Bulletin 557, February 1955. Pullman, Washington.

The ownership and use of conveniences and index items generally associated with a modern standard of living is found below the state average in some Kittitas County localities. Some remote farm or ranch places in the dryland and mountain areas cannot be serviced with electricity, telephones and modern water systems. About one-fourth of Kittitas County farms are more than 10 miles from a trading center. Some of these outlying farm places lower the county level of standard of rural livelihood.

Home conveniences and standards of living are generally good within the farm units located in the Kittitas Reclamation District. Being in level and accessible terrain and near modern highways, power and telephone lines, the standards are on a par with the richest farming areas of the state.

Kittitas County agriculture is a record of progress made by its industrious people. In the last 75 years its dryland and irrigation farmers and its livestockmen have developed a highly important agricultural area vitally contributing to the state economy. Numerous stock farms, dairy farms and growers of hay, grain and vegetables add much to overall production of the central Washington region. Each farm and ranch stands as a living monument to the faith and enterprise of the individual land pioneers who chose their homes in the Kittitas Valley and its neighboring farm districts.