

harvested during the past 15 years with a low of 1,400 acres in 1940 and 1941 and a high of 2,200 acres in 1955. Wild hay and other hay comprise the next largest portion of hay land. Small grains cut green for hay have been on a downward trend since 1939. Acreage of grain hay in 1939 was at a peak of 1,602 acres compared with only 578 acres in 1949 and 288 acres in 1954. Acreage planted in alfalfa hay has been increasing since 1947 but still only totals 40 acres.

Grass silage is a rapidly growing farm practice in this area. It enables farmers to utilize green forage crops more efficiently and to lessen losses in hay quality from damp weather at harvest time. In recent years numerous farms have added silage cutters and installed pits and silos for storing silage. Virtually all of the hay produced on Mason farms is consumed within the county. Only 169 tons of hay from 11 farms were reported sold, with most of this being sold to neighboring farms. Mason farms import much of their alfalfa from surplus areas in eastern Washington.

Oats, Other Small Grains and Corn

The production of oats and other small grains on a commercial basis in Mason County has been somewhat limited by several factors. One of these factors has been the size of farms. Another is the high intensity of dairy and livestock farms which convert much of the land into permanent pasture and hay land. The acreage of oats has shown a slight decline since 1940 but production has remained fairly constant during this period because of relatively high yields. Acreage in 1949 was 196 acres as compared to 120 acres in 1955.

Table 27.- Oats and Barley: Acreage, Yield and Production
Mason County, 1939-1955

Year	Oats (grain)			Barley (grain)		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushel per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushel per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	50	43.0	2,150	--	--	--
1940	110	37.0	4,070	--	--	--
1941	170	41.0	6,970	--	--	--
1942	175	40.0	7,000	30	29.0	870
1943	170	41.0	6,970	30	28.0	840
1944	160	31.0	4,960	20	28.0	560
1945	150	30.0	4,500	20	24.0	480
1946	140	27.0	3,780	20	28.0	560
1947	160	27.0	4,320	20	29.0	580
1948	140	21.0	2,940	30	16.0	480
1949	110	20.0	2,200	20	13.0	260
1950	100	20.0	2,000	20	25.0	500
1951	110	18.0	1,980	20	28.0	560
1952	110	27.0	2,970	10	31.0	310
1953	130	26.0	3,380	10	32.0	320
1954	100	16.0	1,600	10	31.0	310
1955	120	27.0	3,240	10	36.0	360
1956	100	41.0	4,100	--	--	--

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agric. Ext. Div.,
State of Washington

Production totaled 3,240 bushels in 1955. Acreage planted to barley has been declining since 1947 and now totals 10 acres. Wheat, like barley, is grown on very few acres (10) and now has become unimportant as a source of farm revenue. Corn was produced on only 14 acres in 1954. Most of the corn was cut and used for silage, the remainder being grazed or cut for green or dry fodder.

Fruits and Vegetables

Mason County is not self-sufficient in the production of vegetable crops and berries. Much of this is due to the terrain and lack of fertile soil needed in the production of commercial vegetables and berries. Also, much available land is used for hay and pasture. The production of vegetables has decreased since 1939 and now occupies only 11 acres. Nearly all vegetable crops are sold in local fresh markets with little or no processing being done. Over 100 of Mason County farms reported raising vegetables in gardens for home use in 1954.

Commercial berry acreage, mainly in strawberries, raspberries, loganberries and blackberries, constitutes a very small percent of total cropland acreage and has shown a decreasing trend and now only 10 acres are used for growing commercial berries as compared with 32 acres in 1949 and 89 acres in 1950.

Table 11.- Berry Crops: Strawberries, Raspberries and Loganberries
Mason County, 1949-1955

	Strawberries		Raspberries		Loganberries	
	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons
1949	11	20	3	7	45	150
1950	10	20	5	7	40	80
1951	10	20	2	2	40	60
1952	10	20	2	2	40	70
1953	10	20	2	2	2	2
1954	10	20	10	15	25	30
1955	10	20	5	13	25	25
1956	10	20	2	2	30	16

Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Data.
 * Figures are available for inter-censal years.
 † Figures are for 1953, 1956.
 ‡ Figures from U.S. Dept. of Agric. Estimates Division.

The county has a total of 32 acres planted in fruit trees, nuts and berries. This is a decrease from the 470 acres in 1940 and the 537 acres in 1950. The principal fruit and nut trees of all ages on all Mason County farms are apples (3,317), filberts (1,319), plums

and grapes. There are 98,500 vines. Most of the vineyards are located near Grapeview on Puget Sound where several sales and seedling plants are maintained. The principal

variety of grape grown in this area is the Island Belle which is also grown in other parts of Washington. Mason County is fourth in the state in grapevines.

Census enumerations since 1940 have indicated a decrease in fruit and nut trees. Many orchards have been removed from lands that are suited for the growing of more profitable crops. Other orchards have gone into suburban residential property. Freezing weather in 1950 and 1955 killed numerous fruit trees which have not been replaced. In general, western Washington tree fruits are unable to compete in the market with Yakima County and other eastern Washington orchard areas.

Nursery and Greenhouse Products: Flowers, Bulbs and Plants

Sales from nursery products, flowers and flowering plants amounted to over \$38,000 in 1954. Although the acres planted to these products have decreased since 1950, the greenhouse space under glass has increased nearly six and a half times. The greenhouse business has shown a steady trend upward since 1939 with sales from this business amounting to \$36,400 in 1954 which was about 96 percent of the total sales from nursery and greenhouse products.

Table 19.- Horticultural Specialties: Nursery Products, Greenhouse Products, Flowers, Plants, Bulbs, Seeds, Mushrooms and other Special Plants
Mason County, 1939-1954

Census Year	Nursery Products (shrubs, trees and ornamentals)		Flowers and flowering plants, bulbs and seeds; vegetables, vegetable seeds, plants, mushrooms grown in fields and under glass for sale.		
	Acres Planted	Sales from Nurseries	Acres in open fields	Greenhouse space (square feet under glass)	Sales from farms during the year
1939	<u>1</u> / ¹	<u>1</u> / ¹	10	1,310	\$ 3,083
1944 ² / ₂	---	---	---	---	---
1949	8	2,411	15	8,600	\$24,815
1954	3	1,722	1	55,160	\$36,413

¹/ Where less than 3 farms report, data are included only in State totals.

²/ No Census data are available for 1944.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture