

## PART V

## CROPS

Major Crops

Commercial crops in Yakima County are grown on both irrigated and dryland acreages. According to the Census of Agriculture, about 86 percent of the county's 281,008 acres of harvested cropland in 1959 was under irrigation. Yakima County's fruit trees have been increased over the years to a level where it has been able to maintain its prominence as the most important crop of the county in terms of both acreage and value of production. The second ranking crop of Yakima County in terms of acreage was alfalfa hay with the figure of 39,000 acres in 1962. Taken as a group, vegetables grown on 26,660 acres in 1962 ranked third. Asparagus and sweet corn are the most important vegetables harvested in Yakima County. The wheat acreage was fourth in 1962 with 21,700 followed by an estimated 18,100 acres of sugar beets. The sixth ranking crop was hops which were harvested from over 16,500 acres in 1962. Other major crops grown in the county were corn for grain and silage, mint for oil and barley.

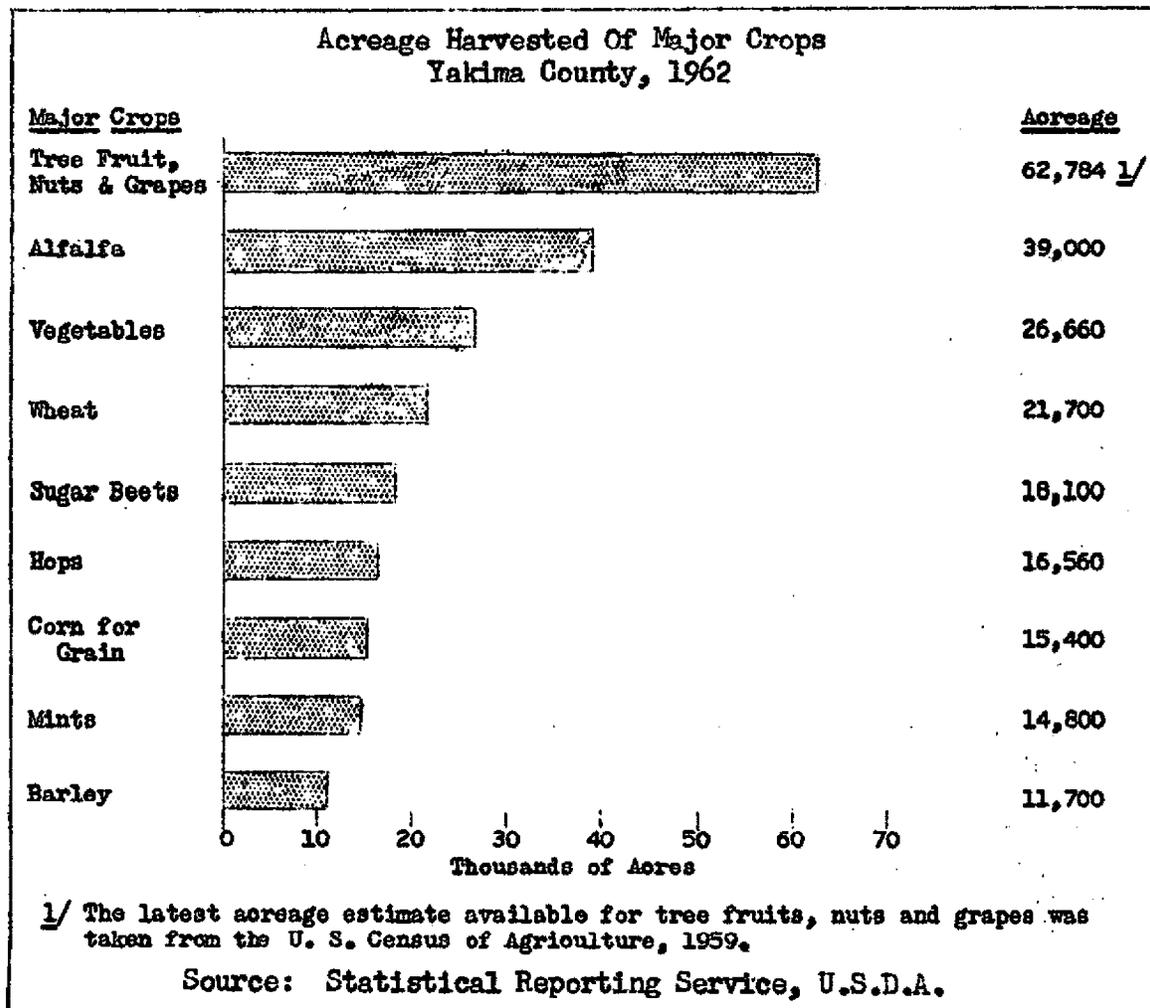


Figure 12. Acreage Harvested of Major Crops, Yakima County, 1962.

### Crop Trends

Agriculture in Yakima County has been almost in a continuous process of change. The expansion of irrigation, the growth of numbers of farms, new markets for fruit and specialty crops, experimentation with new crops and abandonment of others are reflected in crop trends. Census data and estimates of the Statistical Reporting Service during the 1949-1962 period indicate various trends. The statistical tables in this chapter show how acreages and productions in leading crops have decreased or increased over the past years.

Since 1949, there have been several general trends in Yakima crop programs. Specialization in fruit is continuing, with the amount of land planted in orchards and vineyards increasing slowly from 44,584 acres in 1940 to 55,247 in 1950 and 62,784 acres in 1959. In field crops, there have been great increases in sugar beets. Other crops which are greater today than in 1949 are barley, mint, hops, clover-timothy hay and rye. Acreages of wheat, oats, potatoes, alfalfa hay and seed, and red clover seed have been on a downward trend. Commercial vegetable acreage, especially asparagus and sweet corn, has moved upward from 19,453 acres in 1949 to 26,660 acres in 1962. All land in harvested crops has increased 18 percent from 237,438 acres in 1949 to 281,008 acres in 1959. More land has been brought under cultivation by use of irrigation systems and by extending new orchards and grain fields to higher lands.

### Tree Fruits, Nuts, Grapes and Berries

Yakima ranked sixth in value of fruits (including berries and other small fruits and nuts) sold among all United States counties in 1959 and is the leading county in Washington State fruit production. In 1959, it lead all counties in the nation in numbers of apple trees and quantity harvested. Yakima also ranked first, nationally, in the number of pear trees and was third in terms of the quantity harvested. In regards to the number of peach trees, it ranked twelfth and was ninth as far as the amount harvested. It was fifteenth in the number of cherry trees and sixteenth in the number of plum and prune trees. In terms of production, the county was eighth in plums and prunes and ninth in cherries among all American counties. The Yakima Valley is often referred to as the "Fruit Bowl of the Nation" because of its importance in the production of fruit on a national level as indicated above.

In 1959, there were 3,107 farms or over half of all Yakima County farms reporting some fruit grown. Fruits and nuts sold were valued at \$40,612,342 in 1959. This was the most important source of income in the county's agricultural economy and was over one-third of the total farm income. Growers' sales of fruit are great enough to make Yakima the top ranking county of the state in value of all products sold off farms.

Based on number of trees in 1959, fruit and nut crops include the following: apples (2,344,897), pears (1,323,019), peaches (556,696), plums and prunes (254,141), cherries (178,838), apricots (121,235), filberts and hazelnuts (851) and walnuts (402) trees. Grapes totaled 2,914,495 vines of all ages.

#### Apples

Apples are Yakima's main tree fruit crop. In 1959, there were 1,960 growers with 20 or more apple trees. There were 2,344,897 trees of all ages, making up

about 45 percent of all apple trees in the entire state. Bearing apple trees numbered 1,267,829 which yielded 15,574,316 loose boxes, the largest production in the state and in the United States for an individual county. Yakima County alone produced about 50 percent of Washington's 1959 apple crop and accounted for 9 percent of the nation's apple production. In 1961, Yakima shipped 51 percent of the state's fresh market apples and in 1962 the figure was 41 percent.

Most important of the apples grown in Yakima County is the Winesap. The famous Red Delicious, with its solid deep red color so highly prized, is second. The Standard Delicious, with its faint stripe pattern, is third and the tender, yellow-hued Golden Delicious is fourth. Romes rank a close fifth followed by Jonathans and Newtowns. In recent years the tendency has been to cut out the Standard Delicious, Jonathan and Winesap varieties in favor of the more highly valued commercial varieties, such as the Red Delicious.

Table 15. Apples: Trees of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1900-1959

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Apples (Bushels)
1900	177,310	1899	57,345
1910	386,537	1909	321,546
1920	1,907,642	1919	6,249,950
1930	1,763,981	1929	8,971,905
1940	1,200,600	1939	10,501,754
1950	1,103,413	1949	10,208,983
1959	1,267,829	1959	11,057,764

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Between 1910 and 1920 came the big expansion in Yakima apple production. Apple trees of bearing age reached 1,907,642 in 1920, the largest number ever reported by the Census. There was a gain of over 1,520,000 trees in the years 1910-1920. After 1920 there was a constant decline in number of bearing apple trees. Numbers dropped to 1,103,413 by 1950, a decline of 42 percent from the 1920 peak. Despite the decrease after 1920, production has continued to increase and was the highest in 1959. Since 1920, Yakima County apple orchards have been greatly improved by better horticultural practices and harvesting methods and production has been increased by planting heavier producing trees.

Most of the apple orchards are concentrated in the Upper Valley in a belt extending from Naches to the City of Yakima. The orchards are located on the irrigable slopes at the bases of Cowiche Mountain, Cleman Mountain and Yakima Ridge where there is air circulation at night and less danger of frost during the blossoming period. The Lower Yakima Valley also produces many apples, and in the last two years, plantings have been heavy replacing the less profitable fruit crops such as peaches.

#### Pears

Pears are the second most important tree fruit in the Yakima fruit growing industry. In 1959, there were 1,323,019 pear trees being grown on Yakima farms.

The Bartlett pear was reported grown on 1,809 farms while 781 farms reported growing pears other than Bartlett in 1959. Yakima County alone contains about two-thirds of the total pear trees in the state and annually accounts for 60-70 percent of Washington's pear production. In 1959, the county ranked first in the nation in number of pear trees and third in quantity harvested.

Yakima pear growers specialize in both Bartlett pears and winter varieties. The Bartlett is by far the most important, comprising more than 89 percent of the pear trees of all varieties. Yakima County alone had 75 percent of the Bartletts produced in the state. In 1962, about two-thirds of the state's Bartlett pear shipments originated in Yakima County. Pears other than Bartletts grown in Yakima are winter varieties such as D'Anjou, Bosc, Flemish and Winter Nelis. The D'Anjou variety predominates among the winter pears by a wide margin. Yakima County accounted for about 38 percent of Washington's winter pear production in 1959. Fresh market shipments of winter pears in 1962 totaled 735 carlots or one-third of the state's commercial shipments. Quality and size of the fruit moving in fresh channels are controlled by a Winter Pear Control Board which is composed of growers and shippers in Washington, Oregon and California.

Table 16. Pears: Trees of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1900-1959

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Pears (Bushels)
1900	23,681	1899	10,441
1910	56,635	1909	56,779
1920	453,638	1919	1,114,371
1930	920,766	1929	1,744,088
1940	1,000,666	1939	3,816,947
1950	988,870	1949	3,312,160
1959	854,425	1959	2,344,800

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Although pears are grown in all parts of the Yakima Valley, the greatest concentration is in the Upper Valley. The Lower Valley also has a large number of pear orchards but they are more dispersed.

#### Peaches

Peaches form another important commercial fruit crop of Yakima County. The county had 556,696 peach trees in 1959, almost 65 percent of the state total. It produced almost 75 percent of the peaches harvested in the state. In 1959, Yakima also ranked twelfth in the nation in numbers of trees and ninth in the quantity harvested. In 1962, fresh market shipments of peaches totaled 1,134 carlots, or 66 percent of Washington's total.

A great many varieties of peaches are grown but Elbertas and Hales account for most of the county's peach trees. In recent years an early fresh market variety, the Red Haven, has gained favor and its production has increased substantially.

Production of peaches has increased steadily since 1930, although tree numbers have declined in the last ten years. From 1950 to 1959 the number of peach trees of bearing age dropped from 660,791 to 483,094, a decline of about 27 percent. Many orchards have been pulled and replanted to apples because of early spring freezes, winter damage and a series of poor years from a price standpoint.

Table 17. Peaches: Trees of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1900-1959.

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Peaches (Bushels)
1900	43,092	1899	14,024
1910	165,637	1909	7,526
1920	303,152	1919	926,629
1930	358,915	1929	892,549
1940	403,508	1939	1,109,038
1950	660,791	1949	1,174,895
1959	483,094	1959	1,524,554

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Most of the peaches produced in Yakima County are grown south of Union Gap in the Lower Valley. Many of these are grown on land irrigated by water from the Roza Irrigation Canal.

### Cherries

Cherries are the fourth most important tree fruit. Yakima County has more cherry trees and produces more cherries than any other county in Washington. Yakima alone accounted for more than 57 percent of the state's 1959 cherry crop. In the same year, it ranked ninth nationally in production and was fifteenth in total number of trees. In 1962, the county shipped 57 percent of the state's fresh market sweet cherries.

Yakima is almost exclusively a sweet cherry area. Of the 178,838 cherry trees in the county in 1959, about 99 percent were sweet varieties and sour cherries accounted for only 1 percent of the total. Among the sweet cherry varieties, growers prefer the attractive "black" Bing variety followed by Lamberts and "white" Royal Anns.

Cherry tree plantings and production increased steadily up to 1950 in response to an expanding processing market and a nationwide fresh fruit market. After 1950, tree numbers and production declined 30 percent and 36 percent, respectively. Yakima's cherry industry was badly damaged in 1955 by a severe November freeze which killed many trees outright and injured most others to some extent. Heavy removal of cherry trees continued for 3 years after the freeze.

Commercial cherry orchards are concentrated in the Upper Valley north of Union Gap as well as in the Lower Valley. Recent plantings of cherries have been made to replace those damaged by the 1955 freeze and the industry now appears to be on its way back.

Table 18. Cherries: Trees of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1900-1959

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Cherries (tons)
1900	6,904	1899	60
1910	10,892	1909	132
1920	45,922	1919	1,027
1930	80,774	1929	3,237
1940	119,690	1939	6,595
1950	155,377	1949	12,651
1959	108,252	1959	8,091

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

#### Apricots

Yakima County dominates the apricot industry in Washington. There were 121,235 trees of all ages in 1959, over 60 percent of the state total. The county also had 63 percent of the state's production. At one time, apricots were one of the major stone-fruit crops harvested in the county. Now, however, many growers have removed trees because of costly freeze losses, a series of poor price years and a declining market demand. As a result, numbers of apricot trees fell from a high of 192,496 in 1950 to 111,896 trees in 1959. Production, likewise, dropped in volume.

Table 19. Apricots: Trees of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1900-1959

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Apricots (tons)
1900	3,145	1899	5
1910	4,015	1909	8
1920	6,654	1919	176
1930	107,195	1929	2,195
1940	133,343	1939	5,826
1950	192,496	1949	7,640
1959	111,896	1959	7,058

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

The Mocrpark variety predominates followed by Tilton, Blenheim and Riland. Other varieties raised are Perfections, Phelps, Sunglow, Gilbert and Bowers. Most of the apricots are grown in high, relatively frost-free locations. The older plantings were in the Tieton River area northwest of Yakima. The only real concentration of apricot trees remaining is the Buena-Zillah-Granger area in the Lower Valley.

#### Prunes and Plums

Yakima leads all counties in plum and prune tree numbers and production. The county alone had almost three-fourths of Washington's prune crop in 1959 and over

two-thirds of all the trees in the state. It also ranked eighth among all U. S. counties in prune production in 1959. In 1962, the county accounted for about 91 percent of the state's commercial prune shipments to fresh market.

Table 20. Plums and Prunes: Trees of Bearing Age and Production, Yakima County, 1900-1959

Year	Bearing Trees	Year	Production of Plums & Prunes (tons)
1900	82,026	1899	1,135
1910	27,076	1909	1,894
1920	68,361	1919	2,677
1930	170,367	1929	8,922
1940	136,580	1939	7,370
1950	205,185	1949	6,567
1959	181,509	1959	15,213

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

The prune growing industry has been marked by periods of great increase and sudden decline rather than by any orderly trend over the years. Recently, tree numbers have become more stable with production increasing steadily in volume. Italian prunes are the major variety grown in Yakima orchards. Most of the prune orchards are located in the Lower Valley, below Union Gap. The bulk of the crop is raised in the Grandview-Sunnyside area.

#### Nuts

Nut tree orchards are of minor importance in Yakima County. In 1959, there were 103 farms with walnut trees and 30 with filberts and hazelnuts. About 4,640 pounds of walnuts and nearly 11,000 pounds of filberts and hazelnuts were harvested. Walnut trees and production have declined in recent years, whereas, the number of filbert and hazelnut trees and volume have increased since 1954. Between 1954 and 1959, filbert and hazelnut trees increased from 344 trees to 851 and production expanded from 1,343 pounds to 10,925.

#### Grapes

In recent years, Yakima has become an important grape producing area. According to the United States Census of 1959, the county had 55 percent of all the grapes produced in the state and ranked twelfth among all U. S. counties.

Processing plants throughout the Lower Valley plus new markets for juice and grape concentrate have stimulated the grape industry. In 1959, there were 2,719,279 vines of bearing age compared to 1,729,519 in 1950 and to only 512,526 in 1940. Annual production rose from 7,810,296 pounds to over 60,000,000 pounds during the same 20 year period.

Most of the grapes grown in Yakima County are of the Concord variety. Early Campbells are grown for fresh market baskets but constitute only a small part of the total crop. The vineyards are located mainly in the Lower Valley north of the

Yakima River and extending southeastward from Zillah to Prosser. Grapes also are grown on the Indian Reservation and in the Upper Valley near Moxee.

Table 21. Grapes: Vines of Bearing Age and Production  
Yakima County, 1920-1959

Year	Vines of Bearing Age	Quantity Harvested (pounds)
1920	122,280	1,985,238
1930	437,874	7,510,000
1940	512,526	7,810,296
1950	1,729,519	21,850,620
1954	2,466,839	31,084,359
1959	2,719,279	60,169,813

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

#### Berries

Yakima County is not an important berry producing area relative to some of the other counties in Washington. In 1959, only 139 acres were planted to strawberries, raspberries and blackberries. The county, however, is important in the production of black raspberries and currants. In 1962, over 40,000 pounds of black raspberries or "blackcaps", as they are frequently called, were harvested from 50 acres. This 50-acre block of blackcaps accounted for almost one-third of the state's 160 acres planted that year.

Currants are grown satisfactorily in the Lower Valley and new acreage has been coming into production in recent years. Acreage and production in 1962 accounted for over one-fifth of the state's total crop. All of the currants grown are of the red type, with Perfection the leading variety.

Table 22. Blackcaps and Currants: Acreage and Production  
Yakima County, 1954-1962.

Year	Blackcaps		Currants	
	Harvested Acres	Production (pounds)	Harvested Acres	Production (pounds)
1954	55	85,000	--	--
1955	55	95,000	--	--
1956	55	80,000	--	--
1957	55	100,000	20	20,000
1958	55	105,000	40	75,000
1959	55	75,000	50	90,000
1960	45	55,000	55	235,000
1961	50	68,000	65	234,000
1962	50	40,000	65	266,000

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Small Grains: Wheat, Barley, Oats and Rye

Cash grain farming, on dryland and irrigated soils, is an important activity in Yakima County agriculture. Wheat and barley are the two largest crops. There are less than 700 cash grain growers but they utilize about 18 percent of all the harvested cropland in the county. Yakima's cash grain acreage was greatest in the early years of the county's history. Since the 1920's, the annual acreage has fluctuated between 52,000 and 38,000 acres. Farmland devoted to cash grain crops in 1962 was 25 percent less than in 1949 and 34 percent less than in 1929. In recent years, cash grain farming has given way to hay, fruit and specialty crops. Reduction of acreage also has resulted from governmental acreage control programs.

## Wheat

Grown by over 600 farmers, wheat is the major cash crop harvested with over 27,000 acres cut in recent years. The acreage of all wheat has diminished from the 1948 peak of 36,000 acres down to 21,700 acres in 1962. Production, however, has remained stable with an annual harvest of over one million bushels.

Table 23. Wheat and Barley, Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	All Wheat			Barley		
	Acreage (acres)	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Acreage (acres)	Yield (tons per acre)	Production (bushels)
1949	34,500	19.6	676,400	8,100	38.0	307,800
1950	29,100	29.6	860,000	9,500	40.0	380,000
1951	30,200	40.2	1,214,200	6,000	45.5	273,000
1952	31,100	35.7	1,108,900	6,200	43.0	266,600
1953	33,200	35.0	1,162,000	6,700	55.0	368,500
1954	29,100	33.5	973,800	16,900	30.0	507,000
1955	25,200	34.3	865,200	20,600	29.0	597,000
1956	27,200	41.6	1,132,600	17,700	43.9	777,500
1957	31,600	46.2	1,458,900	31,800	50.5	1,606,900
1958	31,100	33.6	1,044,100	16,600	23.4	388,600
1959	28,000	36.0	1,008,000	17,000	41.3	702,900
1960	27,800	36.4	1,012,700	16,900	61.1	1,032,600
1961	28,700	34.0	974,800	19,200	50.8	975,000
1962	21,700	48.2	1,045,000	11,700	59.1	691,000

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Spring wheat which is grown under irrigation far exceeds winter wheat. It is sown in the early fall to take advantage of the wet season. In 1962, spring wheat comprised over 60 percent of the county's all wheat acreage and production. Common white wheat varieties are the most preferred in the cash-grain agriculture of Yakima County. In the crop of 1962 the varieties Baart and Pilcrow accounted for 448,600 bushels or 42.9 percent of all wheat. Common white wheat made up 86 percent of the total crop while White Club wheats made up 14 percent. Omar was the main White Club wheat in that year.

Table 24. Winter Wheat and Spring Wheat  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	Winter Wheat			Spring Wheat		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bushels Per Acre)	Production (Bushels)	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bushels Per Acre)	Production (Bushels)
1949	11,000	11.5	126,500	23,500	23.4	549,900
1950	2,000	23.5	47,000	27,100	30.0	813,000
1951	8,000	38.0	304,000	22,200	41.0	910,200
1952	17,500	35.0	612,500	13,600	36.5	496,400
1953	15,400	35.0	539,000	17,800	35.0	623,000
1954	14,900	32.0	476,800	14,200	35.0	497,000
1955	14,000	29.0	406,000	11,200	41.0	459,200
1956	13,000	26.5	344,500	14,200	55.5	788,100
1957	17,300	43.0	743,900	14,300	50.0	715,000
1958	14,900	38.0	566,200	16,200	29.5	477,900
1959	16,000	27.0	432,000	12,000	48.0	576,000
1960	15,900	36.0	572,400	11,900	37.0	440,300
1961	12,800	21.5	275,200	15,900	44.0	699,600
1962	8,000	45.0	360,000	13,700	50.0	685,000

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Table 25. Varieties of Wheat Grown  
in Yakima County, 1962

Classes and Varieties of Wheat	Production (Bushels)	Percent of Total Crop
<u>Common White Wheats</u>		
Baart	230,800	22.1
Pilcrow	217,800	20.8
Marked	156,900	15.0
Golden	156,000	14.9
Federation	79,500	7.6
Burt	58,000	5.6
<u>White Club Wheats</u>		
Omar	146,000	14.0
<b>Total all classes and varieties</b>	<b>1,045,000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

## Barley

Barley is the second major cash-grain crop. Acreage and production levels have fluctuated over the years. Barley reached a peak of 31,800 acres yielding 1,606,900 bushels in 1957. By 1962, acreage had declined to 11,700 acres and production dropped to 691,000 bushels. Most barley produced in Yakima is from spring varieties grown under irrigation. Barley remains a secondary dryland crop grown by wheat farmers. In recent years, when farmers agreed to reduce acreages of wheat under the federal wheat price support program, barley was planted on land taken out of wheat.

## Oats and Rye

Oats and rye are minor grain crops grown mainly for local livestock feed and some cash-grain sales. The trend of oat acreage in Yakima has been generally downward. Between 1948 and 1959, the acreage harvested dropped from an all-time high of 11,300 acres to 2,800 acres. In 1962, the acreage was only one-third of the 1948 level. Oats are grown mainly for their high feed value and are used mostly on farms where produced. Rye is a minor grain crop grown on less than 30 farms. Acreage and production, however, have increased greatly. With 290 acres in 1946, rye reached a peak of 2,900 acres in 1958. Production increased from 4,900 bushels to almost 61,000 bushels during the same period. In 1962, however, the acreage of rye diminished to only 900 acres and production was less than one-third of the record of 1960. Today, almost all of the rye crop is sold and has consequently become more important as a cash-grain crop.

Table 26. Oats and Rye: Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	Oats			Rye		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1949	9,000	53.5	481,500	550	16.5	9,100
1950	7,700	57.0	438,900	850	17.1	14,500
1951	6,700	59.0	395,300	720	18.9	13,600
1952	5,000	56.0	280,000	500	16.6	8,320
1953	3,700	63.0	233,100	680	21.0	14,300
1954	4,900	62.0	303,800	1,000	16.0	16,000
1955	3,600	77.0	277,200	1,280	17.2	22,000
1956	3,000	65.0	195,000	1,950	15.5	30,230
1957	5,300	62.5	331,200	2,700	22.0	59,400
1958	4,700	60.5	284,400	2,900	21.0	60,900
1959	2,800	50.5	141,400	2,400	19.5	46,800
1960	4,200	64.0	268,800	2,800	24.0	67,200
1961	3,700	70.0	259,000	1,700	35.0	59,400
1962	3,800	80.0	304,000	900	22.0	19,800

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Field Corn

Tremendous increases in corn acreage along with increases in yields have raised grain corn production to levels about four times above the decade of the 1940's. In 1962, 15,400 acres yielded more than 1,255,100 bushels of corn, 47.8 percent of Washington's corn production. At this level, Yakima stands out as the leading county in grain corn output.

In the record corn year of 1959, grain production totaled 2,370,000 bushels compared with only 358,400 bushels in 1949. Yields showed a high of 82 bushels of grain per acre in 1961 compared to only 56.0 bushels in 1949. The trend for corn production and yields was upward throughout the 1950's.

Table 27. Field Corn: Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	Field Corn		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bu. per Acre)	Production (Bushels)
1949	6,400	56.0	358,400
1950	5,780	64.5	372,900
1951	5,890	75.0	441,750
1952	5,840	66.7	389,300
1953	9,820	73.0	716,600
1954	16,000	67.0	1,072,000
1955	13,870	74.5	1,033,320
1956	13,600	75.0	1,020,000
1957	15,400	79.0	1,216,600
1958	29,300	72.0	2,109,600
1959	30,000	79.0	2,370,000
1960	23,200	76.0	1,763,200
1961	16,300	82.0	1,336,600
1962	15,400	81.5	1,255,100

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Field corn is grown under irrigation in Yakima County. Warm temperatures, a long growing season and adequate soil moisture result in high yields. Two-thirds of the corn crop is grown for grain to feed the large livestock industry, primarily beef cattle, hogs and poultry. Harvesting corn for silage accounts for over one-fifth of the crop, with the residual going for fodder.

### Hay Crops

From the standpoint of acreage, alfalfa hay forms the second most prominent crop of the county. In 1962 there were 39,000 acres in alfalfa. The alfalfa crop consisted of 127,200 tons, the second largest production by a county in Washington. Alfalfa was grown on about one-third of the county's farms in 1959. In recent years, acreage has declined slightly along with production. Alfalfa is grown under irrigation and is a major crop on the Wapato and Sunnyside Irrigation Projects where terrain is flat. Although most of the production is consumed by Yakima livestockmen and feeders, large tonnages are trucked to dairy areas in western Washington.

Other hay crops are relatively minor. Small grains cut for hay, consisting of 3,477 acres in 1959, is the second most important hay crop. Almost all of this crop is consumed on the farms where grown. Clover and timothy hay mixtures were the third largest hay crop in 1959. There were only 77 farms growing 1,995 acres of timothy and clover. Acreage has fluctuated greatly from a low of 940 acres in 1956 to a peak of 2,200 acres in 1961. This type of hay has increased in recent years. Less than 50 farms harvested wild hay from a total of 1,779 acres in 1959. In 1959 there was an indicated increase in the processing of grasses, alfalfa, clover and small grains for silage. Silage reached a new peak harvest of 3,037 tons cut from 523 acres distributed over 19 farms.

Except for the increases during the early 1940's, hay acreage in the county has had a history of relatively steady decline. In the 1920's, close to 100,000 acres of hay were being harvested annually. Hay crops are now being harvested from less than 50,000 acres. According to the 1959 Census, Yakima ranked sixth among the counties of Washington in hay acreage with 49,345 acres. Nearly 18 percent of the harvested cropland was in hay crops that year.

Table 28. Alfalfa Hay and Clover-Timothy Hay  
Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	Alfalfa Hay			Clover and Timothy Hay		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (Tons)	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (Tons)
1949	60,600	3.2	194,300	1,040	1.6	1,700
1950	62,800	3.4	212,500	1,160	2.1	2,400
1951	58,900	2.8	166,600	1,330	3.1	4,170
1952	58,100	2.6	152,100	1,420	1.0	1,400
1953	57,000	3.1	175,500	1,530	2.9	4,400
1954	52,600	3.0	157,000	1,240	2.0	2,500
1955	54,200	3.3	178,600	1,160	2.0	2,300
1956	52,500	3.8	199,500	940	1.5	1,430
1957	52,000	3.7	192,500	1,200	2.0	2,400
1958	46,000	3.2	147,200	1,400	2.0	2,800
1959	41,200	3.2	134,000	1,980	2.4	4,800
1960	42,700	3.9	128,600	2,000	1.9	3,800
1961	40,400	3.6	143,800	2,200	2.2	4,900
1962	39,000	3.3	127,200	2,100	2.0	4,100

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

### Vegetables

Commercial vegetable production is a major component of Yakima County's agriculture. Harvested acreage of vegetables for 1959 made Yakima the leading county of the state in vegetable production, with a rank of twentieth in the nation. In 1959, vegetable farming utilized about 8 percent of all the harvested cropland in the county. Vegetables harvested for sale were grown on 23,875 acres in 1954 and 26,660 acres in 1962. In 1959, over one-third of all county farms grew vegetables for home use or as a minor crop. Over 200 farms out of the county's 6,010 farms specialized in truck farming, but 700 other farms also harvested vegetables for sale.

Based on acreage, the commercial vegetables in Yakima County for 1962 ranked in order as follows: sweet corn (10,600), asparagus (10,600), green peas (2,700), fresh market tomatoes (670), cantaloups (580), rutabagas and turnips (260), watermelons (250), onions (100), carrots (90), lettuce (80), cucumbers (50), snap beans (50) and spinach (10).

Table 29. All Vegetables, Asparagus and Sweet Corn  
Acreage and Production  
Yakima County, 1954-1962

Crop Year	All Vegetables 1/		Asparagus		Sweet Corn	
	Harvested Acres	Production (Tons)	Harvested Acres	Production (Tons)	Harvested Acres	Production (Tons)
1954	23,875	104,195	7,300	13,200	10,300	62,000
1955	19,990	76,565	7,275	12,380	6,500	37,900
1956	25,580	101,955	8,200	14,430	9,600	50,900
1957	25,930	105,835	8,700	14,460	9,500	58,000
1958	25,920	86,350	10,250	13,900	8,200	41,900
1959	24,170	83,590	10,250	12,830	9,000	45,250
1960	26,340	95,595	10,620	14,590	10,940	55,420
1961	27,140	105,880	10,600	15,900	11,300	61,700
1962	25,660	99,240	10,600	17,240	10,800	55,100

1/ Acreage and production figures include the following major vegetables grown in Yakima County: asparagus, snap beans, cabbage, cantaloups, carrots, cucumbers, onions, lettuce, peas, rutabagas and turnips, spinach, sweet corn, tomatoes for both fresh market and processing, and watermelons.

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Vegetables grown are mainly used for processing; only a small percentage of the harvested acreage in 1962 produced vegetables for fresh market. Asparagus and sweet corn are the most important vegetable crops in the county. These two crops have represented over three-fourths of the harvested vegetable acreage in recent years.

Table 30. Vegetable Crops: Tomatoes, Dry Onions, Carrots  
Yakima County, 1954-1962

Year	Tomatoes 1/		Dry Onions		Carrots	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	1,175	7,460	300	5,000	90	1,200
1955	1,050	4,550	250	4,400	70	1,470
1956	1,185	7,395	150	2,700	100	1,380
1957	1,120	7,425	250	3,700	90	1,220
1958	1,200	7,800	100	1,700	90	1,260
1959	790	7,190	70	980	120	2,040
1960	810	6,750	70	980	140	2,800
1961	620	5,680	140	2,700	90	2,000
1962	670	5,150	100	1,500	90	1,600

1/ Includes only fresh market.

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Asparagus, grown for processing, has increased considerably in acreage harvested. In 1949, the county harvested only 4,578 acres. The 1962 acreage was 10,600 acres. Yakima County alone accounts for about 69 percent of the state's total asparagus acreage. Yakima County is also the major sweet corn area in the state. In 1959, the county accounted for 46 percent of Washington's sweet corn acreage and ranked seventh in the nation.

Table 31. Vegetable Crops: Green Peas, Snap Beans, Cucumbers  
Yakima County, 1954-1962

Year	Green Peas		Snap Beans		Cucumbers	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	2,800	4,480	150	425	150	500
1955	2,800	3,360	125	375	100	350
1956	3,700	7,040	150	530	400	1,800
1957	3,700	6,090	190	400	300	1,800
1958	3,800	4,940	140	500	200	1,200
1959	2,000	3,000	80	240	160	580
1960	2,000	3,800	50	150	80	240
1961	2,700	3,800	50	150	50	190
1962	2,700	3,200	50	120	50	200

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Table 32. Vegetable Crops: Cantaloups, Cabbage, Lettuce  
Yakima County, 1954-1962

Year	Cantaloups		Cabbage		Lettuce	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	450	1,940	--	--	60	600
1955	500	2,330	--	--	45	350
1956	470	2,700	--	--	40	300
1957	490	1,800	--	--	30	240
1958	580	2,610	--	--	30	240
1959	560	2,740	20	200	70	420
1960	600	2,855	20	210	80	540
1961	530	2,870	20	200	80	590
1962	580	2,950	--	--	80	500

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Vegetable farming is carried on primarily in the Lower Yakima Valley. Areas of concentration are in the Wapato and Toppenish vicinities of the Indian Project (Wapato Division) and in the Roza Project between Grandview and Sunnyside. In 1959, the total estimated farm sales of vegetables amounted to \$4,163,611. Yakima County ranked first in the state in value of vegetables harvested for sale as well as in acreage. Over one-fifth of the acreage in Washington commercial vegetables was grown in the county. Yakima growers received about 20 percent of the \$19,570,779 paid for Washington State vegetables by produce buyers and processors during the 1959 crop year.

Table 33. Vegetable Crops: Rutabagas and Turnips,  
Spinach and Watermelons  
Yakima County, 1954-1962

Year	Rutabagas & Turnips		Spinach		Watermelons	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	600	4,200	--	--	300	1,650
1955	500	3,200	--	--	275	1,100
1956	550	5,000	--	--	235	1,180
1957	550	5,000	--	--	460	2,300
1958	300	2,400	--	--	480	2,600
1959	280	2,520	--	--	370	1,600
1960	230	1,840	10	50	240	1,320
1961	200	1,500	10	50	250	1,750
1962	260	2,080	10	50	250	1,150

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

### Hops

Yakima is the top producer of hops. In 1959, the county produced over 90 percent of the hops grown in Washington, and accounted for over one-half of the nation's total production. Less than 250 growers raise hops in Yakima County but it is over a \$10,000,000 a year business in value alone.

Table 34. Hops and Sugar Beets, Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1925-1959

Year	Hops			Sugar Beets		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Pounds Per Acre)	Production (Pounds)	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (Tons)
1925	No data	No data	No data	599	4.14	2,482
1929	2,172	1,862	4,044,650	105	9.90	1,040
1934	No data	No data	No data	712	11.94	8,504
1939	1,242	1,501	6,367,941	10,489	17.36	182,100
1944	8,490	1,738	14,755,871	11,491	14.31	164,491
1949	12,740	1,386	17,658,854	11,361	21.28	241,745
1954	12,228	1,631	19,947,379	17,995	21.86	393,358
1959	16,986	1,693	28,765,508	14,410	22.33	321,793

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture.

Expansion of hop yards began in the late 1930's and increased rapidly during 1942-1944 when imports from Europe were low. In 1959, 16,986 acres yielded 28,765,508 pounds of hops. Production is favored by the warm, dry climate, good soil and abundance of irrigation water.

The largest and most concentrated hop acreage centers around Moxee in the Upper Valley. The "Reservation", located in the Lower Valley on the Yakima Indian Reservation, is the second largest hop area. Most of the crop is used primarily by the brewing industry to give flavor to beer.

Sugar Beets

A long, warm growing season, a plentiful supply of water and fertile soils have made Yakima an ideal location for growing sugar beets. Since the establishment of a beet sugar refinery at Toppenish, beets have been grown on 10,000 acres or more. In 1959, Yakima County alone accounted for over 40 percent of the state's sugar beet crop and ranked eleventh in the nation.

Sugar beet acreage has increased since 1929. Before 1940 acreage was generally low. Since 1948, acreages have varied in accordance with yearly contracts between growers and processors and quotas allowed growers under the Federal Sugar Act of 1948. In 1959, there were 447 growers, nearly 14,500 acres of beets and a production of 321,793 tons in Yakima County. Elimination of acreage controls by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1961 brought about an increase in sugar beets. In 1962, 18,100 acres produced 433,000 tons of sugar beets. Most of the crop is grown on the Wapato Division of the Indian Reservation. A secondary area of sugar beet farming is in the Sunnyside Division. Yields are among the highest in the nation.

Table 35. Potatoes, Acreage, Yield and Production  
Yakima County, 1949-1962

Year	Potatoes		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (tons)
1949	8,500	12.25	104,125
1950	8,000	12.50	100,000
1951	7,400	12.00	88,800
1952	5,400	13.00	70,200
1953	6,200	12.50	77,500
1954	6,300	13.97	88,000
1955	7,500	10.93	82,000
1956	7,670	12.61	96,760
1957	7,000	13.37	93,650
1958	7,200	13.34	96,080
1959	5,090	13.75	70,000
1960	4,700	13.15	61,800
1961	4,350	11.47	49,900
1962	3,050	12.00	36,600

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Potatoes

Yakima County has long been one of Washington's major potato producing areas. In 1962, it ranked fourth in the state in terms of production. A crop of 36,600 tons was harvested from 3,050 acres, about 6 percent of the state's production.

In 1959, about 170 farms reported growing potatoes, primarily concentrated in the Wapato Division on the Yakima Indian Reservation and in the Sunnyside District. Harvested acreage and production of potatoes in Yakima has been declining in recent years, reflecting the increased competition from newer irrigated croplands in

the Columbia Basin in Grant, Adams and Franklin Counties. Russets, the familiar netted gem, is the most popular potato variety and accounts for most of the production.

### Mint

Peppermint and spearmint grown in irrigated fields to produce mint oil is another important specialty crop. Today, Yakima County is the largest single producer of mint. In 1962, the county produced 61 percent of the state's mint crop and accounted for 30 percent of the nation's total production.

Plant diseases and other problems of growing good quality mint in southwestern Washington caused a shift of the crop to the drier Yakima area. In recent years, an increased demand for mint oil has encouraged an increase in the county's mint industry. There were over 200 growers in 1962 who distilled 1,016,000 pounds of mint oil from about 14,800 acres. Yields per acre are the highest in the nation. Much of this is due to a favorable combination of rich soils, plenty of warmth and sunshine and controlled water. Mint acreage is mainly concentrated in the Sunnyside and Mabton districts of the Lower Valley.

Table 36. Mint for Oil: Peppermint and Spearmint  
Yakima County, 1957-1962

Year	Peppermint			Spearmint		
	Harvested Acreage	Yield (Pounds of Oil Per Acre)	Production (Pounds of Oil)	Harvested Acreage	Yield (Pounds of Oil Per Acre)	Production (Pounds of Oil)
1957	8,900	80.5	716,500	2,000	100.0	200,000
1958	9,000	90.0	810,000	2,400	97.0	232,800
1959	8,800	73.9	650,000	3,600	99.4	357,900
1960	8,000	77.6	621,000	5,000	77.5	387,500
1961	8,700	83.2	724,000	7,360	99.4	731,400
1962	6,800	67.1	456,000	8,000	70.0	560,000

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

### Field Seed Crops

With the expansion of irrigation in the early 1950's, Yakima County became one of the major seed producing areas of Washington. By 1954, the county was first in alfalfa seed and fourth in red clover seed. In recent years, seed crops have decreased sharply. Seed crops were harvested from only 10,022 acres in 1959 as compared to 19,243 acres in 1954.

The harvested acreage of alfalfa for seed, on a downward trend, was only 9,567 acres in 1959. Yakima, however, remains the leading county and accounted for 53 percent of the state's total production of alfalfa seed in 1959. Red clover for seed dropped in production by 68 percent between 1954 and 1959. Also in 1959, Marion bluegrass growing on 343 acres produced 73,873 pounds of seed in Yakima County.