

## **CHAPTER FOURTEEN - AGRICULTURE**



### **14.0 Introduction**

Prime farmland soils are defined in the USDA-NCRS Title 430 National Survey Handbook (November 1996) as follows: Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops in an economic manner if it is treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

Local agricultural lands in the Payette area are more livestock-based than crop-based. This means many workers caring for livestock and perhaps choosing to live within the city of Payette. Large food-processing plants within the city limits have encouraged workers to choose to move to Payette where housing may be available.

### **14.1 Farm Census**

According to the 2012 Farm Census, as described in Exhibit 1, the number of farms in Payette County decreased slightly, from 678 in 2007 to 655 in 2012; the average size of farms decreased from 245 acres in 2007 to 230 acres in 2012. Market Value of Products Sold increased from \$146,454,000 in 2007 to \$236,243,000 in 2012 in regard to top crop items in areas in the State of Idaho.

**Exhibit 1 - 2012 Census of Agriculture - County Profile - Payette County, Idaho**

Subject	2012	2007	% Change
Number of Farms	655	678	- 3%
Land in Farms	157,090 acres	166,179 acres	- 5%
Average Farm Size	240 acres	245 acres	- 2%
Market Value of Products Sold	\$236,243,000	\$146,454,000	+ 61%
<i>Crop Sales, 21%: \$50,270,000</i> <i>Livestock Sales, 79%: \$185,974,000</i>			
Average per Farm	\$360,677	\$216,009	+ 67%
Government Payments	\$652,000	\$462,000	+ 41%
Average per Farm Receiving Payment	\$4,500		

Source: 2012 Farm Census

The agricultural rankings of products sold, the values, and the inventory of Payette County are identified in Exhibit 2. Payette County ranks #2 in fruits, tree nuts, and berries; #4 in cattle; and #9 in other crops and hay.

**Exhibit 2 - Payette County, Idaho**

***Ranked items among the 44 State Counties and 3,079 U.S. Counties, 2012***

Item	Quantity	State Rank	Universe	U.S. Rank	Universe
<b>Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold (\$1,000)</b>					
Total Value	236,243	12	44	427	3,077
Value of Crops (including nursery and greenhouse crops)	50,270	20	44	1,164	3,072
Value of Livestock and Poultry and their Products	185,974	8	44	195	3,076
<b>Value of Sales by Commodity Group (\$1,000)</b>					
Grains, oilseeds, dry beans, dry peas	18,198	22	42	1,273	2,926
Tobacco	0	0	0	0	436
Cotton and cottonseed	0	0	0	0	635
Vegetables, melons, potatoes, sweet potatoes	D	16	43	D	2,802
Fruits, tree nuts, berries	D	2	37	D	2,724

Nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, sod	D	35	41	D	2,678
Cut Christmas trees and short rotation woody crops	D	20	25	D	1,530
Other crops and hay	14,893	15	44	217	3,049
Poultry and eggs	274	7	43	1,174	3,013
Cattle and calves	118,240	4	44	101	3,056
Milk from cows	66,139	9	35	121	2,038
Hogs and pigs	96	10	39	1,268	2,827
Sheep, goats, wool, mohair, milk	404	18	43	413	2,988
Horses, ponies, mules, burros, donkeys	447	9	43	632	3,011
Aquaculture	0	0	22	0	1,366
Other animals and animal products	374	14	42	525	2,924
<b>Item</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>State Rank</b>	<b>Universe</b>	<b>U.S. Rank</b>	<b>Universe</b>
<b>Top Crop Items (Acres)</b>					
Forage land used for all hay and haylage, grass silage, and greenchop	18,607	31	44	1,046	3,057
Corn for grain	7,446	6	22	1,302	2,638
Corn for silage	7,147	11	27	260	2,237
Wheat for grain, all	4,813	34	42	995	2,537
Winter wheat	4,341	27	37	966	2,480
<b>Top Livestock Inventory Items (number)</b>					
Cattle and calves	64,345	13	44	326	3,063
Ducks	D	1	33	25	2,480
Colonies of bees	D	3	36	D	2,761
Layers	2,959	8	43	1,051	3,040
Pheasants	D	3	12	D	963

Source: 2012 Farm Census, Other County Highlights 2012. See "Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series" for complete footnotes, explanations, definitions and methodology.

*(NOTE: "Universe" indicates number of Counties in State or U.S. with sales of the item; "D": values withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.)*

## **14.2 Soils - Payette County and the City of Payette**

Payette County is high in acreage of agricultural and range land, much of this located within the areas surrounding Payette. According to the Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service), 85 percent of county lands qualify for this classification.

The majority of soil types within the Payette city limits come under the Moulton and Emerson series. The Moulton series is somewhat poorly-drained soil to moderately-drained, and fine

sandy loams to silt loams on lowlands. With moderately rapid permeability, these soils are best used for irrigated crops, wildlife, and home sites. The Emerson series consists of well-drained soils on river and stream bottoms, with moderately rapid permeability. These soils are best used for irrigated crops, pasture, and wildlife.

## **14.3 Advantages**

Based on its location, the Payette agricultural community is positioned to continue to stand firm within the region as an economic hub.

1. There is very good access to the Union Pacific Railroad rail line as it travels through the city of Payette. Adequate railroad spurs exist along the Payette corridor for business purposes. The City may consider meeting with the Union Pacific Railroad to request upgrades to the existing spurs.
2. The City of Payette lies within close proximity to Interstate 84 for all east and west bound traffic to Boise and Oregon.
3. U.S. Highway 95 runs through the city of Payette, providing excellent access to north and south bound traffic to Interstate 84 and northern Idaho.
4. There is adequate land for the development of industrial agricultural products for both fresh and processed foods.
5. The City of Payette is ripe for promoting a variety of formal and informal economic activities such as agri-tourism and home businesses, supporting a rural/agricultural way of life.

## **14.4 Agriculture Urban and Rural Interface**

Based upon the 2045 population increase estimated in this Comprehensive Plan, the city of Payette will reach a population of 11,382 by that year - representing an increase of approximately 50% from the 2015 population of 7,571. It is estimated that the number of housing units will increase from the 2015 total of 3,169 to a total of 4,653 by 2045. This increase represents an addition of 1,484 new housing units to the existing stock.

The question is: where and what kind of housing units will be built to create this increase? It would be safe to speculate that some will be built within the current city limits, but many other units will be built in the Area of City Impact, which currently carries an Agricultural Land Use designation. Policies will need to be developed, as stated in Chapter 3 on Housing, in order to manage growth in the Area of City Impact.

**14.4.1 Challenges** - As the city grows and expands within the existing Area of City Impact, citizens need to beware and the City needs to prepare for impacts with the agricultural community. As shown in Exhibits 1 and 2, the agricultural community plays a vital economic role in the city of Payette as well as in Payette County. It will be important to evaluate decisions rendered regarding the interaction between the city and the agricultural community during future land-use discussions. The following are just a few of the land-use issues that need to be addressed.

Challenges regarding agricultural urban-rural interface include:

1. Some property owners may consider their agricultural lands as their future retirement.
2. Traffic concerns about slow-moving farm-equipment vehicles.
3. Transitional land uses.
4. Identifying how agricultural lands could be impacted by residential land uses.
5. The impact of livestock in residential zones.
6. Providing options of approved land uses in agricultural land use areas.

The impact of dust, noise and odor pollution - What may be considered by city dwellers as dust, noise, and livestock orders may be part of the life of the agricultural community. Based upon the season and crops, there may be dust and noise or farm equipment being operated at any hour of the day or night.

The movement of farm equipment along highways and county roads, and the spraying of crops either by plane or on the ground could be problems for new residents.

As crops are being irrigated, citizens should know that sprinkler systems and irrigation ditches are not to be tampered with. Some sprinkler systems are portable and may have diesel engines attached to the pumps which will create engine noise all day and all night during irrigation season.

There may be some restrictions on the planting of residential gardens due to the impacts of cross-pollination on commercial crops.

The lack of agricultural farm workers, and in some cases, farm laborer housing, may become an issue for the local community as well an upcoming national issue.

Preserving prime agricultural land has always been a concern in the agricultural community since the major growth spurt in the late 70s, 90s, 2000s, and today. Some of the tools we have today, such as the transfer of development rights, may assist in managing the loss of prime agricultural lands.

The city of Payette is surrounded by agricultural lands. The agricultural base is very important to the city of Payette and to Payette County. The major concern is that economic development should not infringe on traditional agricultural requirements, such as water and grazing rights. The challenge with incorporating industrial agricultural land uses in the mix is managing the development of residential land uses so that the agricultural base is not negatively impacted.

## **14.5 Agricultural Goals, Objectives, and Strategies**

**GOAL 1: Promote agriculture, protect farmland, and protect the rural economy.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Protect prime agricultural soils and areas of contiguous agricultural activity.

**STRATEGY 1:** Enhance the viability of existing farming operations and agricultural businesses, and encourage the formation of new ones when possible.

**STRATEGY 2:** Provide for a variety of formal and informal economic activities, such as agri-tourism and home businesses which support a rural way of life.

**GOAL 2:           Protect the agriculture-based economy and farmland from unnecessary development.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Limit the encroachment of residential development in prime agricultural lands.

STRATEGY 1:    City services should not be extended in areas outside of the corporate boundaries of the city of Payette.

STRATEGY 2:    Encourage development that is designed to preserve open space and valuable agricultural land.

**GOAL 3:           Work with public and private sector agencies to maintain and improve local infrastructure in Payette and the surrounding area, in order to be competitive in the region.**

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Continue a dialogue with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), Union Pacific Railroad and other agencies regarding maintenance and future improvements to infrastructure that affects the city of Payette's economy.

STRATEGY 1:    Consider meeting with Union Pacific Railroad in order to discuss with them the timing of upgrading the existing spurs along the corridor.

STRATEGY 2:    Continue a dialogue with representatives of ITD regarding roadway maintenance and improvement.