

Organic Farm Acreage in Washington State - 2003

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This report provides the best **estimate** of organic farm acreage, both certified and transitional, in Washington State. It is based on data from the Washington State Dept. of Agriculture Organic Food Program and data from Dovex, as of November 2003. Certain crops (e.g. apples, pears) have further acreage details by variety or specific crop that are not presented here. Data are listed in Acres. This table includes only WA state acres although WSDA certifies in other states. Data is through 12/30/03.

CERT. = certified organic; TRANS. = transitional.

	<u>CERT.</u>	<u>TRANS.</u>		<u>CERT.</u>	<u>TRANS.</u>
FRUITS AND NUTS			FORAGES	3855	494
Tree Fruit	9354	869	Hay	2833	494
Apple	7003	719	Alfalfa hay	1341	205
Pear	1466	80	Grass hay	774	
Cherry	513	58	Hay, misc.	463	289
Peach	174		Mixed hay	255	
Apricot	78	12	Pasture	781	
Nectarine	57		Silage	241	
Plum/Prune/Pluot	63				
Other (kiwi)	1		GRAINS, PULSES, and OIL CROPS		
Grapes	1722	282	Grains	1952	18
Juice	1539	282	Wheat	1326	
Wine	176		white	240	
Generic	7		red	183	
Berries	350	84	generic	903	
Blueberry	161	84	Corn	317	18
Raspberry	130		Oats	164	
Strawberry	25		Other	102	
Other	34		Barley	43	
Nuts	45	0	Pulses	370	
Filbert	37		Beans	370	
Walnut	4		Oil Crops	0	0
Chestnut	4				
			FALLOW	2278	25

	<u>CERT.</u>	<u>TRANS.</u>		<u>CERT.</u>	<u>TRANS.</u>
HERBS	883	0	VEGETABLES	9250	104
Medicinal	668	0	Sweet corn	3580	
Echinacea	258		Pea	1847	
Clover	118		Roots and Tubers	1197	0
Catnip	126		Potato	1170	
Other	164		Parsnip, turnip, beet	28	
Culinary	110		Mixed Vegetables	646	
Mint	77		Allium	506	100
Lavender	20		Onion	385	100
Mixed	8		Garlic	28	
			Leek, chives	93	
			Fresh Beans	751	3
			Carrot	305	1
OTHER CROPS	579	39	Cucurbits	241	
Timber/Woods/	130	8	Mixed greens	74	
Christmas trees			Brassicas	50	
Seed crops	290		Asparagus	52	
Grasses	78				
Cover crops	57	5			
Cut or edible flowers	9				
Mushrooms	10				
Hops	4	26			
Plants/Starts	1				
			Totals for 2003		
			Certified Acres	30,640	
			Transitional Acres	1,914	

Interpretation

Organic acreage in Washington State is dominated by three types of crops – tree fruit, vegetables, and forages. Apples are the leader for tree fruit and continue to show substantial acres in transition, although lower than in the previous few years. Production is based in the central, irrigated areas of the state. Vegetable production is more diverse; however, two crops grown for processing (corn and peas) account for about 2/3 of the acreage. Most of the larger scale vegetable production occurs in the irrigated south central region (Grant, Yakima, Adams, Benton, Franklin counties), while smaller and more diverse vegetable production is common on western Washington farms more oriented towards direct markets. Again, for forages, alfalfa production is based in central Washington while other forages are grown around the state. The growth of the organic dairy sector has created demand for organic forages, an important market for this production.

Washington is a significant producer of organic grains and pulses with an estimated 2000 acres certified in 2003. However, this is proportionally a very small fraction of the several million acres of grain production typical in the state. Over 1000 acres of cultivated land is certified for various medicinal, culinary and other herbs. This compares to around 2000 acres certified in Missouri.

Looking at transition acres as a leading indicator, tree fruit, grapes, and forages will continue to expand production, and berries will experience nearly a 30% increase on the relatively small base of organic acres. Breakthroughs in organically approved weed control for vegetables and dryland cereals would likely lead to substantial increases in these crops. The livestock sector is

relatively small but has opportunity for growth with the implementation of the National Organic Standard and the growing demand for natural meat and dairy products.

Estimated Washington State Organic Crop Acreage. 2002- 2003

Crop	2002 Cert	2003 Cert	2002 Trans	2003 Trans
Tree Fruit*	9731	9355	709	868
Vegetables	8280	9251	124	104
Forages	3670	3855	404	494
Grains/Pulses	2647	2322	18	18
Fallow	2277	2278	26	25
Herbs	1050	883	0	0
Grapes	1545	1722	325	282
Berries	375	350	84	84
Other	525	579	26	39
Nuts	45	45	0	0
Total	30144	30640	1716	1914

*Tree fruit 2003 includes both WSDA (8844.1) and QAI (496.28) certified acres and WSDA (448) and QAI (420.63) transitional acres

In 2003, there were decreases in certified acres of tree fruit, grains and herbs. Pear acreages were down by about 300 acres. Apples were down about 50 acres and this may be due to some Red Delicious apples are probably being replanted to other varieties. Overall this was not reflected in acreage trends. There was an estimated 12% decrease in organic wheat production this year, and a 20% reduction of medicinal herb acreage. Organic vegetable production increased about 10%, from 8280 to 9251 acres, with fresh bean production increasing by over 500 acres.

Certified grape production also increased by an estimated 170 acres (~10%) in 2003 as some acres came out of transition and apparently new acreages were certified as well.

Berry, nut and fallow acres were fairly stable. Forage production did expand in 2003 with both new transitional and certified acres reported.