

# Hood River County Facts

Once a corner of the nation's largest county, Hood River County is now the second smallest in the state, at 522 square miles. With the Columbia River forming its northern boundary, the



*View of Mt. Hood from a Hood River Valley orchard*

county rises from 51 feet above sea level on the river, to its southern tip on the top of Mt. Hood, at 11,245 feet. Its western boundary lies in the Cascade Range and its eastern boundary is roughly marked by Fir Mountain, Bald Butte and Surveyor's Ridge.

Over half of the land base in the county is under federal ownership through the Mt. Hood National Forest and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Hood River County owns and manages 31,000 acres of forest and there are another 28,000 acres of private forest land, all managed for timber production.

Hood River County's population has been growing by leaps and bounds in recent years. In 2000 the county's population was 20,411, a 21% increase over

1990. Of those, 5,831 live in the City of Hood River, 1,100 live in the City of Cascade Locks and the rest are dispersed throughout the county.

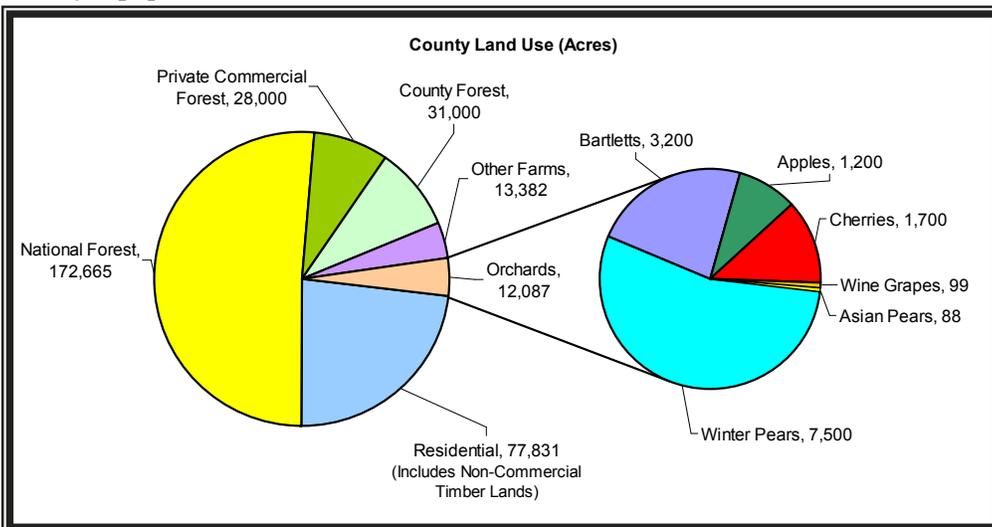
Principal industries in the county include agriculture, recreation and tourism. Hood River County produces more winter pears than any other county in the United States. There are 15,000 acres of irrigated cropland, mainly planted to pears, cherries, apples and wine grapes, earning over \$56 million in gross sales in 2006. There are 350 fruit growers in the county; 12 have orchards larger than 200 acres, while the average size is 59 acres.

## Resources

Hood River County Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Information Center  
[www.hoodriver.org](http://www.hoodriver.org)

Recreational activities include windsurfing, skiing, snowboarding, biking, kayaking, kiteboarding and hiking. Regional tourist destinations include Multnomah Falls, Timberline Lodge, Mt. Hood Meadows, the Gorge Discovery Center, the historic Mount Hood Railroad and the Sternwheeler Columbia Gorge. The growing season is celebrated twice each year, with the Hood River Valley Blossom Festival occurring the third full weekend in April and the Hood River Valley Harvest Festival occurring the third full weekend in October. There are numerous other local festivals and events, with destination weddings drawing an increasing number of visitors each year.

With its proximity to Portland, excellent weather and easy-going ambiance, it's no wonder that Hood River County has seen a marked influx of new residents. Like earlier settlers before them, the new residents are seeking their bit of paradise in which to live, work and play.



2002 Census of Agriculture County Data, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, OSU Extension Service, Hood River County

*Article written in cooperation with: Genevieve Scholl-Erdmann and Melanee Gillette, Hood River County Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Council and Jean Godfrey, Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers*