



Current Cassia County Courthouse Built in 1939 Burley, Idaho (county seat was moved to Burley in 1919)



Cassia County Courthouse located in Albion Idaho (county seat until 1919)



Cassia County Situation Statement

2025

"The University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, religion, national origin, or disability in employment or other activities in accordance with state and federal laws. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, those requesting reasonable accommodations need to contact the Cassia County Extension Office, 1459 Overland Room 4, Burley, Idaho 83318 or call (208) 878-9461."

Table of Contents

History of Cassia County	3
Interesting Facts	4
Demographics	5
Climate & Geographic Area	6
Natural Resources	7 & 8
Agriculture	9
Livestock	10
Rural Development	11
4-H Program	11 & 12
Education	12 & 13
Family Consumer Science	14
Economy	15 & 16
Wages & Income	17
Housing	18

History of Cassia County

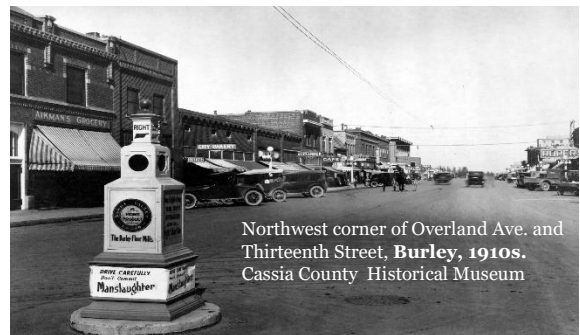
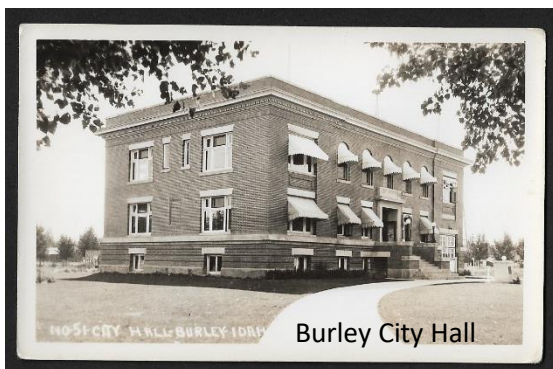
Cassia County was established February 20, 1879, as a result of the increasing population in the eastern part of Owyhee County. Albion, originally named Marsh Basin, was designated the county seat. Four other communities grew large enough to acquire post offices during the 1870's. Oakley's office opened in 1876 followed by Bridge and Cassier, or Raft River Bridge. In the northwest corner of Cassia County, the Salmon Falls post Office also opened in 1879. The 1870's was the decade of early development, but significant growth started in the 1880's. The county seat was changed to Burley on Nov. 5, 1918. Cassia County was named for Cassia Creek, which was named by Hudson Bay Trappers who found cassia plants on the banks of the river.

By the 1870s, several towns had sprung up along the routes. Malta, Connor, Elba and Almo are now quiet communities rooted in agriculture. They also serve as gateways to the City of Ricks, where scores of California Trail emigrants recorded their names on the massive granite formations.

Working to offset the depression years, the community dedicated the 220-acre Burley Municipal Airport July 4, 1930, and the handsome art deco Cassia County Courthouse and National Guard Armory in 1939.

The county seat was originally located in Albion and then moved to Burley in 1919. County business was done in the old City Hall building (the Old City Hall was torn down in Year and is currently a park) that was originally located to the north of the County building . The Cassia County Courthouse was built in 1939 and all county business was moved into the new facilities. A new judicial center was built in the old grocery store to the north of the county building in 2003.

Located in south central Idaho, the county seat of Cassia County is situated along the broad Snake River and surrounded by rich agriculture land and timbered mountains. Burley is halfway between Boise and Salt Lake City, Utah, with easy access to both. Burley is the heart of the irrigation development known as the Minidoka Project, a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project that waters the region.



Interesting Facts:

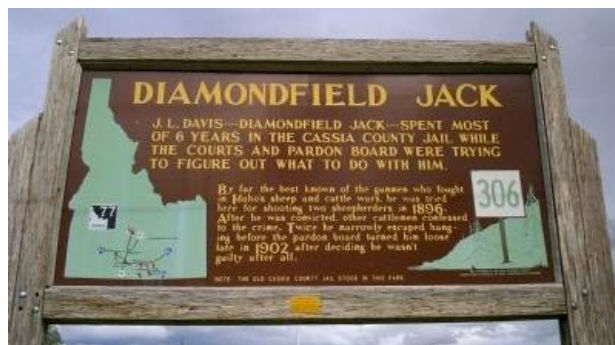
- White settlers started trekking through the area in the mid-1800s, many traveling on the Oregon Trail, the California Trail, the Kelton Road and other pioneer trails. Cassia County is rich in history of fur trappers and of emigrants who turned south from the Oregon Trail in route to California by way of City of Rocks.
- Several battles between emigrant parties and local Indians occurred in September 1860, near Almo, not far from the City of Rocks.
- The town of Albion was the site of a legendary Western trial. Here, “Diamondfield Jack” Davis was found guilty in 1897 of murdering two sheepmen. The evidence was sketchy, and other men later confessed to the killings, but Davis was sentenced to hang. Eventually, however, he was pardoned.
- Albion had yet another role in Idaho history: From 1893 through 1951, it served as home to the Albion State Normal School, one of the state’s leading teacher-training colleges.
- Oakley was founded as a stage station in 1864. Oakley was settled around 1878, and today is known for its impressive collection of fine historic buildings.
- Slot machines were legal for a brief period in the 1950’s.



<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/idaho/little-city-of-rocks>



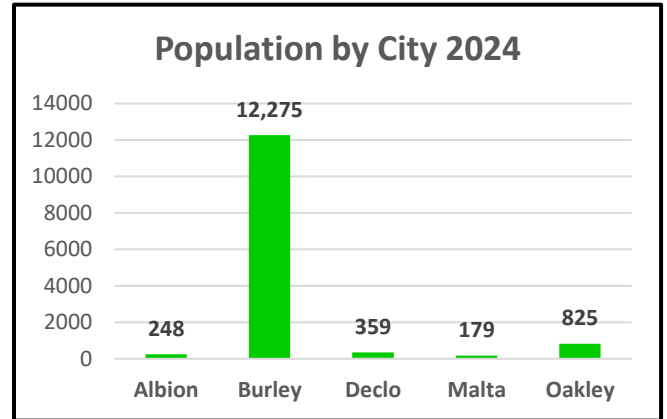
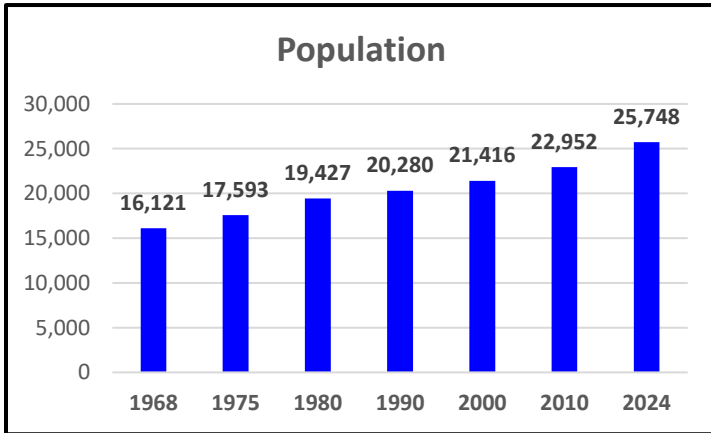
Albion Normal State School



DEMOGRAPHICS

Cassia County’s population grew 10.4 percent over the last 10 years with highest growth during the Great Recession. Population was estimated at 25,186 in 2020. The county diversified beyond agriculture as national companies relocated and existing businesses survived the recession. Efforts to market Cassia and Minidoka counties together through a community partnership that spotlighted low land and labor costs were successful in landing new businesses. The area offers an array of natural resources and recreational opportunities. Burley, the largest city with a population of 11,475, is on the banks of the scenic Snake River. It is a short jaunt to the City of Rocks National Reserve for climbing and Pomerelle Mountain Resort for skiing. City and business leaders expect moderate to strong growth based on the favorable business climate and Burley’s investment in wastewater capacity.

Cassia County’s median age in 2020 was 32. Cassia County’s population is 81% Caucasian and 24% Hispanic.



Diversity blossoms in southern Idaho; Hispanics come to find work. The number of Hispanics living in the region nearly doubled between 1990 and 2000. They are staying, in part because there is an effort to educate families about the importance of keeping their children in school, so they can make better lives for themselves. Hispanic influence is growing. The 2001 Legislature passed a law that extends minimum-wage protection to nearly all farm workers – many of whom are Hispanic. Farm workers won mandatory worker’s compensation coverage in 1996 after a bitter battle in the Legislature. Agriculture had been exempted for 79 years.

Almost all Idaho Hispanics live in southern Idaho. Seventy-four percent of Idaho’s Hispanic live in nine counties, Cassia County being one of them.

Races in Cassia County	Amount
White Alone	94.1%
Hispanic or Latino	28.2%
Two or More races	1.8%
Males:	12,047
Females:	11,643

CLIMATE

The frost-free periods for most of Cassia County's agricultural land is about 152 days. This will vary due to air drainage patterns. Oakley is probably a little warmer than Burley and the Burley area is usually a little freer from frost than the Malta area. The growing season is usually from early March until October. Again, this varies from year to year. Average winter temperatures are 36.5° high and 16.7° low with an average summer high of 90.9° and a low of 56.6°. Winters are generally mild with little snowfall in the valley area, and temperatures are rarely below 10 degrees F. Water for irrigation becomes short in the areas dependent on mountain streams in mild winters and may become a problem. Wind is also a weather factor that is present in most springs. Summer temperatures sometimes pass 100 degrees F., but not for long periods.

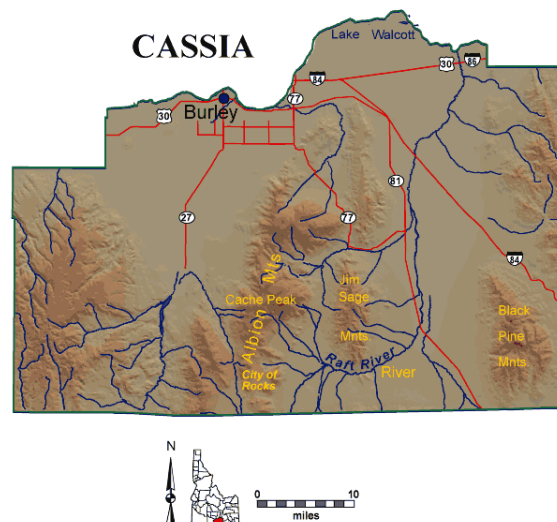
Temperature		Precipitation (inches)	
Lowest Average Daily Minimum	18° F	Average Annual Total	11"
Highest Average Maximum	88° F	Average Annual Snowfall	22"
Hottest Month	July & Aug.	Humidity	
Coldest Month	Jan. & Dec.	Average July Afternoon	25-35%
		Average January Afternoon	40-50%

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Cassia County has seven major communities with numerous smaller communities. The six major communities are: Burley; Oakley; Declo; Albion; Elba; Almo and Malta. The bulk of the population is located in Burley with Oakley and Declo following in density. The areas of Albion, Elba and Almo are located in the higher mountain valleys of the county and are sparsely populated. In these areas, the only shopping facilities are community stores. Malta, Declo and Oakley have secondary shopping areas.

The major shopping center for Cassia County residents is Burley. A concern of community leaders is that residents are making purchases on a regular basis in Twin Falls, Pocatello, Boise, and Salt Lake City at the large shopping malls.

The rugged beauty of the land and the easy access to many outdoor activities such as boating, skiing, hunting, fishing, and the Annual Burley Boat Regatta make the Mini-Cassia area attractive to both residents and tourists alike.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Today, water from the Snake River is used to irrigate over one million acres of rich farmland, and to generate and distribute electricity to private and industrial users, at the lowest cost in the nation.

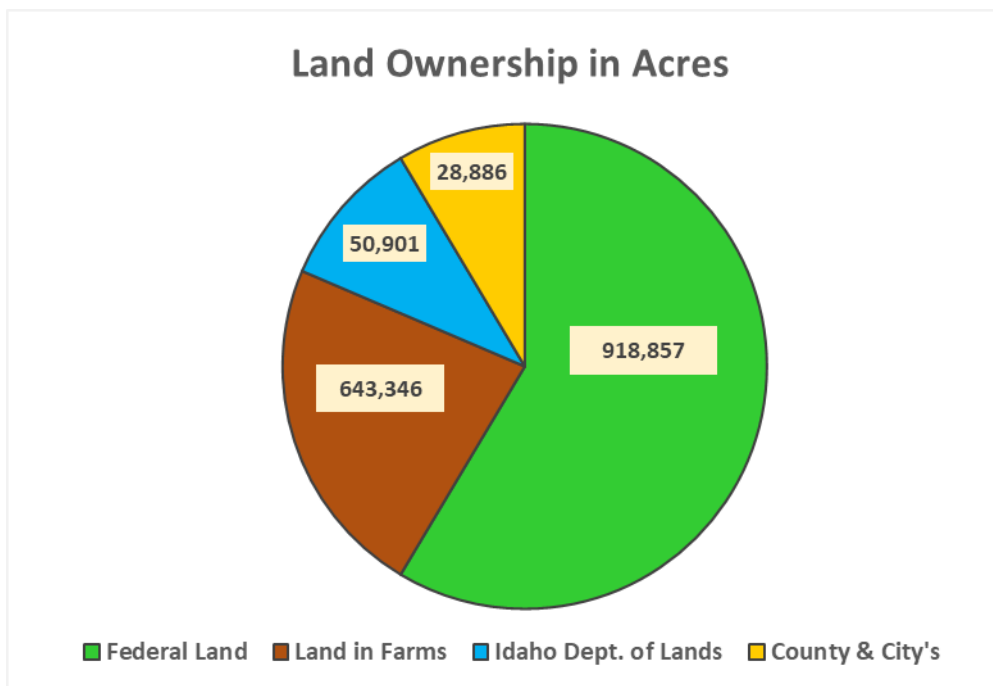
Soil conditions in the Mini-Cassia area are primed to accept and reward the gift of water. A mixture of clayish and sandy soils, enriched with volcanic ash, provide vital minerals and nutrients necessary to support an abundance of crops. A conducive growing climate and carefully monitored irrigation combine to make the Mini-Cassia area one of the top farm production regions in the state, totaling three million dollars in crop production annually.

Accessibility of quality raw products has led the nation's top food processors to locate within the Mini-Cassia area. Potato processors, fresh pack food processors, dairy processors, and the nation's largest sugar manufacturer profiting from the riches of the area include McCain's Corporation, Magic Valley Produce Inc., and the Amalgamated Sugar Company. Diversification of crop production, high acreage yields, and a cooperative growing season provides a consistent supply of raw products for processing facilities. Improvement in raw and finished product storage capabilities have allowed many processors to lengthen their production time to a nearly year-round operation except for required basic maintenance procedures that are performed for three to four weeks during the year.

Agricultural related industries, such as implement dealers, farm equipment manufacturers, and Boise Cascade's Corrugated Container Division all reap the benefits of the Mini-Cassia area's fertile land and ample water supply.

Cassia County's land area is 2,580 square miles. Land is 2,565 square miles and water 15 square miles. Land is generally fertile and highly productive. There is an additional 50,000 acres of land suitable for profitable farmland if underground water were developed. The natural resources being utilized in the county are basically land, water, grass, several rock quarries, natural hot springs, and some small amounts of timber. There is the possibility of some mineral deposit exploitation, depending upon economic feasibility.

Precipitation in Cassia County ranges from 10 inches at Burley to 15 inches in the higher dry land areas. Most of the land is entirely dependent upon irrigation water. The major sources of irrigation water in the county are canal and deep well delivery systems (in the Snake River Plain and Raft River area) and free flowing streams and reservoirs. In some areas, water is listed as a critical need. Drilling for underground water for agricultural uses in new areas is regulated.



Burley is the heart of the irrigation development known as the Minidoka Project, a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project that waters the region.

The Bureau of Reclamation was established by Congress in 1902. While the fledgling Twin Falls project was being started under the provisions of the Carey Act, funding for the Minidoka Project, the second reclamation project in the nation, was authorized by Congress. \$2,600,000 was allotted in 1904 for construction of the Minidoka Dam and work started on the Minidoka Dam in September of that year. Settlers began arriving on the project that same year to find sagebrush desert with the dam and canal system years from completion. Most of the men worked on construction while the women cared for the family and livestock. The first water was turned into the Minidoka North Side canal in 1907 and the Minidoka Dam was completed in 1909.

Small dams and irrigation diversions had been placed in Goose Creek by the first settlers. The Kuhn's formed the Twin Falls Oakley Land and Water Company in 1909 and built the Oakley project to reclaim 43,893 acres. The Oakley Dam was the largest earth dam in the world at the time of completion. The lack of sufficient water caused the project acreage to be reduced to about 21,000 acres managed by the Oakley Canal Company.

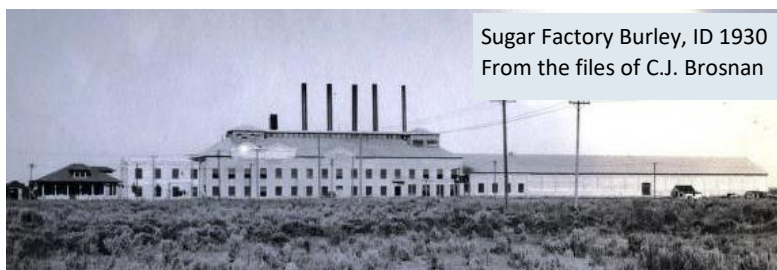
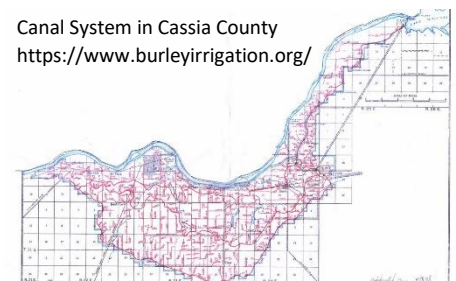
History in south-central Idaho, both prehistoric and modern, centers on the Snake River and its tributaries. The economy, the towns and communities, electricity, manufacturing and industry, and agriculture are dependent on the Snake River for continued existence. The collapse of any portion of the foundation of the structure that has been built would be disastrous. The periodic drought cycles serve as reminders that without water the entire region could, probably would, quickly revert to the original great sagebrush covered desert of the Snake River Plains.

Cassia County is geographically the 9th largest county in the state and ranks 15th among the counties in population. The county covers 2,577 square miles bounded on the north by the Snake River and on the south by mountains extending to Nevada and Utah. Over 56% of the county belongs to the Federal Government. The county is agriculturally oriented and ranks 1st in the state for total farm income. Agriculture and food processing are important components of the local economy.

In spite of the many problems and short water supplies, the farmers were able to successfully add new crops to the alfalfa hay and grain they had planted first. Sugar beets were introduced and the construction of the Burley Sugar Factory in 1912 made it possible to use the beets for sugar instead of livestock feed.



Minidoka Dam
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2016865097/>



The combination of good soil, favorable topography, an average irrigation season of about 200 days, and available irrigation water makes the surrounding lands highly productive. Burley is a farm, marketing and distribution center. At the heart of the West's largest deep-well pumping project, Cassia County has over 500,000 acres of fully developed irrigated and non-irrigated cropland. Besides potatoes, sugar beets, grains, corn silage, alfalfa, also grown are peas, corn, beans, and small seeds, which add stability to the agricultural base. Livestock production, dairying, and meat processing, and active weekly auctions are the other major contributions to the farm and ranch economy. The value of Cassia County agricultural production annually exceeds \$382 million.

Since the beginning of the irrigation projects, dairying has been an important part of the economy. There was a time when milk cans lined country roads waiting to be transported to the creamery by milk truck. The scene vanished with the arrival of Grade A dairy regulations. Today, the family herd of cows has been replaced by high-tech dairies that milk thousands of cows daily. The dairies and cattle feeding operations provide a ready market for the high-quality alfalfa hay grown in the valley.

The annual precipitation is less than 11 inches. Grazing is excellent on the high ranges and livestock and crop production are the major industries of the county. Irrigation prevails on Raft River and on Goose Creek. Consequently, the base of the great agricultural empire rests upon the wise and prudent use of water supplied from three main sources; the Snake River, creek and stream runoff stored in small reservoirs, and deep well pumping. The availability of 90% of this water is dependent upon an adequate supply of electricity to lift it from the river and the ground.

The average size of irrigated farms has risen dramatically in the last 20 years. The trend of agricultural producers having to be effective managers to survive is a reality. Sixty percent of the land in Cassia County is state and federally owned and is used primarily for grazing 125,000 head of cattle. Cooperation between the Bureau of Land Management and local ranchers has led to better utilization of these basic natural resources.

This area was known as "The Potato Processing Capitol of the World". The J.R. Simplot Company opened its multi-million-dollar potato processing plant in 1959. There were six huge potatoes, sugar beet and fresh vegetable processing plants that employed well over 6,000 workers.



AGRICULTURE

Located in a high-desert plains region, Cassia County is in the heart of an agricultural gold mine. There are over 500,000 acres of fully developed irrigated and non-irrigated cropland. The average size of farms is 1,100 acres. The semi-arid nature of the region provides the perfect growing conditions for many crops. An abundance of deep fertile soil, an extended growing season, a virtually pest-free environment, and ample rangelands for grazing all combine to make Cassia County one of the top-ranking regions in the State for total farm income. Cassia County is rated #1 in Idaho in total value of agricultural products sold. Average value of agricultural products sold per farm is \$1,584,136.00. The average value of crops sold per acre for harvested cropland is \$503.95. The value of livestock, poultry and their products as a percentage of the total market value of agricultural products sold is 62.46%.

Warm summer days, cool nights, and fertile soil enriched with volcanic ash are ideal growing conditions for the famous Idaho Russet Burbank potato. Cassia's prime growing conditions produce over 10 million hundredweight of potatoes annually and are the area's leading cash crop, with nearly \$79 million dollars in annual cash receipts.

Sugar beets are the second leading cash crop. Annual production is 1,125,000 tons, nearly 13% of Idaho's total sugar beet production. Cash receipts from sugar beet marketing alone deposit nearly 23 million dollars into the area's economy. Cassia County contributes greatly to Idaho's ranking as the nation's largest producer of sugar beets, accounting for approximately 12.5 percent of Idaho's sugar beet crop. Cassia is the 7th highest wheat producing area in the state. Leading varieties grown are West Bred 470, a soft white winter wheat and Alturas, a soft white spring wheat, both of which are used in cookies, cakes, and pastries.

Malting barley appears to grow exceptionally well in this area. For these reasons, Miller Coors has located a transport center for malting barley in Cassia County. Feed barley is also grown to help local dairies with their feed needs. Alfalfa hay and corn silage are also grown on over 60,000 acres and 20,000 acres respectively also at the behest of dairies and growing feedlot enterprises. Peas, dry beans, feed corn, and livestock round out Cassia's vast agricultural community. Diversification in crops provides a stable economic base for the agricultural industry, while establishing sound growing practices by growing crops on a rotation basis to replenish vital nutrients taken from the soil. Growing conditions within the region are suitable for a number of additional crops as well including carrots, green beans, onions, and many seed varieties.

Cassia County's market value of production was \$953,728,000 in 2012. The average age of principal operators is 55.7 years of age. The average size farm is 915 acres. The majority of farms are over 1000 acres. Cassia County ranks 1st in Idaho with total value of agricultural products sold, 2nd in livestock and 4th in crops. Top livestock are dairy, beef cattle, hogs, mink, sheep, and horses. Top crop items are potatoes, sugarbeets for sugar, wheat, forage – land used for hay, corn silage, grass silage, greenchop and barley.

For the past several years, livestock revenues exceeded crop revenues. Prior to 2000, crop revenues had surpassed livestock revenues every year since 1979.

Farms, Cropland & Livestock	1987	1992	2002	2007	2012	2017	2022
Total Number, All Farms	873	788	692	644	668	585	554
Total Acres in Farms	653,525	666,342	774,260	644,740	611,055	643,346	657,664
Avg. Farm Size (acres)	749	846	1,076	1,001	915	1,100	1,187
Total Farms in Crops	750	685	504	470	482		406
Total Acres in Crops	413,331	(D)	422,424	372,773	333,822		366,476
Cattle and Calves Inventory	107,828	134,228	175,837	231,082	255,384		264,897
Number of Irrigated Farms	723	641	533	476	506		

Value of Land & Building & Products	1987	1997	2007	2012	2017	2022
Average Value of Land & Building Per Farm	\$465,049.00	\$917,627.00	1,665,431.00	2,143,115.00		
Average Value of Land & Buildings Per Acre	\$632.00	\$932.00	1,664.00	2343.00		
Average Value Per Farm of Products Sold	\$200,239.00	\$456,541.00	593,503.00	973,170.00	\$926,720,000	1,153,031,000

Principal Occupation of Farm Operator	1987	1992	1997	2002	2007	2012
Farming	609	550	488	446	347	375
Other	264	238	241	246	297	293

LIVESTOCK

Livestock production, dairying, cheese and dry milk production, and meat processing are all industries that make this area a tremendous bounty of agricultural production. Beef cattle feeding is one of the more popular enterprises, with two large commercial feedlots and several individual feedlots located in the county. We have an abundance of good quality forage and feed grains. Sugar beet and potato by-products are supporting food stuffs that contribute to making beef fattening very desirable.

The ability to grow top quality forage makes dairying an attractive enterprise for Cassia County farmers. Dairying has become the largest livestock enterprise in the county with over 58,000 head of dairy cows. These cows are milked on 42 dairies that range from 100 cows per dairy to well over 5000. Six local producers from Cassia and surrounding counties have started a large, powdered milk and butter enterprise. These producers wanted to insure better returns per cwt of milk and provide a stable market for their milk. High Desert Milk was born in 2001 and these producers currently milk 35,000 cows and farm close to 40,000 acres of ground and market 2.2 million lbs. of milk per day. In 2009 High Desert Milk had sales of \$100 million. A butter plant was added in 2012. Locally grown alfalfa hay and corn silage provide affordable feed for dairy herds. Other milk processing plants located in nearby Minidoka County also aid Cassia County's dairy producers, aiding Idaho's ranking as the nation's third largest cheese producing state.

The sheep industry has shown an increase in interest after a slump in the early 1980's and several farmers are choosing to market forage through sheep. Numbers for sheep are up from 11, 512 in 2002 to 13,250 in 2007. While these numbers are not that large, the industry is seeing new opportunities in Cassia County for the future.

Production of swine may be increasing with a demand for information on how to construct hog producing equipment and housing. Cassia County has the largest farrow to fat swine operation in the state. One producer has 3,200 sows producing over 25,000 - 30,000 head of feeder pigs per year.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Livestock and dairy farming contribute dramatically to the economic health of the Mini-Cassia area. Rangelands support grazing of an average of 125,000 cattle and 14,000 sheep annually. Publicly and privately-owned range lands are being well utilized by the livestock producers. There has been a great deal of improvement in this regard in the last 15 years. A lot of grass has been planted and more stock watering facilities have been developed.

There is still a great deal that can be done in stock water development and rotation grazing that will enable producers to manage their ranges for a maximum sustained production and profit.

Agriculture, with its associated enterprises, is certainly the number one industry in Cassia County bringing in more than 954 million dollars annually into the county economy. These farm and ranching businesses are critical for the continued economy of this area. Education in agriculture is critical to the maintaining of these businesses and with the average age of farmers in Idaho at 52.7, estate planning appears to be a critical need for ag producers in the county. Farm financial management and estate planning are topics brought out in advisory committees for ag education in the county. A table describing the relative importance of different crops and livestock follows.

Crop Commodity	Data Year	Value of Sales	Rank in State
Potatoes cwt	2022	\$ 86,638,125	7
Barley bu	2022	\$35,517,693	5
Grains & Beans	2022	\$132,132,000	2
Sugar Beets	2022	\$55,683,945	1
Alfalfa Hay & Other Crops	2022	\$1,422,266	4
Total All Crops	2022	\$311,394,029	4

Livestock Commodity	Data Year	Value of Sales	Rank in State
Milk from Cows	2022	\$393,469,000	4
Cattle & Calves	2022	\$330,430,000	1
Poultry & Eggs	2022	(D)	1
Hogs & Pigs	2022	(D)	1
All Livestock Products	2022	\$762,844,000	3
Total of Ag Cash Receipts	2022	\$1,153,031,000	1
Data provided by 2022 Ag Census			

(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for Individual operations.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Agriculture-related industries flourish in the area. Implement dealers and farm equipment manufacturers provide a vital link in the successfulness of the agricultural and food processing industries. Corrugated boxes manufactured locally by Boise Cascade are utilized by local processors and by businesses and industries throughout the world.

Processed products and manufactured goods from the area are easily distributed to West Coast and Pacific Rim markets through an extensive transportation network. Interstate highways, railhead connections, containerized shipping, and air links provide manufacturers with affordable access to vital markets.

The retail trade is another example of the positive economic climate found here. Figures released by the State Tax Commission show that spending in the area increases each year. Some of the retail shopping is; Wal-Mart, Ross, Maurice's, A Child's World and Real Deals. The implications on the area's retail trade has been substantial. Small retailers in the area are feeling the competition from these giant, national retailers.

There is one daily newspaper available in Burley, the Mini-Cassia Times News (except Saturday). The Weekly Mailer is mailed out to all Cassia County residents every other Tuesdays. The VOICE is a weekly publication based in Burley. It is mailed every Wednesday and serves the Mini-Cassia area. Internet is widely used in the Mini-Cassia area.

The Burley City Library serves those who live in the Mini-Cassia area. The library offers hardbacks, paperbacks, audio books (cassette & CD), videos, DVDs and several public access computers. The library subscribes to print journals and several local, regional, and national newspapers. They also have an Inter-library loan system that allows patrons to borrow books from many northwestern libraries. The library enjoys support from "Friends of the Library," a non-profit group. On Average, over 70,000 library items are circulated annually.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (General)

Youth development is an important part of the family and community life in Cassia County. As with the general population trends, the major portion of the youth live in Burley. Adults have made a conscientious effort to provide community-based activities for youth. These are available through churches, special interest groups (such as 4-H and scouting), community organizations and schools. A number one concern of the Idaho Migrant Council is to keep kids in school. The teen birth rate was 11 per 1,000 in Cassia County, compared to 12 per 1,000 in Idaho and 14 per 1,000 in the US.

4-H PROGRAM

The youth in Cassia County are involved in activities in the schools, churches, and community as well as 4-H and FFA programs. The general purpose of the University of Idaho 4-H program is to provide opportunities for youth to gain life and leadership skills in order to become positive adults and community contributors. Other key areas that are focused on are mental, physical and social growth. Youth learn positive behaviors through adult mentors and by doing real life, hands-on activities.

4-H is a large extension program within our county. Youth between the ages of 8 and 18 may become part of the program. Younger youth, ages 5 through 7 have the opportunity to be Cloverbuds and experience the 4-H program on an age appropriate level. Traditional 4-H members take part in a club setting with adult leadership.

Within the formal club setting, a group of young people, both boys and girls, are organized into a club under the guidance of local volunteer 4-H leaders. Clubs hold regular meetings conducted by a club youth presidency who are assisted by Roberts Rules of Order. 4-H youth give demonstrations on projects they are currently working on. This is followed by an educational piece/s given by the leaders, guest presenters and/or the youth in the club.

There are, however, youth in our county whose lifestyles, for one reason or another, do not fit within a traditional club situation, so Cassia has started a community club. Through the Cassia County Community Club, otherwise known as the 4-C's, we hope to reach underserved and non-traditional youth/families by offering 4-H projects through meetings held at the Extension Office, after school and during the summer. Classes will be taught by 4-H leaders, youth leaders and staff. By meeting at the office, we hope to be more accessible to youth. Whether youth are in a traditional club or in the 4-C's, the culmination of the project is when the youth enters and displays their project at the Cassia County Fair. Youth who receive high honors on their projects may go onto to District and State Competitions.

Cassia County offers an unlimited number of project areas to the youth for 4-H participation. Youth may choose from project areas

such as science, arts, technology, agriculture, livestock, family consumer science and miscellaneous subject matters. Again, our goal is to involve youth in a setting that will not only teach life skills but help the youth develop their self-worth and develop leadership skills. Youth are enrolled in organized clubs with projects ranging from robotics to rabbits. The goal for traditional 4-H clubs is to increase the number of trained volunteers so that we may increase the number of 4-H youth participants.

4-H PROGRAM

Although traditional 4-H has played a large part in youth programming in Cassia County, the coordinator, upon the recommendation from the advisory committee, has reached out and developed several partnerships which have allowed programming to be shared with a larger youth audience within the county. The goal is to work with underserved youth, minorities and youth who live within the city as well as the many small communities surrounding the county seat, Burley.

Other partnerships include the Cassia County School District, Burley Public Library, the College of Southern Idaho, and Cassia Regional Medical Center. When 4-H goes into the elementary schools, science activities/projects are taught and promoted. Cassia 4-H continues to work with the above groups in presenting the “Lunch in the Park” summer program where we reach approximately 200 youth each week. Cassia 4-H also does 4th grade “Idaho History Day” where we work with all the 4th grade youth in the county.

As 4-H continues its programs, new and diverse partnerships will be sought out not only to identify the needs of the youth within the county but to maximize the number of youths reached within our county.

4- H Enrollment (2023-2024)

Gender of 4-H Youth Participants		Ethnicity	
Girls: 177 Boys: 197 Not Specified: 1		Hispanic or Latino	7
Traditional Members	375	Not Hispanic or Latino	355
4-H Camping Programs	9	Preferred Not to Respond	13
4-H Adult Volunteers	62	Race	
		American Indian or Alaskan Native	1
Place of Residence of 4-H Youth		Asian	
Farm: 109 Towns: under 10,000: 159 Towns & Cities: (10,000 – 50,000): 107		Black or African American	
		Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	4
Youth Participating Outside of traditional 4-H Clubs	2110	White	357
		Youth Indicating More Than One Race	6
		Undetermined	1
		Preferred Not to Respond	6

EDUCATION

The school district mission statement reads: “The Mission and Vision for the Cassia County Schools and Board of Trustees is high levels of learning and success for all students.”

Cassia County Joint School District 151 is the 15th largest district in the state, in terms of student enrollment. The district encompasses most of Cassia County plus small portions of Oneida and Twin Falls Counties and is geographically larger than the state of Delaware. Within these 2,500 square miles are 18 schools with a total enrollment of 5,600 students. All schools are on a semester schedule and are accredited through the Northwest Accreditation Association and the State Department of Education. The district employs certified staff of over 340, 1/3 of whom have advanced degrees. Ancillary and auxiliary personnel bring the total number of employees to about 750, making the district the largest employer in the county.

Cassia became a countywide consolidated district in 1948. Prior to that there were 49 school districts spread throughout Cassia County. By merging into a consolidated district, they gained efficiencies and access to educational and financial resources. The schools of Cassia County continue to provide exceptional educational and extracurricular activities. Students, teams, and faculty are regularly awarded state and national honors and recognition. Average base pay teacher salary is \$41,676.

EDUCATION

The Cassia County High School has been established for students who are either unsuccessful in the Traditional high school, are pregnant, have infants or have dropped out of school. It is set up with a strict deadline schedule combined with job experience. The results have shown that this program is successful. Gardening, Cooking and Build your Future is the curriculum being taught by the Extension office.

About 60% of the student population at Cassia High School (ALT) identify as Hispanic, making up the largest segment of the student body. Cassia School district in Burley is made up of 28.19% Hispanic students, so Cassia High School (ALT) has a slightly different ethnic distribution compared to other schools in the city.

The demographic breakdown of Cassia High School (ALT) is drastically different from that of a typical school in the state of Idaho, which is made up of 18% Hispanic students on average.

High School graduate or higher, percent of persons Age 25+, 2017-2021 are 84.3%.

Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons' age 25+, 2017-2021 are 18.7%

Graduation rates for Cassia County High Schools is 43.9%.

Higher education is available in Burley through the College of Southern Idaho Mini-Cassia Center. New classes begin each semester during the school year. Credit classes are available throughout the year for those who are working towards a degree. CSI offers a two-year general education degree at the Mini-Cassia Center. Pre-requisites for nursing students, business and education are also offered.

The General Education Liberal Arts Program, including course work in ceramics and art, is becoming more and more popular. The CSI Foundation Board purchased a new \$15,000 kiln and wheels. Dual college credits are available to students while still in high school for half tuition costs. English as a Second Language class is offered along with a strong basic education program to assist non-high school graduates in obtaining their high school equivalency GED diploma. These classes are offered continuously through the year with open enrollment during day and evening to accommodate students who work or have families.

The Cassia Regional Technical Center is operated by the Cassia County School District and is located in Burley. The Center serves juniors and seniors from Burley, Declo, Murtaugh, Oakley, Raft River, and Valley High schools, as well as those students living within the District's boundaries who attend private and home schools. The Cassia Regional Technical Center was established in 1998, to meet community and regional needs for career opportunities and trained employees. The classes offered are Pre-Engineering & Automated Manufacturing Technology, Automotive Service Technology, Computer Aided Design and Drafting, Electronics Technology, Health Care Professions, Residential Construction Technology, Early Childhood Professions, Graphic Communications, Emergency Medical Technician, and Information Technology. Each program has an advisory committee of industry professionals who meet a number of times each year to advise the instructional staff on needs and developments in a specific industry.

CASSIA COUNTY ENROLLMENT FOR 2024-2025		
SCHOOL	Level	NO. OF STUDENTS
Burley area:		
Dworshak	K-6 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	401
Mountain View	K-6 Grades	474
White Pine	K-6 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	566
John V. Evans	K-6 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	547
Burley Jr. High	7-8 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	570
Burley High	9-12 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	1049
Cassia County High School	7-12 Grades	110
Other County Schools:		
Albion Elementary	K-5 Grades	32
Declo Elementary	K-5 Grades (Inc. Sp. Ed.)	450
Raft River Elementary	Pre-K-6 Grades	137
Oakley Elementary	K-6 Grades	188
Declo Jr. High	6-8 Grade	249
Declo High School	9-12 Grades	336
Oakley High	7-12 Grades	183
Raft River High	7-12 Grades	174
Mini-Cassia Online Learning Academy	K-12 Grades	94
TOTAL STUDENTS IN CASSIA COUNTY		5560

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

Cassia County has a very community-oriented citizenry. Studies have indicated that youth and adults alike are deeply involved in church, service, fraternal, recreation and civic activities. It is a common goal of families to continue the pioneer heritage of improving their surroundings and the quality of life that they enjoy.

UI Extension Educators and other experts provide research-based information to help local families and communities make informed decisions about nutrition, financial management, relationship skills, food safety and healthy living. Extension Educators are your source for current and safe recommendations for preserving foods at home. Explore food preservation information, classes, and resources.

The UI Extension Eat Smart Idaho program is designed to help limited-resource adults learn how to stretch their food dollars to provide tasty, low-cost, and healthy meals for their families. This program is funded by two Federal grants, allowing University of Idaho Extension to deliver classes specifically for those with limited resources. These grants are provided by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service in cooperation with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and by USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture.

For every dollar invested in nutrition education for limited resource learners, enough Idahoans change their eating habits to save more than \$13 in future health care costs because their risks for serious nutrition-related diseases has been reduced. Nutrition education is critical for the health and well-being of children and their families.

Malnutrition, along with environmental factors associated with poverty, can permanently limit physical growth, brain development and cognitive functioning. The longer a child's nutritional, emotional and educational needs are not met, the greater the likelihood of cognitive impairments.

The needs in Cassia County are many and varied. The importance of food preservation and food storage has greatly increased over the years. Consumers are planting gardens and persevering the fruits and vegetables for future use. Under the direction of the Family and Consumer Science Extension educator, there is an active Master Food Safety Advisor group. There are 21 individuals who volunteer approximately 30 hours of their expertise in food preservation and food safety within their communities. These women are certified and updated throughout the year with the most recent research. A "Home Food Preservation" workshop is offered throughout the community. The 11-hour class covers the aspects of food safety and home food preservation, boiling water canning, pressure canning, freezing, and drying of foods. Homemakers, as a general rule, keep up to date with canning equipment, supplies, and current canning recommendations.

With rising food costs, limited income homemakers or homemakers with large families, are having difficulty extending their food dollars to meet the needs of their families. Nutrition and food preparation are stressed, with many homemakers grinding their own grain into flour, making their own cheese and sausage, and preserving garden produce and home-grown meat. Professionals teach food safety recommendations and procedures that are based on sound scientific research.

Increasing ethnic diversity in the county brings University of Idaho Extension new challenges in meeting educational needs. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin represent 28.7% of the population in Cassia County. This is currently underserved population for Cassia County Extension. Efforts to reach this population include participating in parent advisor meetings that are conducted by the Cassia County School Districts Migrant Liaison and working with the Migrant Liaison, working with the Migrant Head Start with the Extension Eat Smart Idaho Program.

In family and community programming, we plan to incorporate minority populations in all programming. We have at least one Hispanic individual on the Family & Consumer Sciences advisory committee so that we can get the Hispanic perspective from our community concerning our programming. We try to advertise in Spanish when possible, and place flyer's in many different locations where minority populations congregate, such as churches and grocery stores. Our office contains the necessary equipment and staff does all that's possible to make most accommodations for handicapped individuals.

The importance of good health cannot be overstated. One of the most important facets of good health is adequate exercise. Another essential part of achieving and maintaining good health is eating habits. Teaching a healthy diet includes a variety of foods from all the food groups in the right amounts for your sex, age and weight. Eating healthy supports all of your body's activities, from your ability to fight off illnesses to your ability to make decisions and learn.

Population without health insurance coverage in the US in 2022: 8.4%. Persons under 19 years old without health insurance coverage in 2020-2021: 5%.

ECONOMY

Several new companies have chosen to come to Cassia County in recent years.

Ida-Beef –Local producers now have the option to send cows nearing end-of-life to the Ida-Beef plant in Burley. According to the company, the goal is to help dairy producers save money, by giving them a local option for shipping cows to slaughter, instead of shipping cows to facilities in other states. Ida-Beef says their new facility currently harvests over 100 cows daily, but that the facility is capable of processing close to 400 cows a day. The company says it aims to use as much of the processed cow as possible and ships much of the meat to regional food companies.

Watco Companies LLC, which purchased the Dutchman’s Facility off Highway 30 in Oct. 2016, is Idaho’s agricultural gateway to U.S. markets, who maintains Eastern Idaho Railroad lines. One of the largest short line railroad holding companies in the U.S. with 37 short line railroads operating on more than 5,000 miles of track, as well as 33 industrial contract switching locations.

NewCold, a cold storage warehouse that primarily stores frozen potato products, had its grand opening Sept. 30, 2019, in Burley. The facility began operations in May 2019. The Dutch company built the massive, 90,000-pallet storage space primarily to handle McCain Food’s recent \$200 million expansion. But NewCold doesn’t exclusively house McCain potato and appetizer products.

NewCold isn’t a traditional warehouse. Because NewCold relies so heavily on automation, many of the company’s employees spend their time in front of computers, albeit with neon coats draped over their chairs.

Automation makes cold storage more economical, NewCold Director of Business Development Jonas Swarttouw. For one, automation can dramatically decrease the building’s footprint.

Pactiv Evergreen restaurant supplies, and equipment opened its new plant at the end of 2015, investing \$50 million and hiring 50 workers initially. They serve the foodservice industry as the eighth largest thermoformer in North America by offering a variety of high-quality plastic cups, bowls, containers, lids, and trays. Their new products include ecofriendly and biodegradable cups and containers.

Alto Ingredients is the leading producer and marketer of low-carbon renewable fuels in the Western United States. In July 2015, they expanded their operations and sales footprint, more than doubling their scale, entering new markets, and expanding their mission to become the industry leader in the production and marketing of low carbon renewable fuels.

DOT Foods and Dot Transportation added up to 25 new positions in Burley, in March 2015. The nation’s largest food industry redistributor, and Dot Transportation, Inc., a national food redistributor, opened its state-of-the art warehouse in 2008. Dot has doubled in size every five years in the company’s history.

Major employers include McCain’s, Cassia School District, Intermountain Health, Dot Foods and Wal-Mart High Desert Milk, PCA (Packaging Corporation of America), D.L. Evans Bank, PACTIV EVERGREEN, and Americold Logistics.



Packaging Specialties opened its shrink wrap and printing operation in 2008. They are more than a box manufacturer. They seek to be the leader in helping their customers – large or small, package, transport, and supply products of all kinds.

Packing Corporation of America is a full-service supplier of corrugated containers, serving primarily the fresh and processed potatoes, dairy, agricultural and industrial packaging markets. They service eastern Idaho, northwestern Utah, and eastern Montana. We specialize in RSCs, die-cut items and high-graphics packaging. More than 115 dedicated team members are committed to providing quality products, efficient design, excellent service, and continuous improvement solutions to help our customers succeed in their businesses.

Hy-Line North America is an egg hatching operation that ships from the new plant in Burley and buys eggs locally. They are the world leader in poultry layer genetics with a rich history of innovation. They are the first poultry breeding company to apply the principles of hybridization to commercial layer breeding. They are the first company with its own in-house molecular genetics team leading the industry in application of DNA-based technology to its breeding and genetics program. They sell both brown and white egg stock to more than 120 countries worldwide and is the largest selling layer in the American egg industry.

Dow Chemical Co. is making its home in Burley. The facility will produce Styrofoam brand insulation. Manufacturing will begin in 2018 and provide 21 full-time jobs at the height of operation. The impact on the city will come from roughly \$15 million in private investment, the 80 construction jobs and good benefits and salaries.

High Desert Milk and Gem State Processing are both food processing plants. All these national companies pay competitive wages with benefits. Many of the food processing jobs require higher skill levels due to automation. McCain Foods is an example of automating with higher skilled jobs and higher wages, recently announcing a \$100 million expansion.

Agriculture employs more Hispanics than any other industry in Idaho. In 2014, 16% of the state’s Hispanics worked in agriculture, which the Census Bureau groups with forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining. This compares to 4% non-Hispanic workers.

Cassia County had the highest sales of agricultural products which tends to have the highest percentage of Hispanic residents (28.7 Hispanic in 2022). Agriculture employs more Hispanics than any other industry in Idaho. Because they are more likely to work in lower-wage industries and occupations Hispanics earn less on a full-time, annual basis than non-Hispanics.

The unemployment rate in Cassia County, Idaho, is 2.8%, with job growth of .8%. Future job growth over the next ten years is predicted to be 35%.

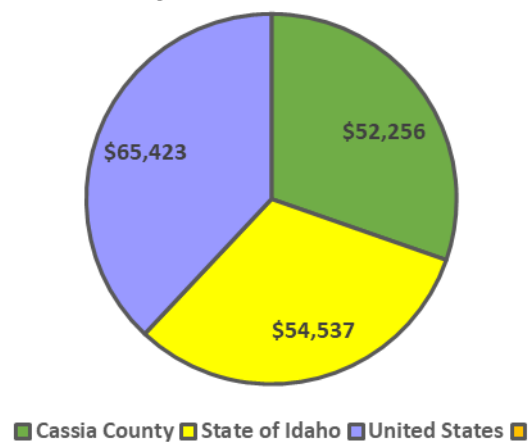
Labor Force	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2023
Civilian Labor Force	11,110	11,114	11,116	11,487	11,601	13,361
Unemployment	641	579	477	388	352	365
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.8	5.2	4.3	3.4	3.0	2.7
Employment	10,469	10,535	10,640	10,776	11,249	12,361

Wages & Income

Wages have been traditionally low in Cassia County but with the influx of national companies, particularly over the last 8 years, wages are climbing. Previously, jobs had been in agriculture, food processing, retail or services. The dairy industry has brought some stability to agricultural wages with its year-round need and deep supply chain. Cassia is the leading county in the state for agricultural receipts, ranked 34th nationally. Per capita income increased 17 percent from 2014, about half of the state and nation's growth. Its ranking of 7th is an indicator of the wealth from large farms and supporting business. Per capita income growth over the last decade is estimated at nearly 57 percent. Cassia County's per capita income is 11 percent below the nation's and 11 percent higher than the state's per capita income. Covered wages for All Industry grew 5.2 percent from 2014—most significantly in Financial Activities and Information. Historically, the lower wage scale has attracted many companies, but higher skilled jobs are pulling up the average wage. Wage growth in covered employment has increased over the last decade for All Industry by 38 percent compared to 21 percent employment growth.

Occupational	Median Wage
Teachers	\$51,775
Community & Social Services	\$51,874
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$70,430
Dental Assistants	\$36,721
Healthcare Support	\$31,830
Transportation & Material Moving	\$40,088
Business & Financial Operations	\$67,784
Sales & Related	\$32,569
Food Prep. & Serving Related	\$25,039
Office & Admin. Support	\$40,397
Construction & Extraction	\$48,864
Protective Service	\$51,841
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	\$51,433
Production	\$40,507
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	\$32,800

Per Capita Income for 2022



Industry Employment & Wages	Average Employment 2012	Average Wages 2012	Average Employment 2022	Average Wages 2022
Total Covered Wages	9,803	\$31,155	12,226	\$45,483
Natural Resources & Mining	1,584	\$31,567	2,036	\$44,401
Construction	400	\$35,432	636	\$50,226
Manufacturing	1,234	\$41,026	1,708	\$54,581
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	2,601	\$31,620	2,960	\$51,643
Information	78	\$46,916	87	\$65,848
Financial Activities	241	\$38,433	320	\$62,457
Professional & Business Services	443	\$27,708	589	\$47,339
Educational and Health Services	1,978	\$26,261	2,112	\$39,660
Leisure and Hospitality	478	\$10,160	1,017	\$16,371
Other Services	203	\$16,776	223	\$32,384
Public Administration	564	\$40,776	538	\$49,120

HOUSING

The median home value in Cassia County is [\\$270,882.00](#), which is lower than the state average of \$444,451.00. Median existing single-family home values are moving higher in much of the United States, increasing 27 percent for Idaho over the past year 2022-2023.

Renters make up 27.6% of the Cassia County population. 6.4% of houses and apartments in Cassia are unoccupied. Rent averages \$772 a month.

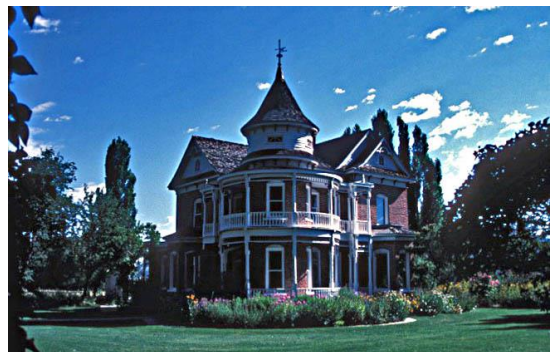
As of July 1, 2023, there were 8,491 households in Cassia County. The average household size is 2.96 people. The median housing value is \$270,822.00. The median property tax in Cassia County, Idaho is \$692 per year for a home worth the value of \$114,600. Cassia County collects, on average, 0.6% of a property's [assessed fair market value](#) as property tax.

Home ownership rate, 66.0%. The estimated median household income is \$65,358.00. Percentage of residents living in poverty in July 1, 2022, is 11.3%.

Habitat for Humanity and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development both provide housing programs for the homeless. HUD is a government agency that offers several housing assistance programs to qualifying homeless individuals and families in the United States. Habitat for Humanity is a Christian-based organization that operates worldwide.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has several categories of housing programs, including competitive homelessness programs and formula homelessness programs. Programs under the competitive homelessness umbrella include the Continuum of Care Program and the Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program, whereas the Emergency Solutions Grant Program falls under the formula homelessness program.

Examples of other homelessness programs offered through the department are the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Program, the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program, and the Title V Program - Federal Surplus Property for Use to Assist the Homeless. Additional help for segments of the homeless population are available through the HUD's Office of Housing and the Office of Public and Indian Housing.





University *of* Idaho Extension