



Grant County

Labor Area Summary

October 2013

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Overview

This report provides current updates on the Grant County economy. It incorporates the most recent, not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm and agricultural employment and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year changes (between October 2012 and October 2013) in unemployment and on year-over-year employment trends in major industries in Grant County.

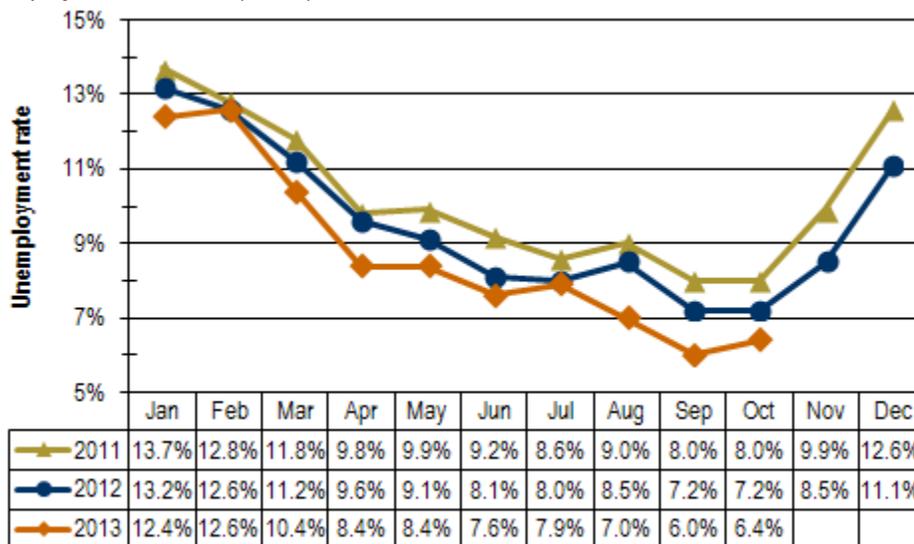
Unemployment rates

Washington state's annual average not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased one full percentage point between 2011 and 2012, from 9.2 percent to 8.2 percent. Between the Octobers of 2012 and 2013 the rate fell from 7.2 to 6.4 percent, a decrease of eight-tenths of a percentage point. Grant County's October 2013 unemployment rate of 6.4 percent (not seasonally adjusted) decreased eight-tenths of a percentage point below the 7.2-percent reading in October 2012. This October was the 37th consecutive month of year-over-year decreases, or of no change, in the local unemployment rate (i.e. from October 2010 to October 2013).

Figure 1. Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted

Grant County, January 2011 through October 2013

Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



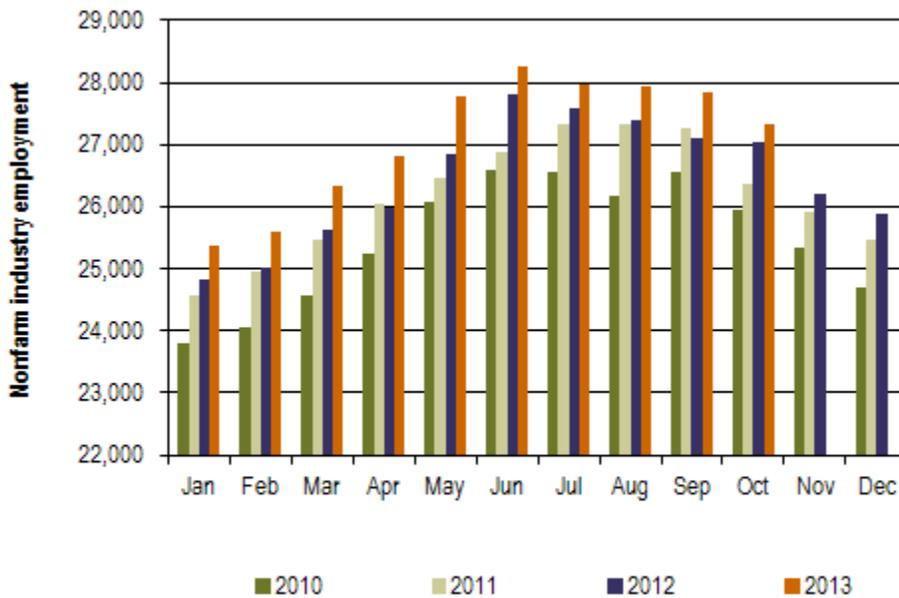
The Grant County unemployment rate decreased eight-tenths of a percentage point between October 2012 and October 2013.

Total nonfarm employment

Businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 2,966,400 nonfarm jobs this October (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 2,917,700 jobs in October 2012. This equated to a 1.7 percent year-over-year employment increase statewide. Washington's labor market has been growing for 37 months (from October 2010 through October 2013).

Grant County's nonfarm labor market has registered year-over-year gains from October 2012 through October 2013, thirteen consecutive months of job growth. This October, local nonfarm employers provided 27,320 jobs, a 1.0-percent and 270-job increase from the 27,050 jobs tallied in October 2012.

Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment
Grant County, January 2010 through October 2013
Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA



Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 27,320 nonfarm jobs in October 2013, a 1.0 percent upturn from October 2012.

Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) stabilized in 2012, following a 1.0 percent and a 33,770 resident decrease in 2011. However, the CLF has only posted year-over-year growth in two of the first ten months of 2013. Washington's CLF was 3,470,340 residents strong in October 2013 versus 3,494,790 in October of last year, equating to 24,450 fewer residents in the labor force (down 0.7 percent). A shrinking labor force is just about never good economic news.

Grant County's labor force grew by 1,240 residents (up 3.0 percent) in 2012. However, Civilian Labor Force (CLF) growth virtually stagnated during the first three months of 2013 before posting year-over-year declines in April, May, June, and July 2013. But, the labor force rebounded in August, September, and October 2013 by registering over-the-year increases. Between the Octobers of 2012 and 2013 the Grant County labor force expanded from 43,990 to 46,340 residents, a strong 5.3 percent increase. Fewer residents were unemployed this October versus the same month in 2012 (3,150 residents were unemployed in October 2012 versus 2,960 in October 2013). Hence, a labor force increase coupled with a decrease in unemployed residents caused the County's unemployment rate to fall from 7.2 percent in October 2012 to 6.4 percent in October 2013, as shown in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3. Labor force and industry employment, not seasonally adjusted
 Grant County, October 2013
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMEA

Grant County	Preliminary	Revised	Revised	Change		
	Oct-13	Sep-13	Oct-12	Sep-13 Oct-13	Oct-12 Oct-13	Oct-12 Oct-13 %
Labor force and unemployment						
Civilian labor force	46,340	47,270	43,990	-930	2,350	5.3%
Resident employment	43,380	44,430	40,840	-1,050	2,540	6.2%
Unemployment	2,960	2,840	3,150	120	-190	-6.0%
Unemployment rate	6.4	6.0	7.2	0.4	-0.8	
Industry employment						
Total nonfarm ¹	27,320	27,830	27,050	-510	270	1.0%
Total private	19,140	19,890	19,130	-750	10	0.1%
Goods producing	5,940	6,290	6,040	-350	-100	-1.7%
Service providing	21,380	21,540	21,010	-160	370	1.8%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	5,840	5,890	5,760	-50	80	1.4%
Information and financial activities	1,060	1,060	1,070	0	-10	-0.9%
Government	8,180	7,940	7,920	240	260	3.3%
Workers in labor/management disputes	0	0	0	0	0	
¹ Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of the armed services, workers in private households, and agriculture. Includes all full- and part-time wage and salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. Columns may not add due to rounding.						

Nonfarm employment in Grant County increased 1.0 percent, a gain of 270 jobs, between October 2012 and October 2013.

Nonfarm industry employment

Specifically, on an annual average basis, nonfarm employment in Grant County:

- Decreased from 25,700 in 2009 to 25,470 in 2010, a 230 job and 0.9 percent decline.
- Jumped from 25,470 in 2010 to 26,170 in 2011, a 700 job and 2.7 percent increase.
- Increased from 26,170 in 2011 to 26,450 in 2012, a 280 job and 1.1 percent upturn.

Preliminary estimates (see *Figure 3*) illustrate that Grant County’s nonfarm employers tallied 270 more jobs in October 2013 than in October 2012, a 1.0 percent upturn. The following is a summary of the most recent over-the-year changes, by major industry:

- The goods producing category is comprised primarily of construction and manufacturing firms and it experienced two years of dismal economic times in 2009 and 2010. Specifically, Grant County’s goods producing firms lost 800 jobs (down 12.8 percent) during 2009 and another 230 jobs in 2010 (down 4.2 percent). This category then expanded by 420 jobs in 2011, an impressive 8.1-percent annual average employment increase. It averaged 130 new jobs in 2012, rising from 5,620 in 2011 to 5,750 last year (up by 2.3 percent). In fact, goods producers posted nine consecutive months of job growth from October 2012 through June 2013. However, growth has cooled, and in fact estimates indicate that year over year, goods producing employment decreased in July, August, and October 2013. In October 2013 there were 5,940 goods producing jobs versus 6,040 in October 2012, as shown in *Figure 3*.

- Over-the-year job growth occurred at service providing businesses and organizations between the Octobers of 2012 and 2013. This category increased from 21,010 jobs in October 2012 to 21,380 in October 2013 (up 1.8 percent), accounting for all of the year-over-year gain in Grant County's total nonfarm employment this October, as shown in *Figure 3*. The County's service providers have added jobs from October 2012 through this October (for 13 consecutive months). Statewide, service providing organizations have been growing for 39 months (from August 2010 through October 2013). Hence, local service providing businesses and organizations recovered later than service providing businesses and organizations across Washington, and it is these businesses and organizations that are currently keeping local nonfarm job market growth in the “plus-column.”

Agricultural employment

LMEA's Agricultural Labor Employment and Wages report for October 2013 showed the total number of agricultural jobs rose 9.3 percent over the year in the Columbia Basin Area 4, an agricultural reporting area that includes Adams and Grant counties. Total agricultural employment was 15,630 in October 2012 versus 17,090 in October 2013, a 1,460-job increase. A little more than 80 percent of agricultural jobs provided in this two-county area are on farms and orchards in Grant County. It should also be noted that seasonal agricultural employment in the Columbia Basin's Area 4 decreased from 13,600 in October 2012, to 11,580 in October 2013 – a 14.9-percent downturn. Why? According to the Agricultural Labor Employment and Wages report, “Columbia Basin (Area 4) seasonal employment decreased 14.9 percent due to decreased apple work (-2,460).”

In other agricultural news, weather conditions were warmer and drier than normal during the reporting period. Potatoes, onions, dry beans, dry corn, silage corn and late planted sweet corn harvest were underway. Apple harvest continued as well, with strong yields being reported. Primary agricultural activities were apple harvesting, general apple work, miscellaneous onion warehouse work and field corn warehouse work.