



# Grant County

## Labor Area Summary

### Volume 2010, Number 11



**Mark A. Berreth, Regional Labor Economist**

215 Bridge Street, Wenatchee, WA 98801

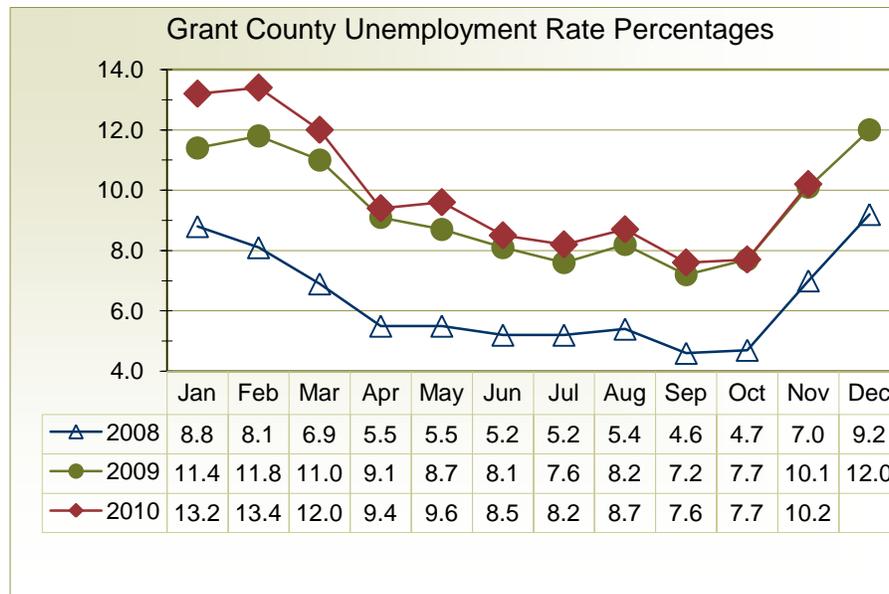
Voice: (509) 665-3737 FAX: (509) 665-3743

[mberreth@esd.wa.gov](mailto:mberreth@esd.wa.gov), [www.workforceexplorer.com](http://www.workforceexplorer.com)

## Unemployment

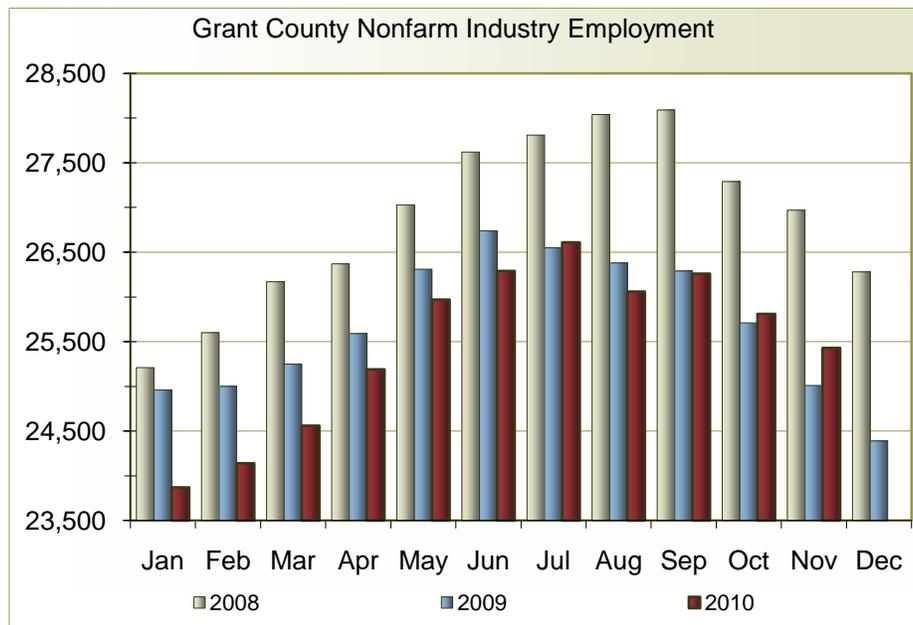
Grant County's unemployment rate of 10.2 percent (not seasonally adjusted) is 0.1 percentage point higher than November 2009. Over-the-month it is a 2.5 percentage point jump. Although it is a large increase from October to November, this is a normal seasonal pattern which is mainly contributed to agriculture.

Overall Grant County has started to show signs of improvement both in employment and unemployment figures. The recovery has been going very slow and signs of progress are hard to see at times. Although there was a slight increase in the unemployment rate in year-over-year figures, the number of individuals unemployed has stayed the same. The only difference is in a slightly smaller labor force. This signals towards a faltering economy in the short-run as it becomes clear the recovery is slow to get started.



Washington State's unemployment rate of 9.1 percent (not seasonally adjusted) is 0.4 percentage points higher than October and 0.2 percentage points higher than November 2009. Even with this slight jump in the unemployment rate the labor force and the number employed have seen a slight increase in year-over-year figures. This shows signs of a strengthening economy by being able to absorb slightly more employment. Unfortunately the number unemployed has also risen slightly. Signs of strength are met with losses in other areas and this shows the big picture of a struggling recovery for Washington State.

## Employment



Grant County has been able to absorb more employment in year-over-year figures and is starting to show some strength. Even as the agricultural season winds down and puts pressure on the unemployment rate, total nonfarm employment has been able to continue to improve.

Total private employment has grown slightly both in the goods-producing sector and the service-providing sector. Grant County has a diverse economy and has been able to grow in manufacturing and various areas within the service-providing sector. The long-term goals of Grant County have focused around manufacturing which in turn has spurred retail sales growth. This focus on diversifying the economy has enabled Grant County to see some improvement faster than other areas in North Central Washington.

Washington State has dropped slightly in over-the-month figures both in total nonfarm employment and total private employment. This tends to be a normal seasonal fluctuation for the labor force. More important is the year-over-year gains in total nonfarm employment and total private employment. Although this is a very good sign towards an improving economy the gains need to be larger in order to make a dent in the overall growth in the labor force.

The nation has started to show unsure signs of recovery. Consumer confidence has started to drop slightly while consumer expectations have been rising. Various leading indicators have started to see more fluctuation but have not made significant gains one way or the other. That being said, national retail sales have seen growth for five straight months now and will hopefully continue through the holiday season.