



# Grant County

## Labor Area Summary

### October 2015

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## Overview

This report provides an update on the Grant County economy incorporating current, not seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment and civilian labor force data. Analysis focuses on year-over-year (between the Octobers of 2014 and 2015) and average annual (between 2013 and 2014) labor market changes.

## Unemployment rates

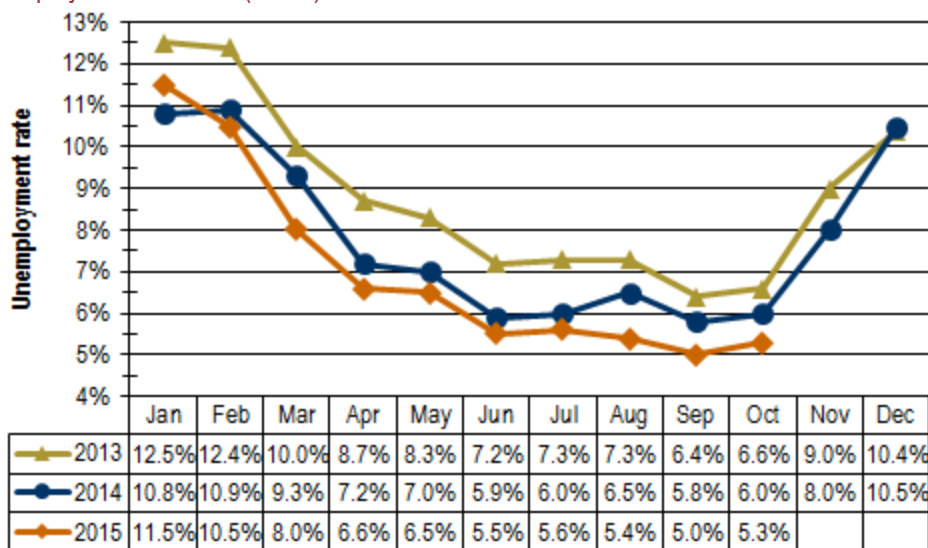
Civilian Labor Force (CLF) data show that Washington state's not seasonally adjusted average annual unemployment rate fell eight-tenths of a point between 2013 and 2014, from 7.0 percent to 6.2 percent. Between the Octobers of 2014 and 2015 the rate declined eight-tenths of a point, from 5.8 to 5.0 percent.

In Grant County, the average annual unemployment rate decreased one and one-tenths percentage points between 2013 and 2014, from 8.8 to 7.7 percent. The rate decreased seven-tenths of a point this October to 5.3 percent from the 6.0 percent reading in October 2014 (see *Figure 1*). The last time an October unemployment rate was this low in Grant County was seven years ago (in October 2008) when the rate was 4.8 percent.

**Figure 1.** Unemployment rates, not seasonally adjusted

Grant County, January 2013 through October 2015

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



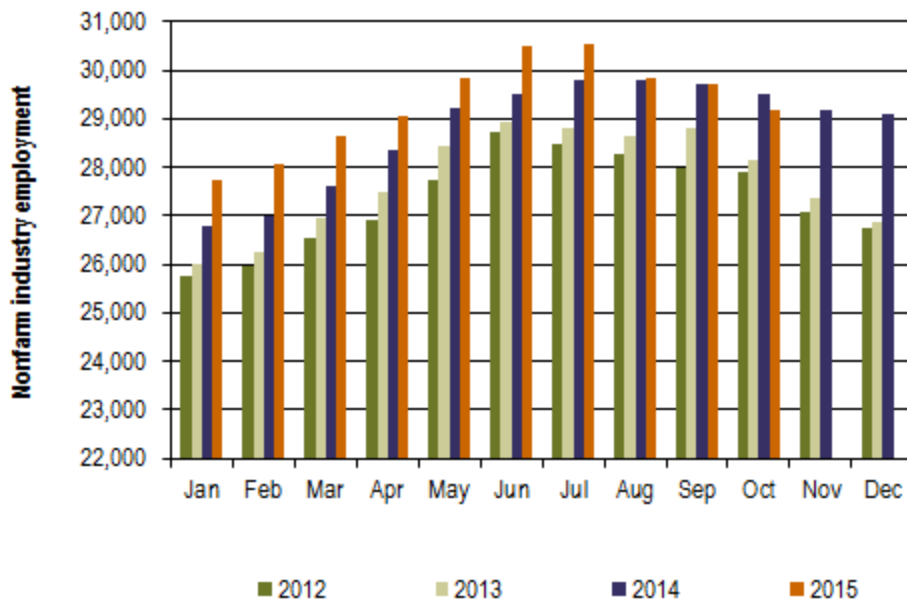
The Grant County unemployment rate decreased seven-tenths of a point, from 6.0 percent in October 2014 to 5.3 percent in October 2015.

## Total nonfarm employment

Between 2013 and 2014, Washington's labor market provided 81,000 new nonfarm jobs, an annual average increase of 2.7 percent. This October, businesses and government organizations across Washington supplied 3,204,200 nonfarm jobs (not seasonally adjusted), compared to 3,118,400 jobs in October 2014, a 2.8 percent year-over-year employment increase. The state's economy has posted year-over-year nonfarm employment increases for the past 61 consecutive months (October 2010 through October 2015).

Between 2013 and 2014, Grant County's labor market provided 1,080 new nonfarm jobs, an average annual increase of 3.9 percent, more robust than the state's 2.7 percent job growth rate. Although Grant County added nonfarm jobs for the 35 month period from October 2012 through August 2015, employment contracted 0.1 percent between the Septembers of 2014 and 2015 and by 1.2 percent between the Octobers of 2014 and 2015. This October, employers provided 29,180 jobs; a 340 job and 1.2 percent decrease from the 29,520 recorded in October 2014. Certainly this is not good economic news for the local economy.

**Figure 2. Nonfarm industry employment**  
Grant County, January 2012 through October 2015  
Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA



*Nonfarm employers in Grant County provided 29,180 nonfarm jobs in October 2015, a 1.2 percent downturn from October 2014.*

## Employment and unemployment

Washington's Civilian Labor Force (CLF) expanded by 28,145 residents (a 0.8 percent upturn) from 2013 to 2014. The state's labor force has increased, year over year, for the past 21 months (February 2014 through October 2015) but the growth pace slowed to 0.1 percent this October. In fact, the labor force expansion rate has decreased for the past six consecutive months, from 2.2 percent in April 2015 down to 0.1 percent in October. In October 2015, Washington's CLF tallied 3,525,129 residents versus 3,520,313 in October 2014 equating to 4,816 more Washingtonians in the labor force.

Although Grant County's CLF increased 1.7 percent in 2014 and the labor force expanded for 15 months (May 2014 through July 2015), year over year growth rates were negative in August and again in October 2015. Specifically, the CLF declined from 47,471 in October 2014 to 46,997 in October 2015 (meaning that 474 fewer residents in the local labor force). Fortunately, the number of unemployed countywide dropped from 2,844 in October 2014 to 2,514 this October. The net result: the county's unemployment rate fell by seven-tenths of a percentage point between the Octobers of 2014 and 2015 (see *Figure 3*).

**Figure 3. Labor force and industry employment, not seasonally adjusted**  
 Grant County, October 2014, September and October 2015  
 Source: Employment Security Department/LMPA

Grant County	Preliminary Oct-15	Revised Sep-15	Revised Oct-14	Change		
				Sep-15	Oct-14	Oct-14
				Oct-15	Oct-15	Oct-15 %
<b>Labor force and unemployment</b>						
Civilian labor force	46,997	47,793	47,471	-796	-474	-1.0%
Resident employment	44,483	45,398	44,627	-915	-144	-0.3%
Unemployment	2,514	2,395	2,844	119	-330	-11.6%
Unemployment rate	5.3	5.0	6.0	0.3	-0.7	
<b>Industry employment</b>						
Total nonfarm <sup>1</sup>	29,180	29,700	29,520	-520	-340	-1.2%
Total private	21,070	21,820	21,170	-750	-100	-0.5%
Goods producing	5,940	6,130	6,620	-190	-680	-10.3%
Mining, logging and construction	1,290	1,340	1,350	-50	-60	-4.4%
Manufacturing	4,650	4,790	5,270	-140	-620	-11.8%
Durable goods	2,490	2,490	2,270	0	220	9.7%
Nondurable goods	2,160	2,300	3,000	-140	-840	-28.0%
Service providing	23,240	23,570	22,900	-330	340	1.5%
Trade, transportation and utilities	5,960	6,100	5,810	-140	150	2.6%
Wholesale trade	1,720	1,760	1,630	-40	90	5.5%
Retail trade	3,280	3,340	3,160	-60	120	3.8%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	960	1,000	1,020	-40	-60	-5.9%
Information and financial activities	1,260	1,260	1,240	0	20	1.6%
Professional and business services	2,140	2,310	1,760	-170	380	21.6%
Education and health services	2,930	2,940	2,870	-10	60	2.1%
Leisure and hospitality	2,240	2,470	2,300	-230	-60	-2.6%
Government	8,110	7,880	8,350	230	-240	-2.9%
Federal government	750	780	760	-30	-10	-1.3%
State and local government	7,360	7,100	7,590	260	-230	-3.0%
State and local government education	3,470	3,090	3,600	380	-130	-3.6%
Workers in labor/management disputes	0	0	0	0	0	
<sup>1</sup> 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 decreased 1.2 percent, a loss of 340 jobs, between October 2014 and October 2015.*

## Nonfarm industry employment

Preliminary estimates (see *Figure 3*) indicate that Grant County’s nonfarm employers provided 340 fewer jobs in October 2015 than in October 2014, a 1.2 percent downturn. Washington’s nonfarm market grew by 2.8 percent growth pace during this period. Following is a summary of these recent year-over-year and over-the-month (September to October 2015) employment changes by industry:

- Most jobs in the combined “mining, logging and construction” category in Grant County are in construction and this category has been registering year-over-year employment losses for the past four months (July through October 2015). Statewide, construction has been adding workers for the past 44 consecutive months (from March 2012 through October 2015).
- Although Grant County's manufacturing industry had been growing for 22 months (from September 2013 through June 2015), it has been contracting for the past four (July through October 2015). Between the Octobers of 2014 and 2015 manufacturing employment decreased by 11.8 percent, from 5,270 to 4,650 jobs, a 620 job contraction. This recent slowdown in manufacturing employment has been centered in nondurable goods manufacturing (primarily in food processing) which has been contracting, year over year, for the past four months (July through October 2015). Conversely, Washington's nondurable goods manufacturers have either stabilized or posted year-over-year job gains for the past 34 months (January 2013 through October 2015).
- Retail trade employment in Grant County has been posting year-over-year gains for the past eight months (March through October 2015). This industry consists of such business as auto dealerships, general merchandise stores, hardware stores, food stores, etc. and it saw full- and part-time employment rise from 3,160 in October 2014 to 3,280 this October, a 3.8 percent and 120 job increase (see *Figure 3*). Washington's retail trade industry has been lengthening the number of people on its payrolls for the past 61 months (from October 2010 through October 2015).
- Professional and business services consists of a diverse set of niche industries, ranging from computer systems design and accounting/tax preparation services to management services, legal services and temporary employment services. In short, professional and business services is the umbrella industry of businesses that support other businesses. Professional and business services provided 1,760 jobs countywide in October 2014 versus 2,140 in October 2015, a strong 21.6 percent increase and an upturn of 380.

## Agricultural employment/production

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage (QCEW) program, conducted by the Washington State Employment Security Department provides agricultural and nonagricultural employment and wages for firms, organizations and individuals whose employees are covered by the Washington State Employment Security Act. Frequently termed “covered” or “QCEW” data, this information provides a reliable data set for comparing employment and wage trends in major industries at the county level. In August 2015 preliminary annual average QCEW data for calendar year 2014 became available. A ten-year analysis (from 2004 through 2014) of these data show that in Grant County:

- Total covered employment rose from 31,807 in 2004 to 38,886 in 2014, a 7,079-job and 22.3 percent upturn. The number of agricultural jobs (a subset of total covered employment) increased from 7,459 in 2004 to 10,658 in 2014, a 3,199-job and 42.9 percent uptrend. In 2004 Grant County's agricultural industry accounted for 23.5 percent of total covered employment. In 2014 agricultural employment accounted for 27.4 percent of total covered employment countywide. Hence, agricultural employment rose 3.9 percentage points (from 23.5 to 27.4 percent) in Grant County during the past ten years.
- Total covered wages rose from \$821.0 million (in 2004) to \$1.39 billion (in 2014) a \$573.4 million and 69.8 percent upturn. The agricultural payroll (a subset of total covered wages) advanced from \$134.6 million in 2004 to \$263.0 million in 2014, a \$128.3 million and 95.3 percent uptrend. In 2004 Grant County's agricultural industry accounted for 16.4 percent of total covered wages. In 2014 agricultural wages accounted for 18.9 percent of total covered payroll countywide. Hence, agricultural wages rose 2.5 percentage points (from 16.4 to 18.5 percent) in Grant County during the past ten years.