

The State of Utah's Economy

UBA/USU Ag Outlook & Conference

Marilyn Cannon,
Senior Economist

February 24, 2026

Labor Market Information Shop



P.O. Box 100127
Arlington, VA 22210

- Employment Statistics
- Unemployment Statistics
- Job Forecasts
- Wages
- Demographic Characteristics

Defining Labor Market Information (LMI) and LMI Customers

Defining Labor Market Information.

Labor market information includes all quantitative or qualitative data and analysis related to employment and the workforce. The goal of LMI is to help customers make informed plans, choices, and decisions for a variety of purposes, including business investment decision making, career planning and preparation, education and training offerings, job search opportunities, hiring, and public or private workforce investments.¹

Economic and Labor Market Data

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

How is labor market information applied?

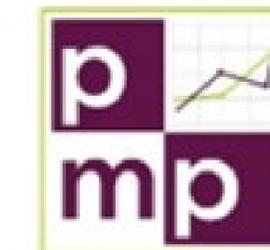
- Building Data Products
- Driving Policy
- Resource Allocation
- Strategic Planning
- Informing an Audience

MAIN SOURCES OF DATA



IPUMS

United States
Census
Bureau



AGENDA

- 1 Labor Market Trends
- 2 Agriculture in Utah
- 3 Looking to the Future

Utah's Labor Market

1. COOLING LABOR MARKET
2. POPULATION GROWTH



Photograph from Utah Office of Tourism

What are

Nonfarm Jobs?

What Are Nonfarm Payrolls?

Total nonfarm payroll employment is a popular measure of the **number of U.S. workers in the economy.**



This measure from the **Bureau of Labor Statistics** accounts for about **80% of the workers** who contribute to GDP.

However, it **does not** include:

- Farm employees
- Private household employees
- Unpaid volunteers
- Proprietors
- The unincorporated self-employed

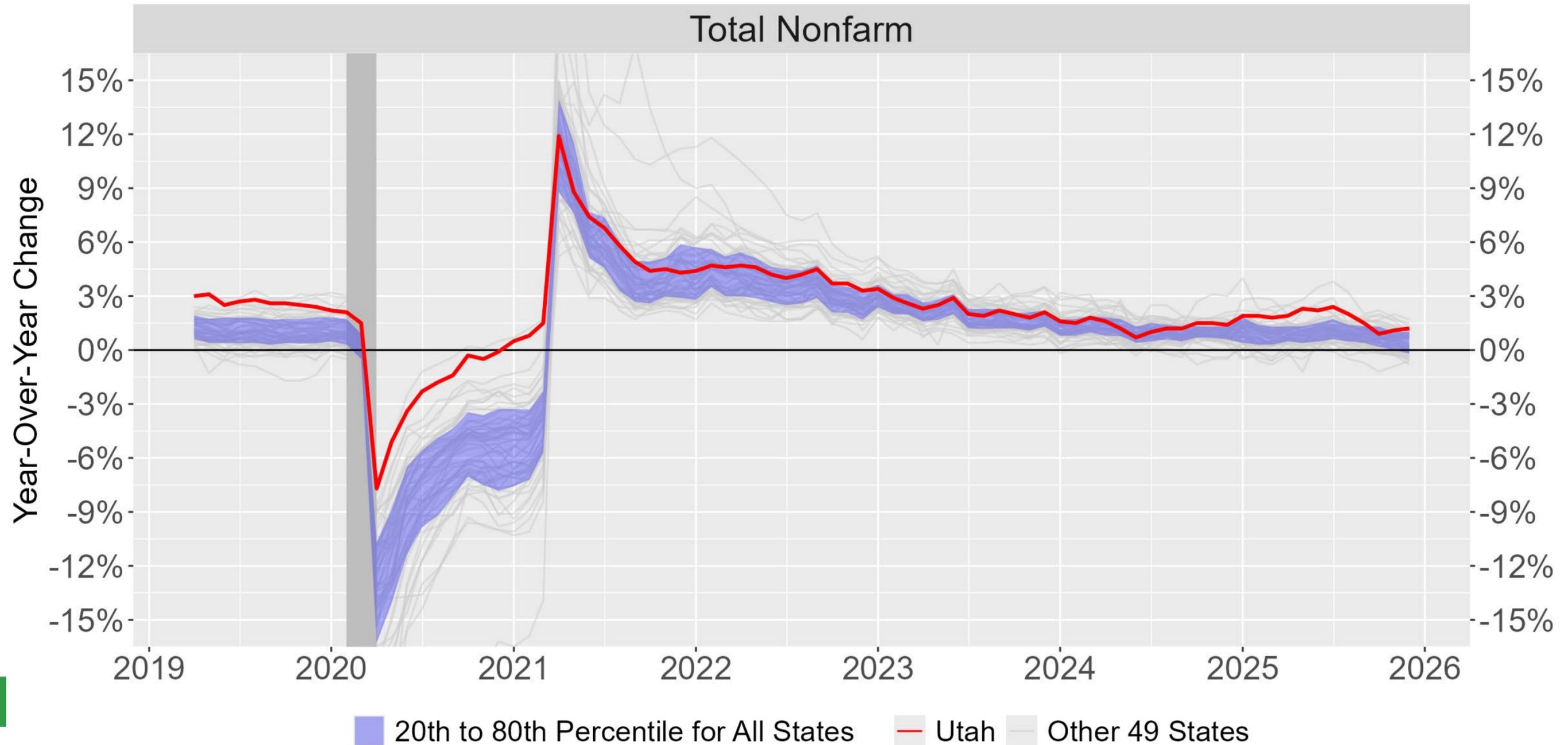
The U.S. Department of Agriculture tracks **farm labor**, including self-employed, unpaid and hired workers.



Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics (PAYEMS), USDA (NASS).

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK *of* ST. LOUIS

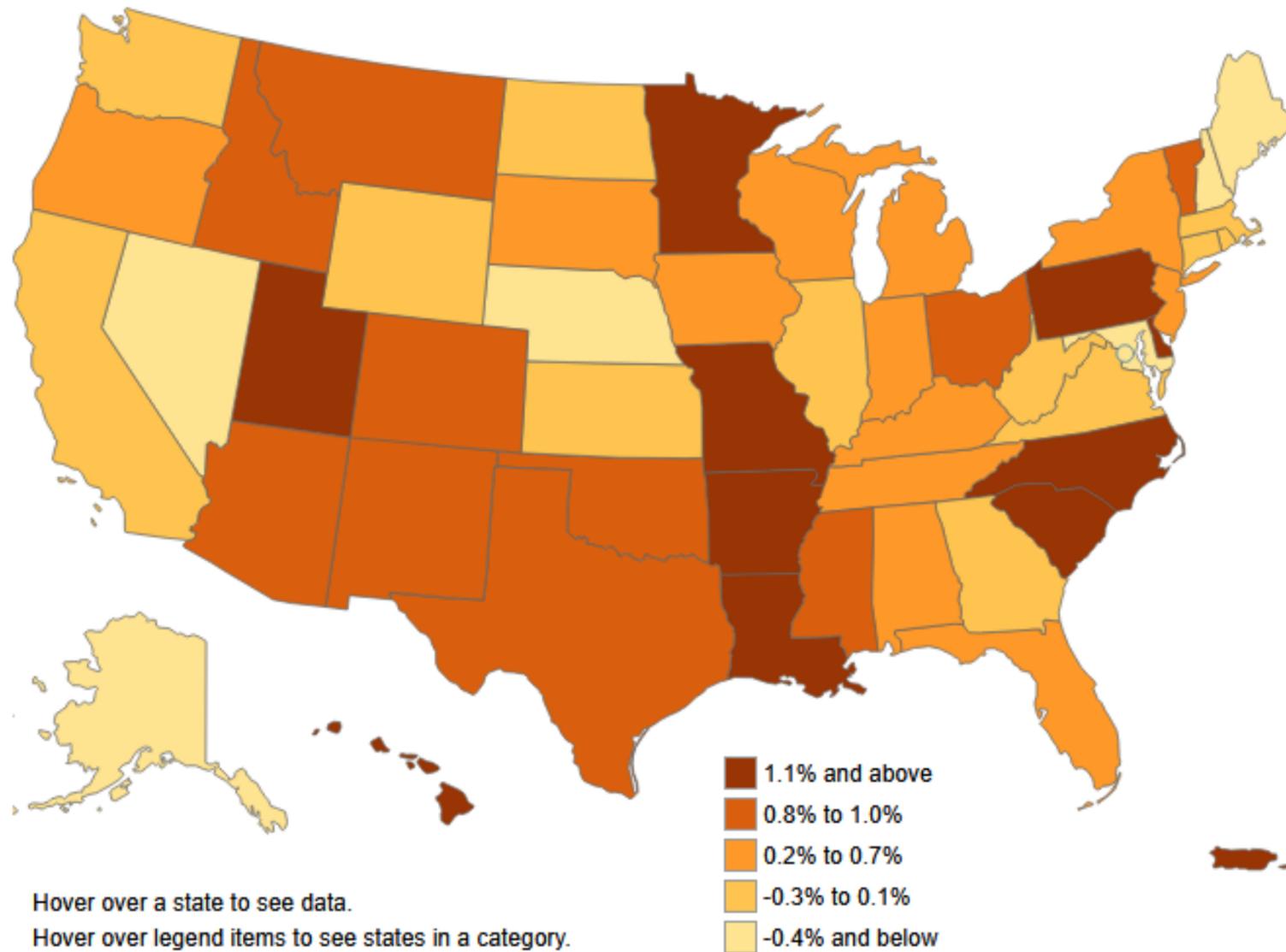
Nonfarm Job Growth All States



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Employment Statistics (CES), not seasonally adjusted

December 2025 YoY % Change in Nonfarm Employment

Change in nonfarm employment by state, December 2024 to December 2025, seasonally adjusted



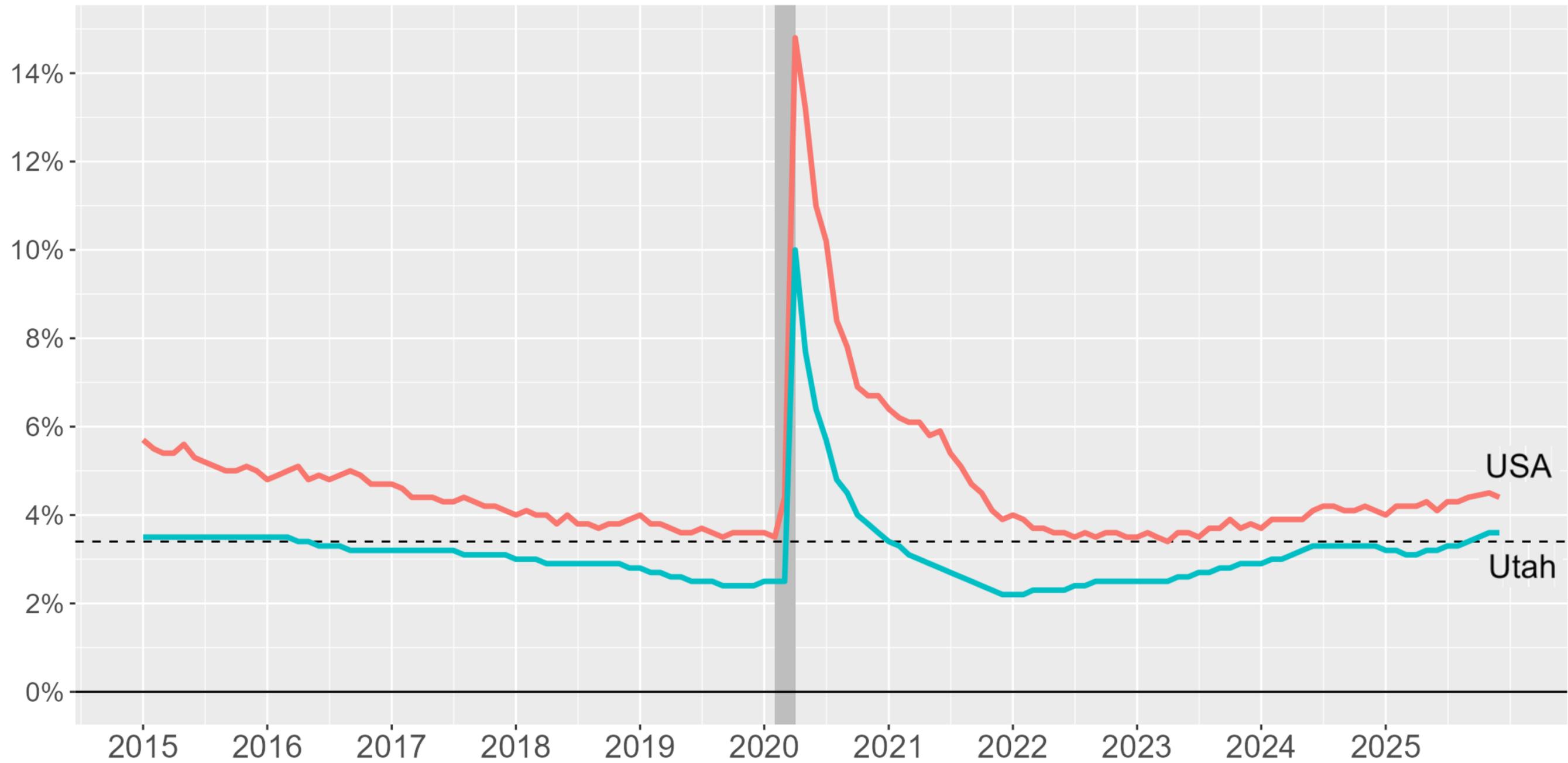
Hover over a state to see data.
 Hover over legend items to see states in a category.
 Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

State	Percent change	December 2024 employment (thousands)	December 2025 employment (thousands)	Net change (thousands)
Missouri	1.8	3,000.00	3,052.80	52.8
North Carolina	1.6	5,044.30	5,125.00	80.7
South Carolina	1.4	2,383.70	2,417.30	33.6
Louisiana	1.2	1,989.50	2,012.40	22.9
Pennsylvania	1.2	6,180.80	6,257.40	76.6
Utah	1.2	1,764.00	1,784.60	20.6
Arkansas	1.1	1,377.20	1,392.90	15.7
Delaware	1.1	490.8	496.1	5.3
Hawaii	1.1	645.8	653.2	7.4
Minnesota	1.1	3,034.40	3,068.50	34.1

U.S. Average = 0.4%

The Resilient Cooldown: Rising Unemployment

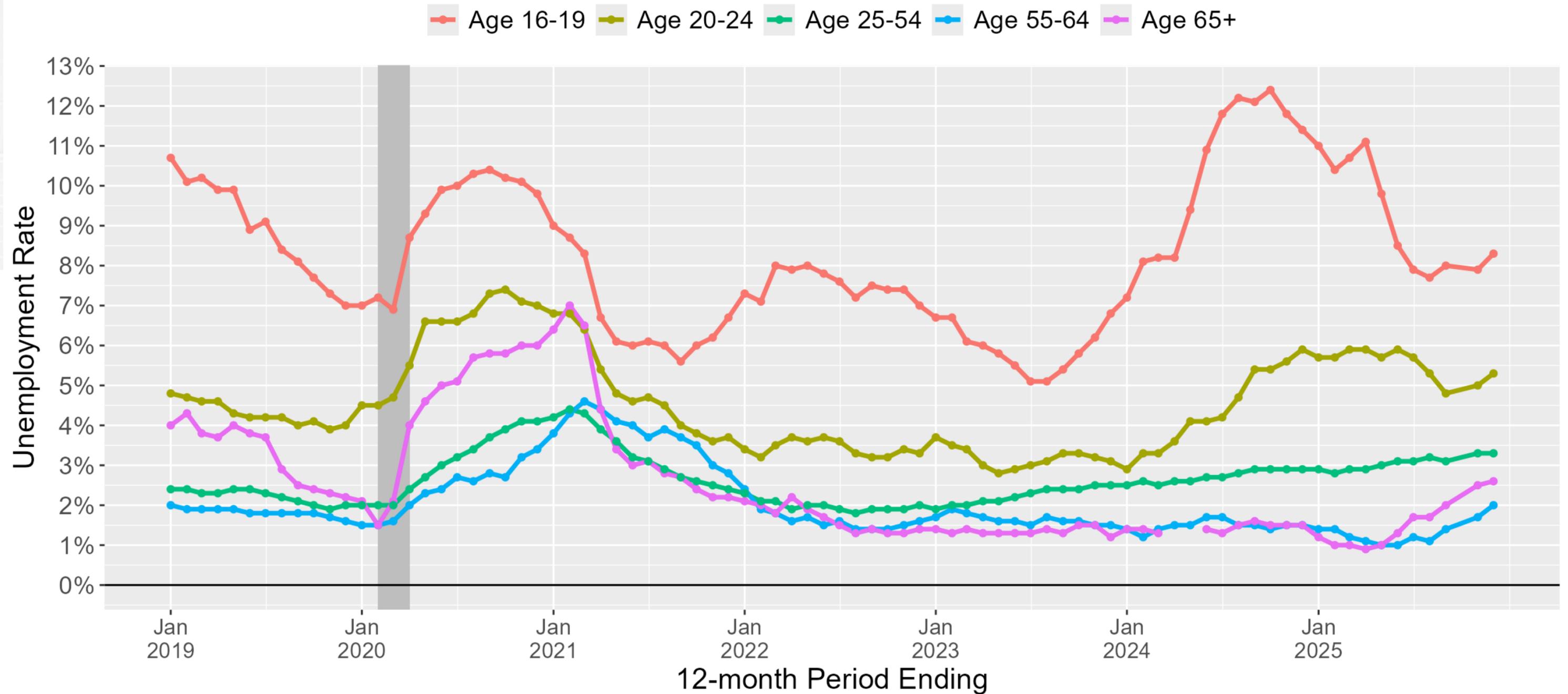
Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

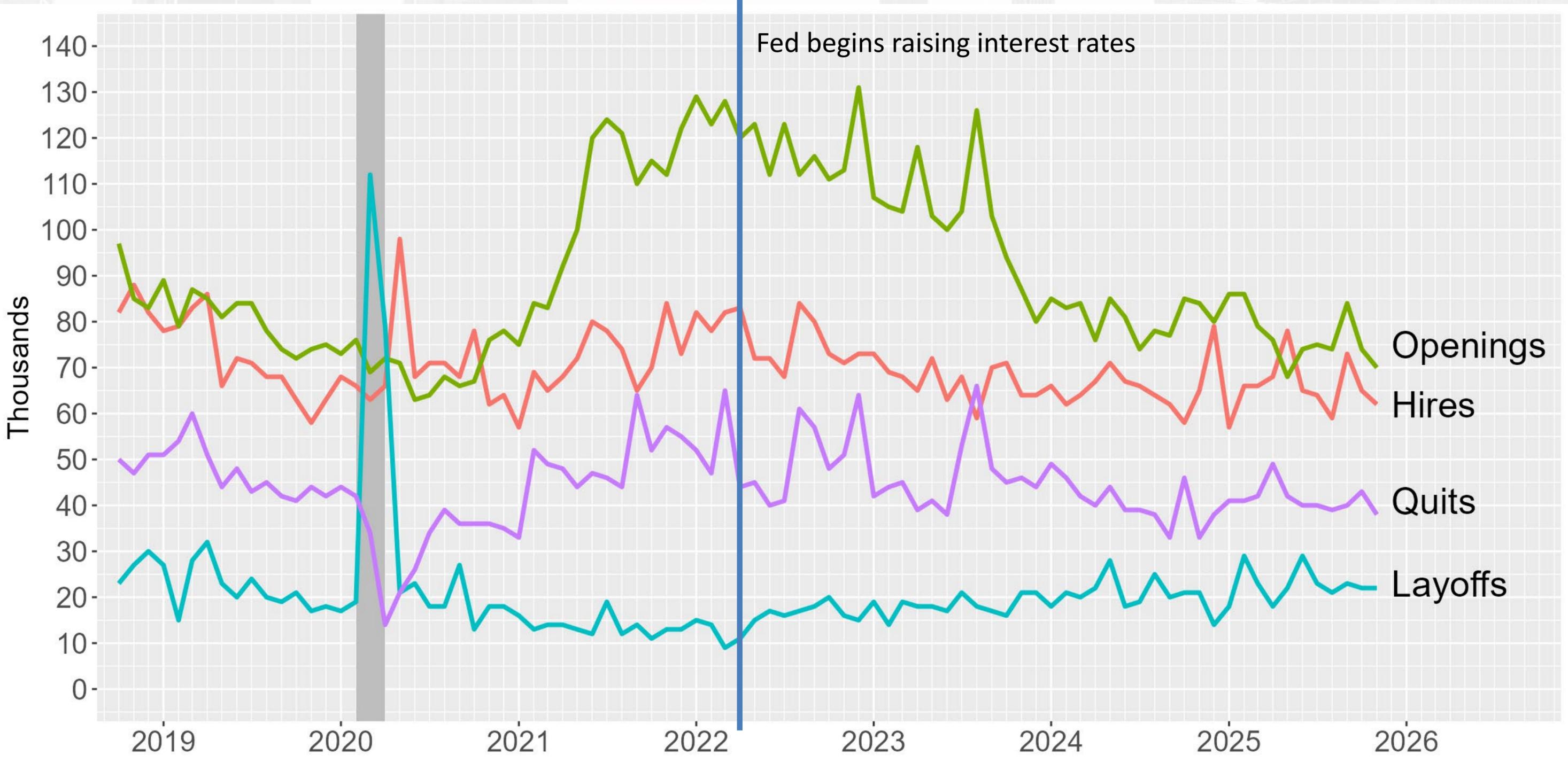
The Resilient Cooldown: Rising Unemployment

Utah Unemployment Rates by Age Group



Source: Current Population Survey & Bureau of Labor Statistics

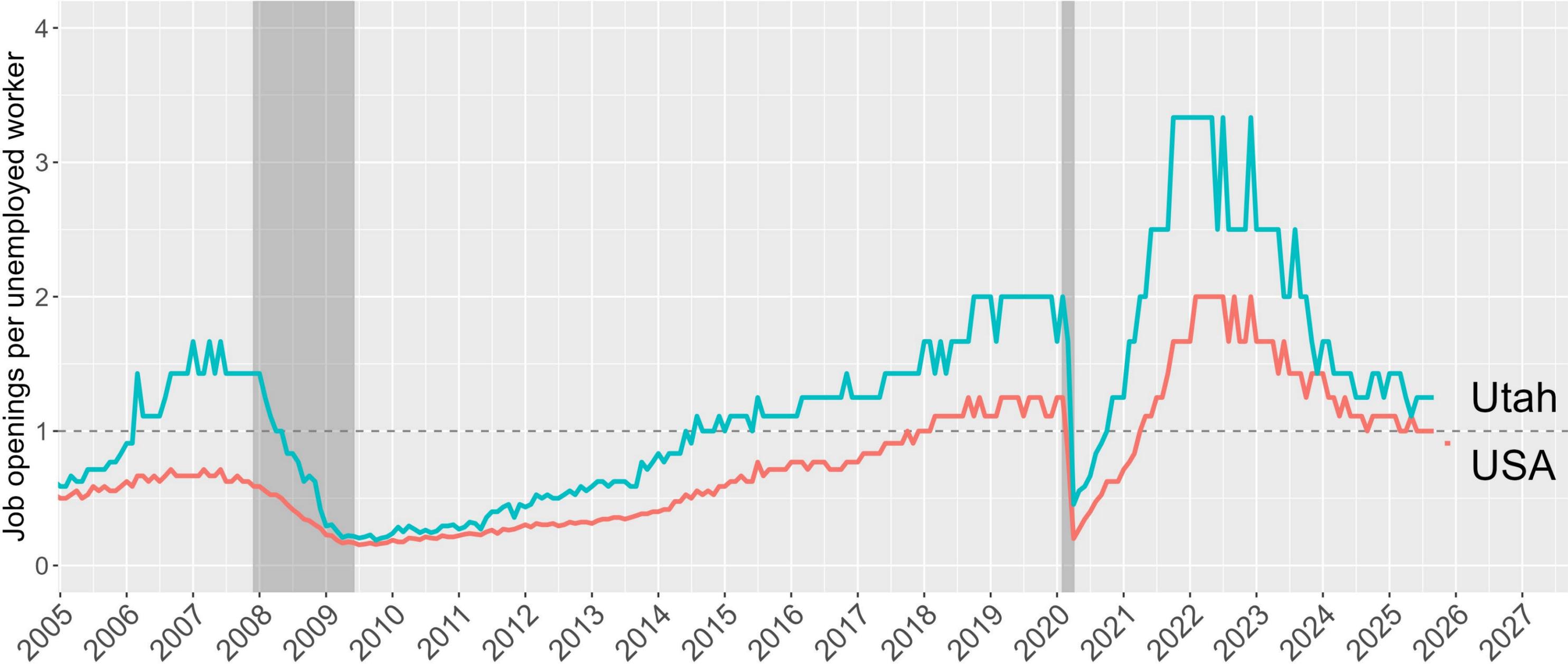
The Resilient Cooldown: Labor Demand Softens, but Overall Market Strength Holds



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Resilient Cooldown: Labor Demand Softens, but Overall Market Strength Holds

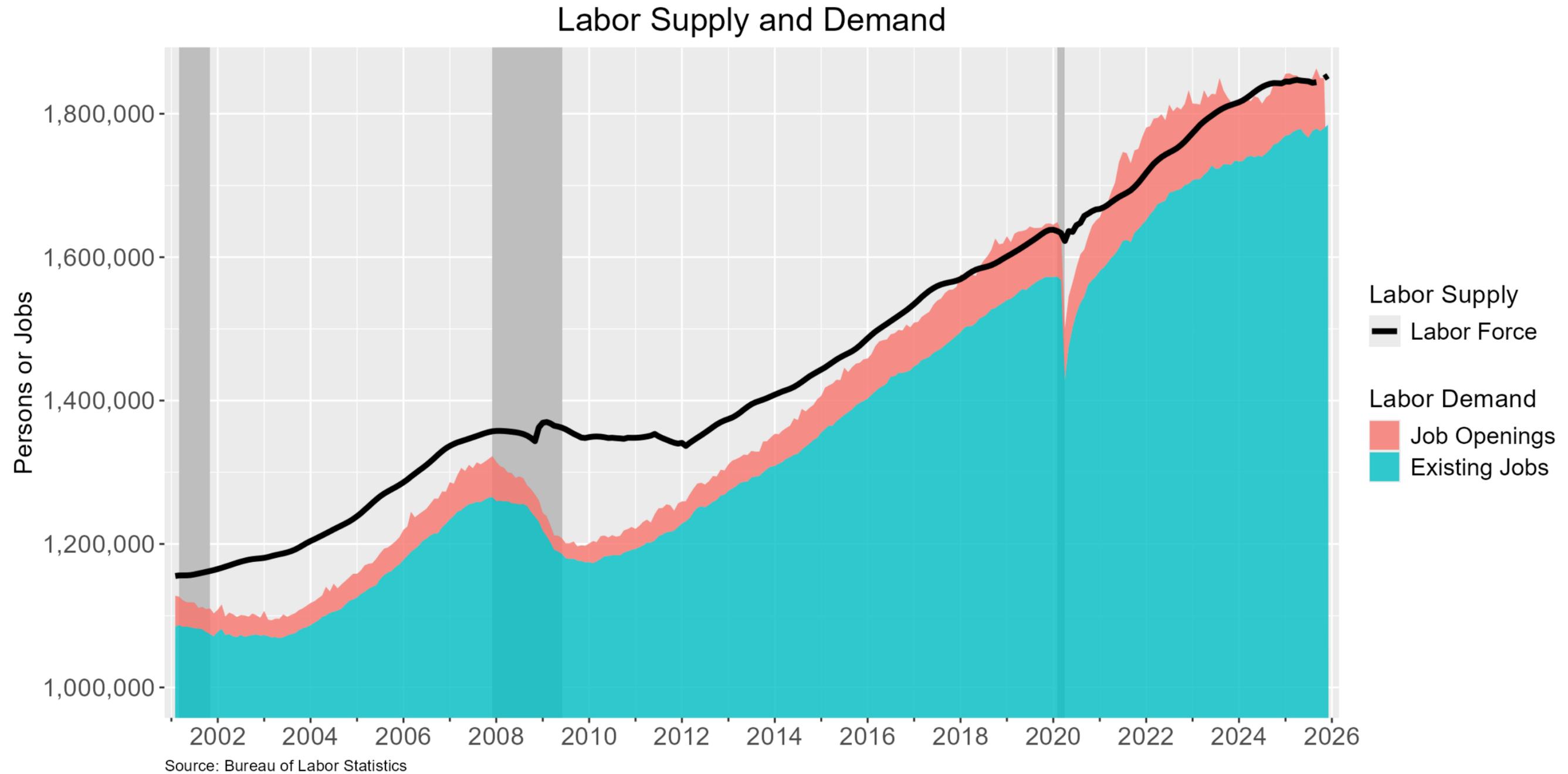
Job openings per unemployed worker



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

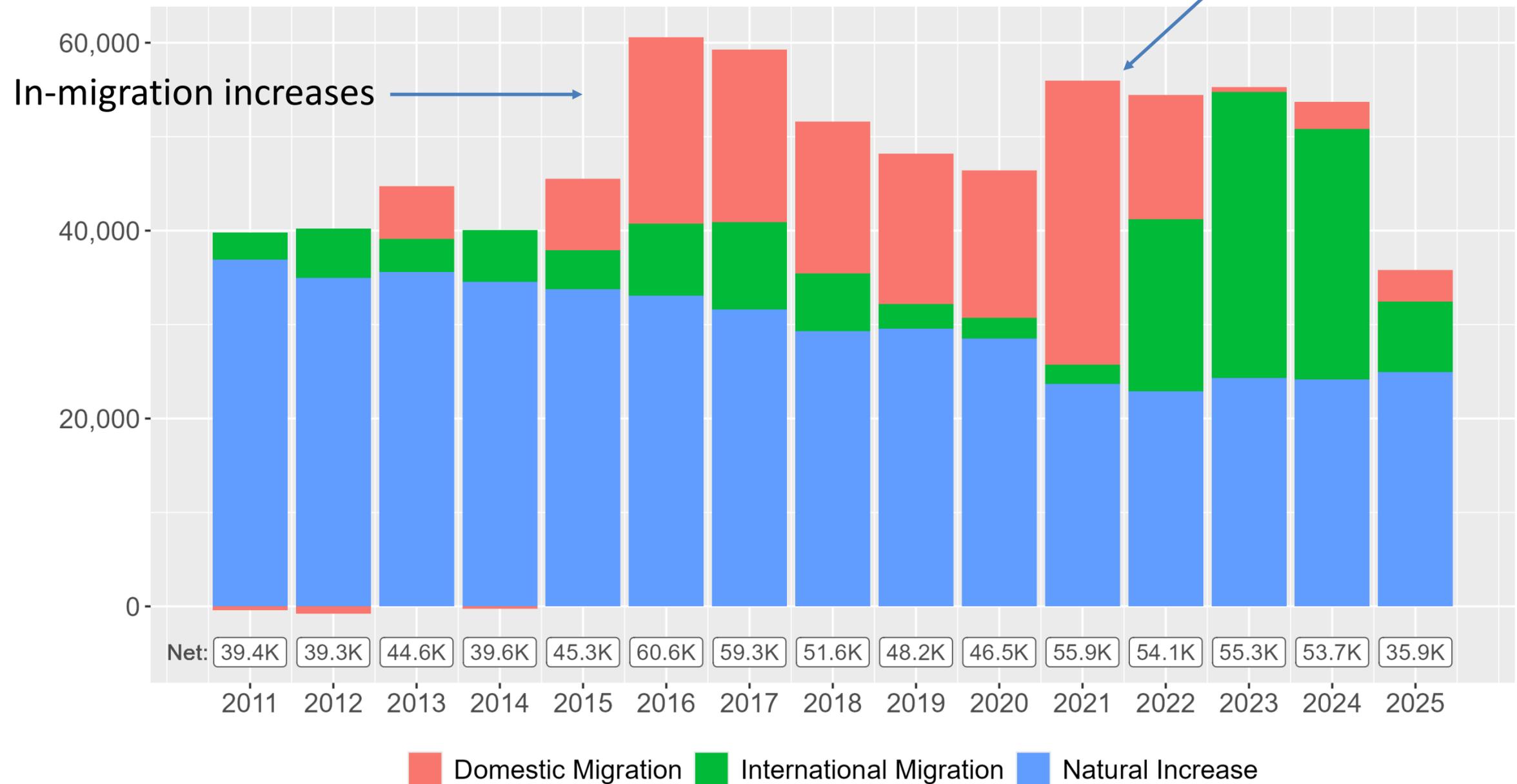
Labor Supply and Demand



Utah Net Migration

2011-2025

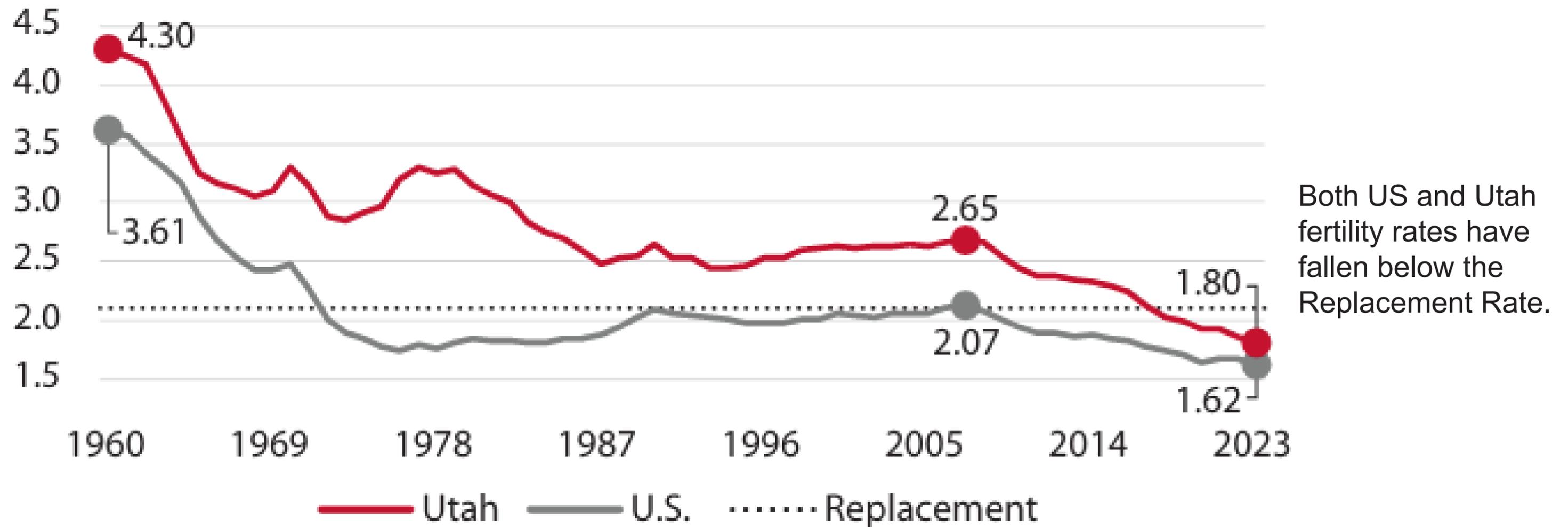
Utah: Components of Population Change



2025 saw a reversal in trend, as natural increase outpaced in-migration for the first time in 4 years.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

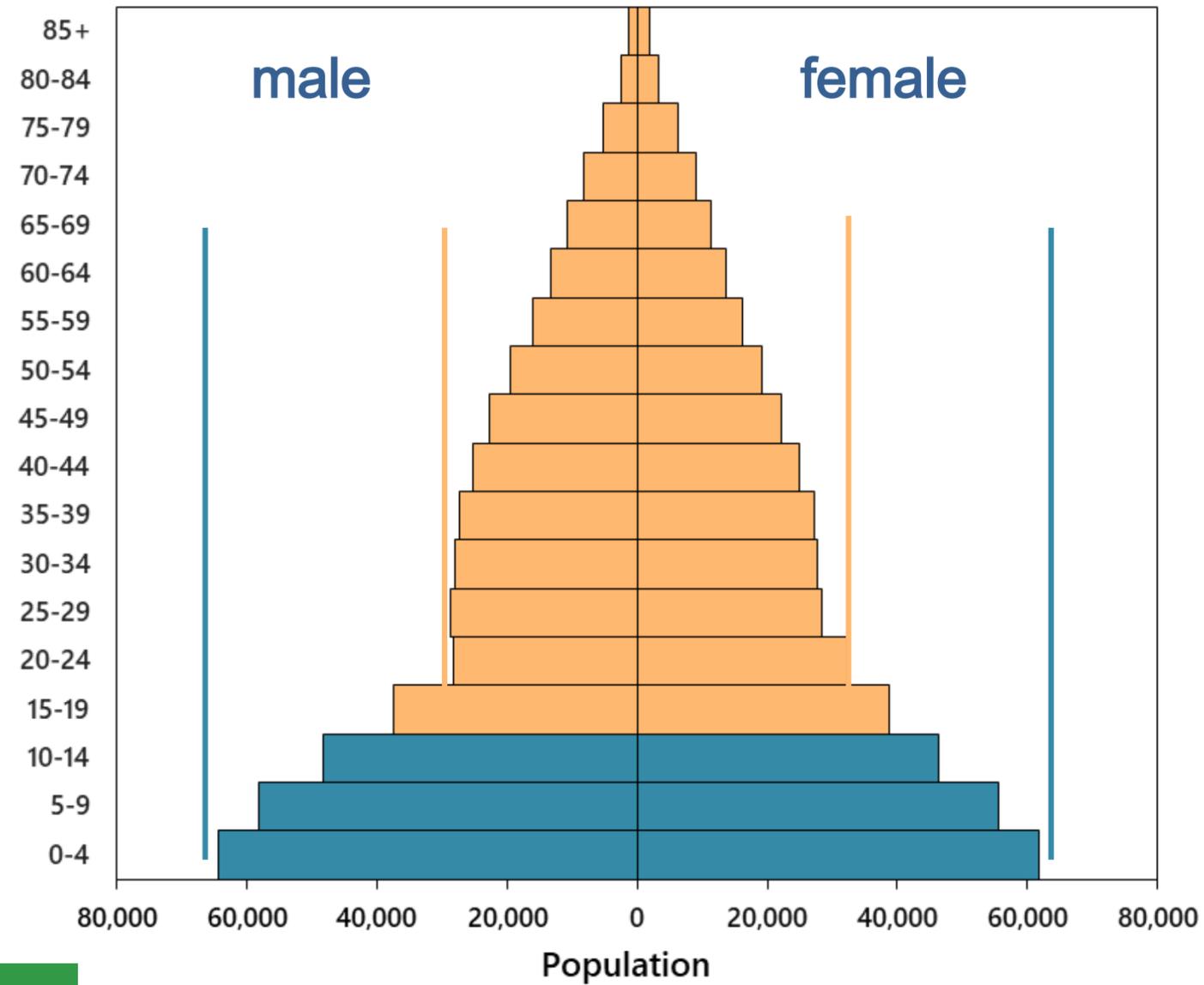
Total Fertility Rate 1960 - 2023



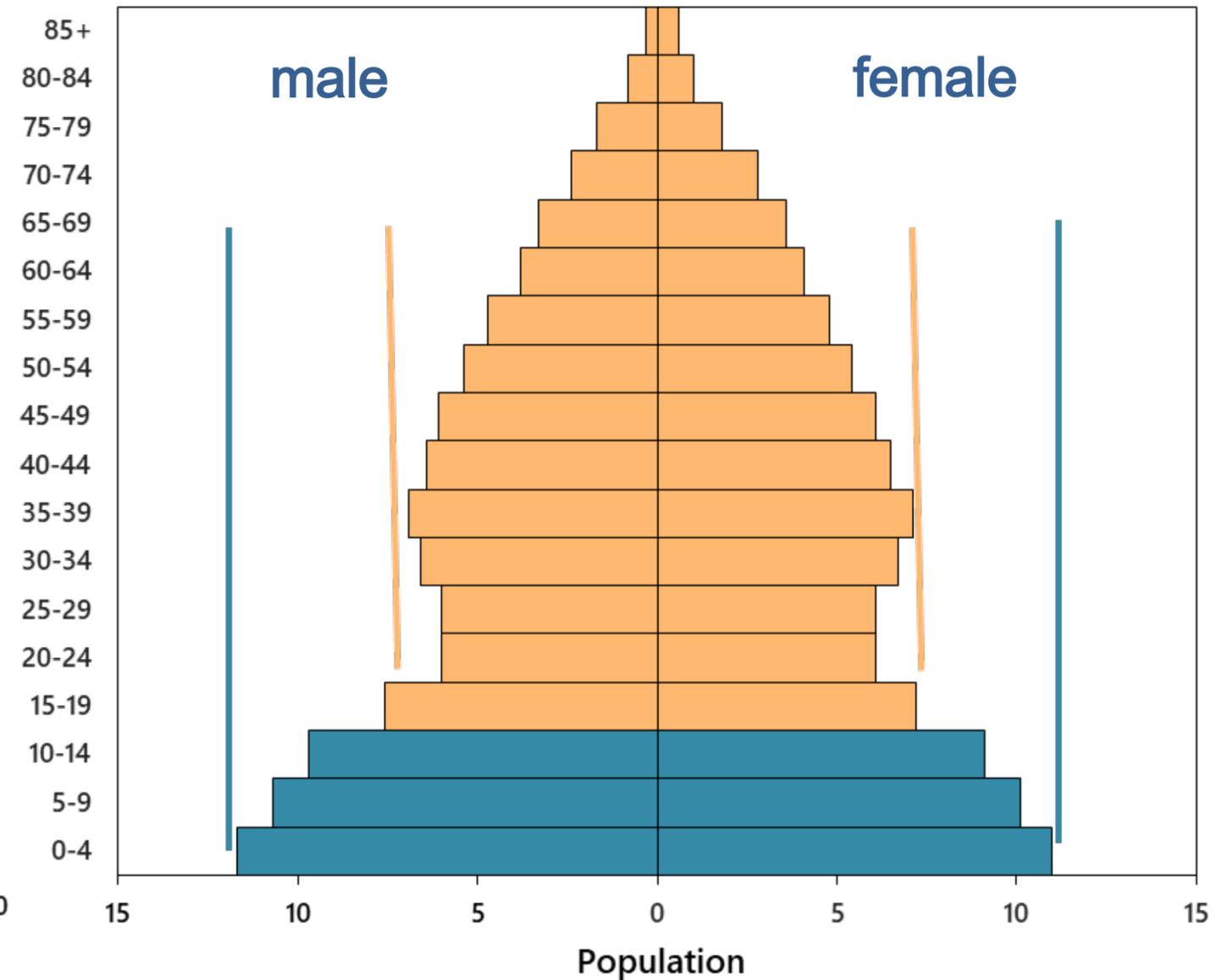
1960 Population

Utah

U.S.



 Baby Boom Generation



9%
65+

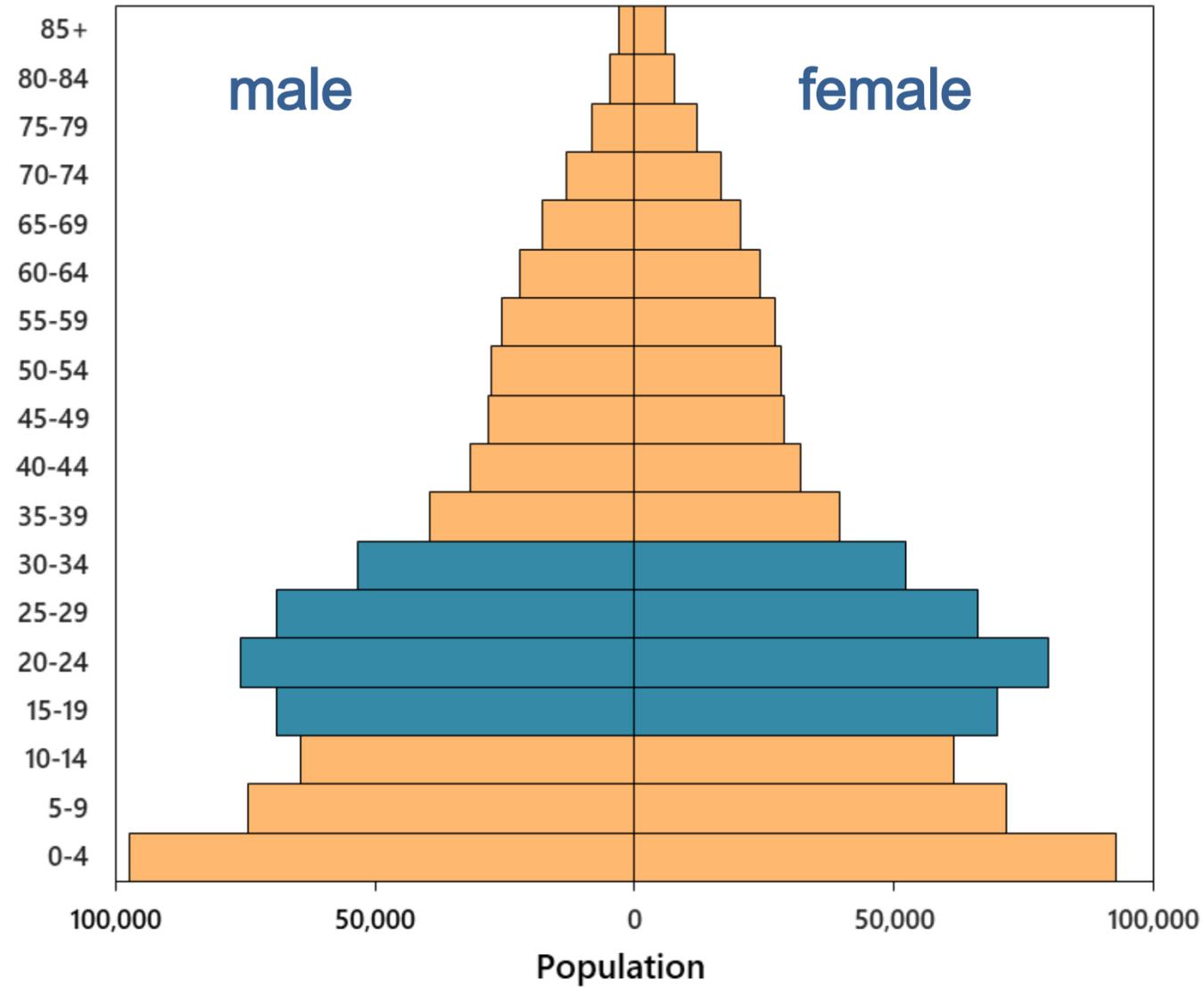
31%
0 - 14

 Baby Boom Generation

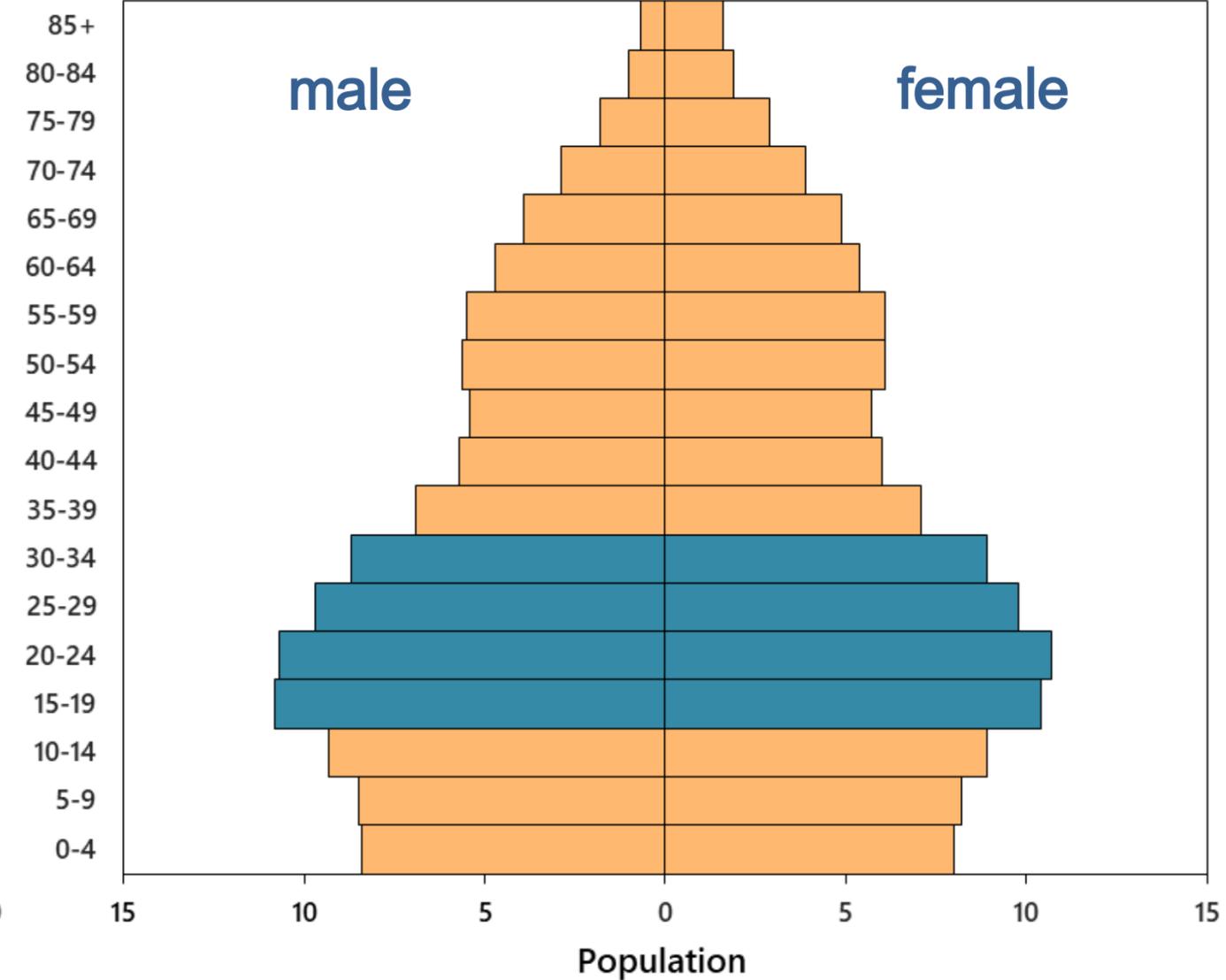
1980 Population

Utah

U.S.



 Baby Boom Generation

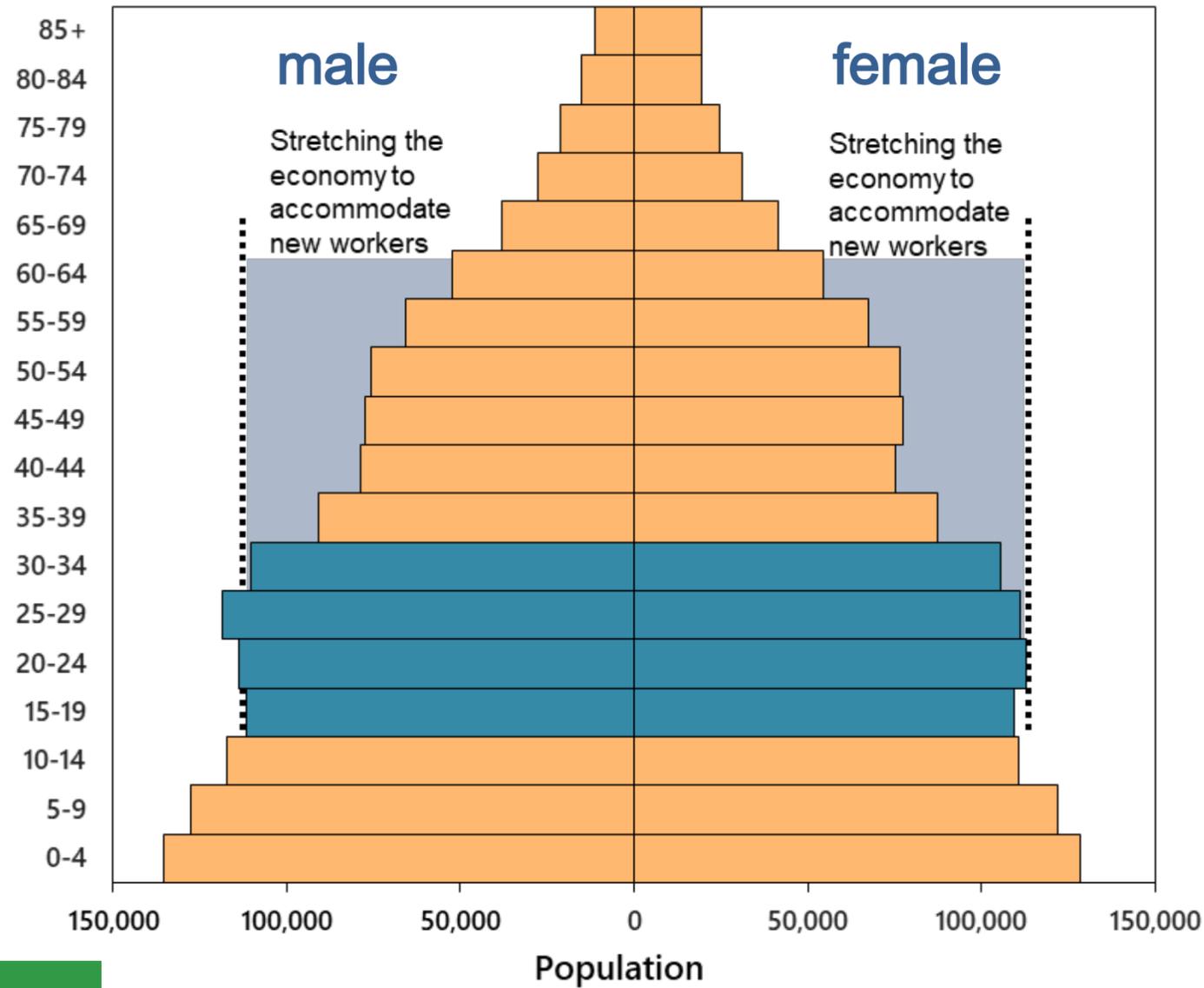


 Baby Boom Generation

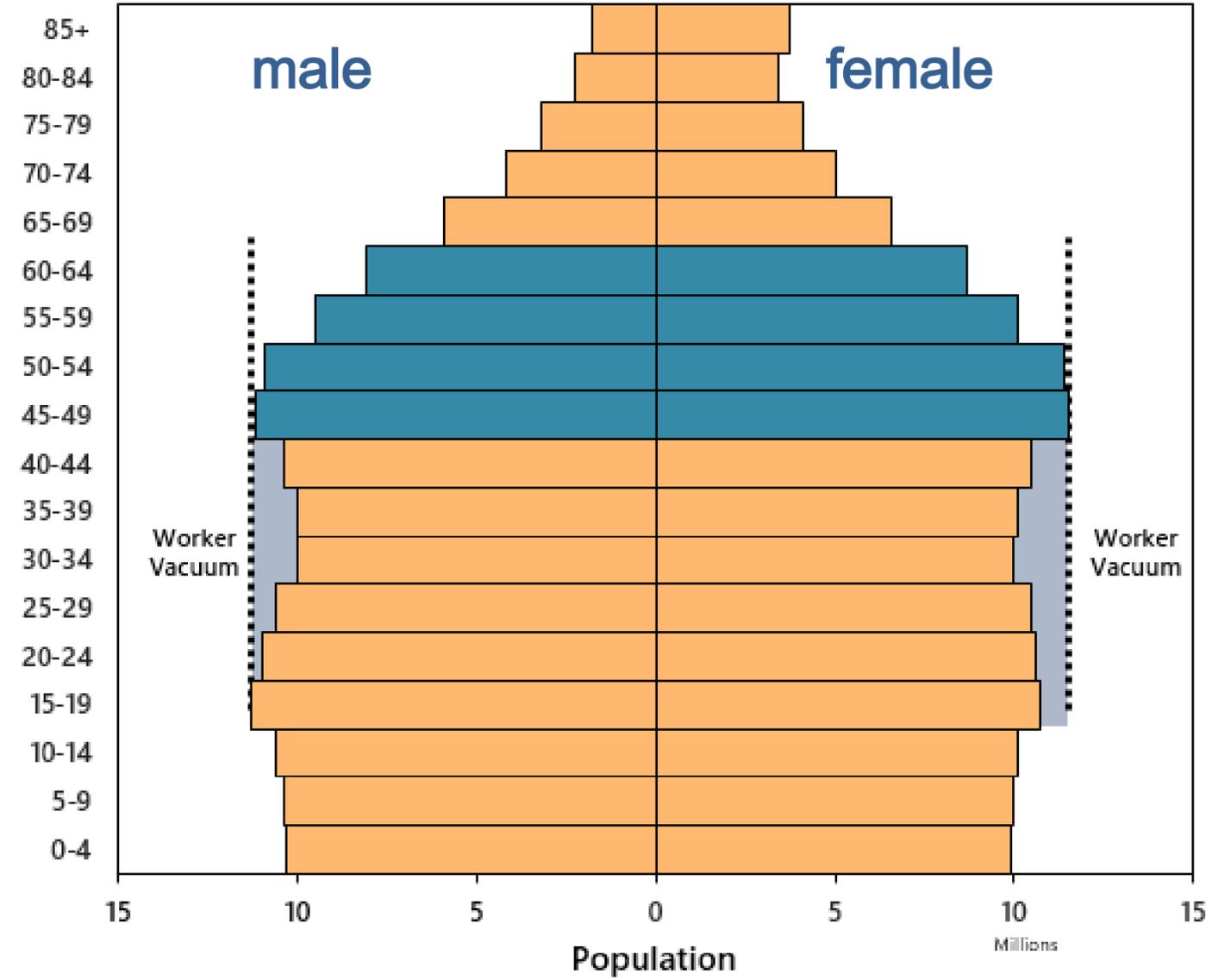
2010 Population

Utah

U.S.



■ Labor Force Dominance

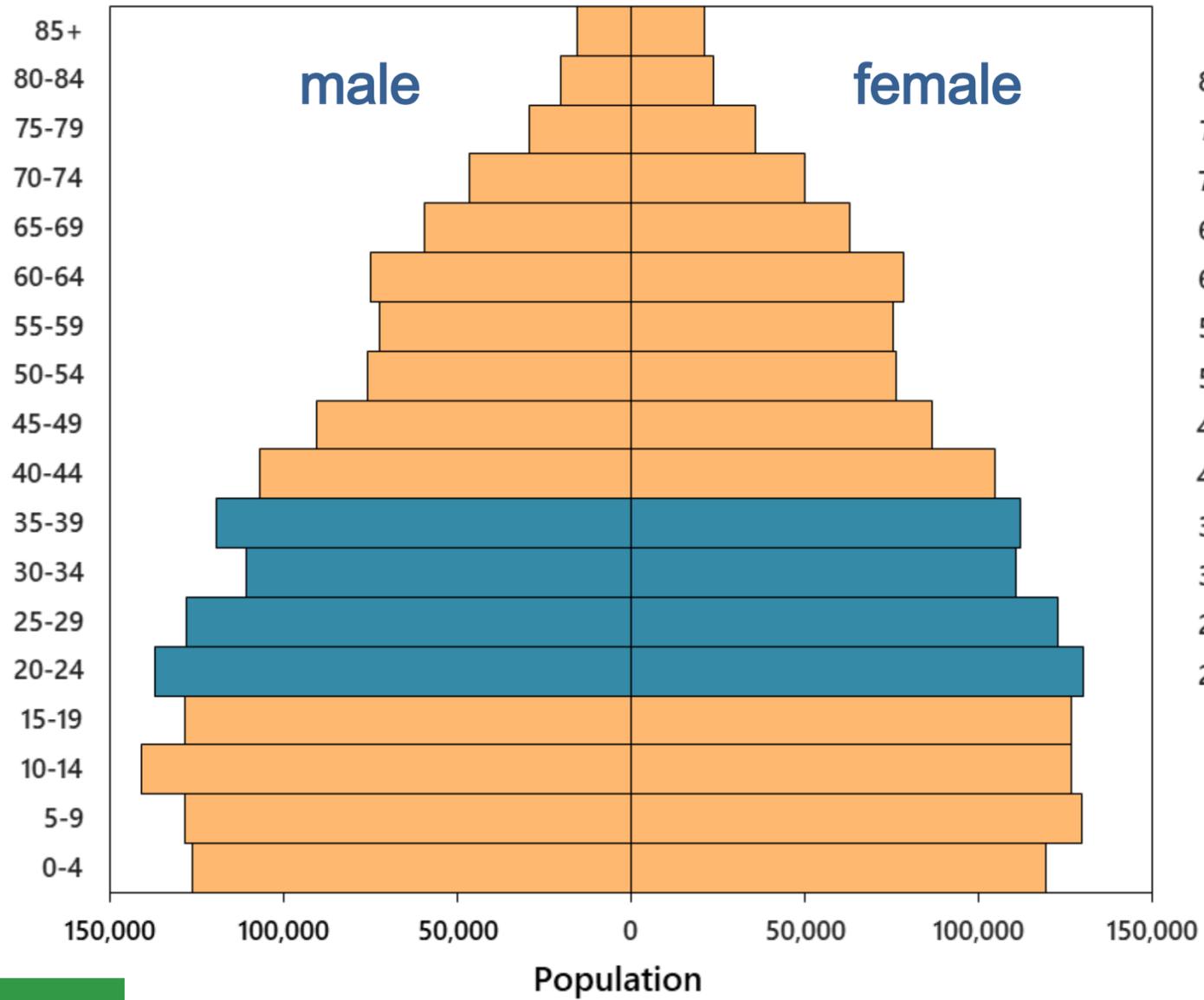


■ Baby Boom Generation

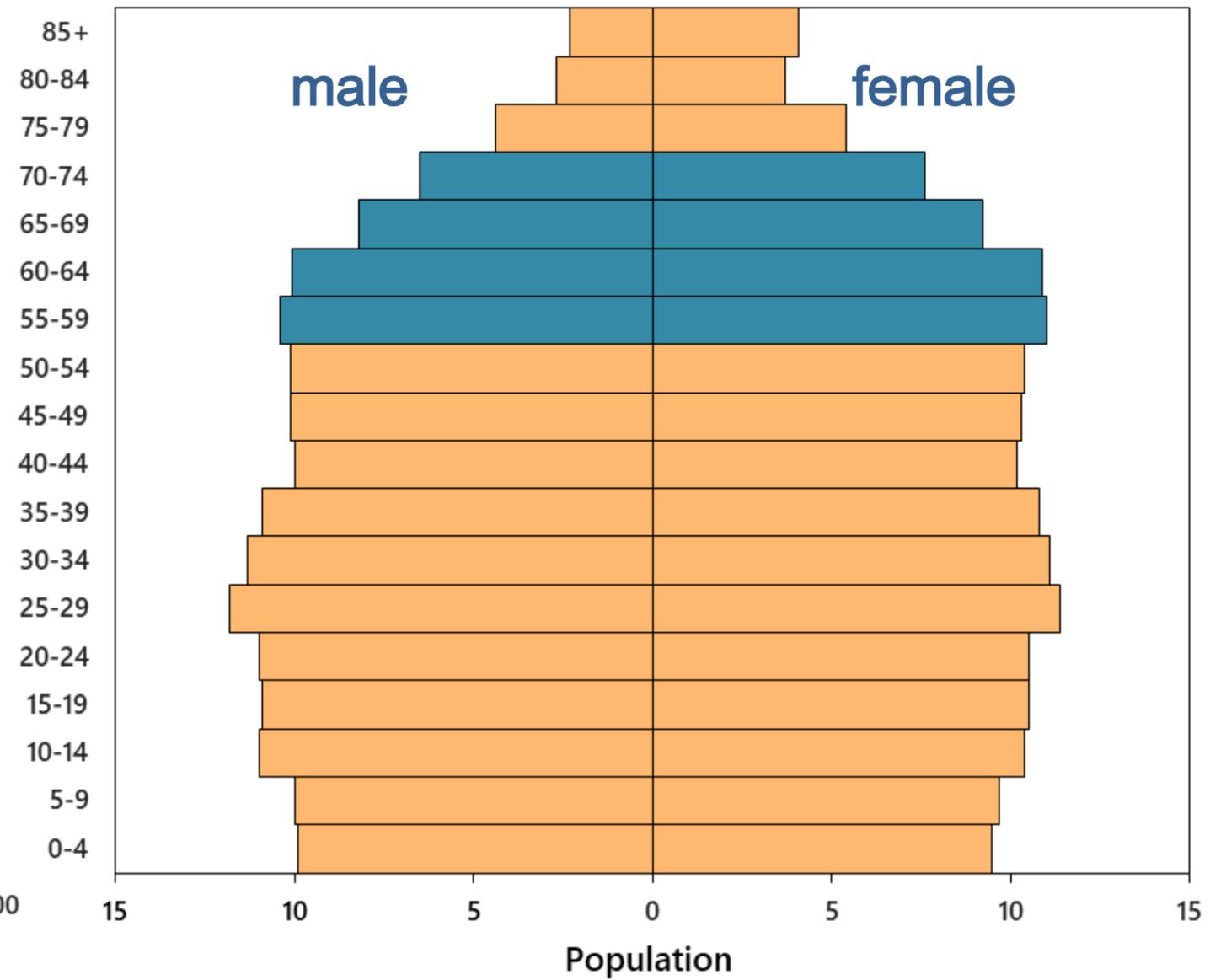
2020 Population

Utah

U.S.



■ Labor Force Dominance



16.6%
65+

18.4%
0 - 14

■ Baby Boom Generation

Economy of Agriculture

1. DEFINITIONS AND MEASUREMENTS
2. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
3. NATIONAL & STATE TRENDS



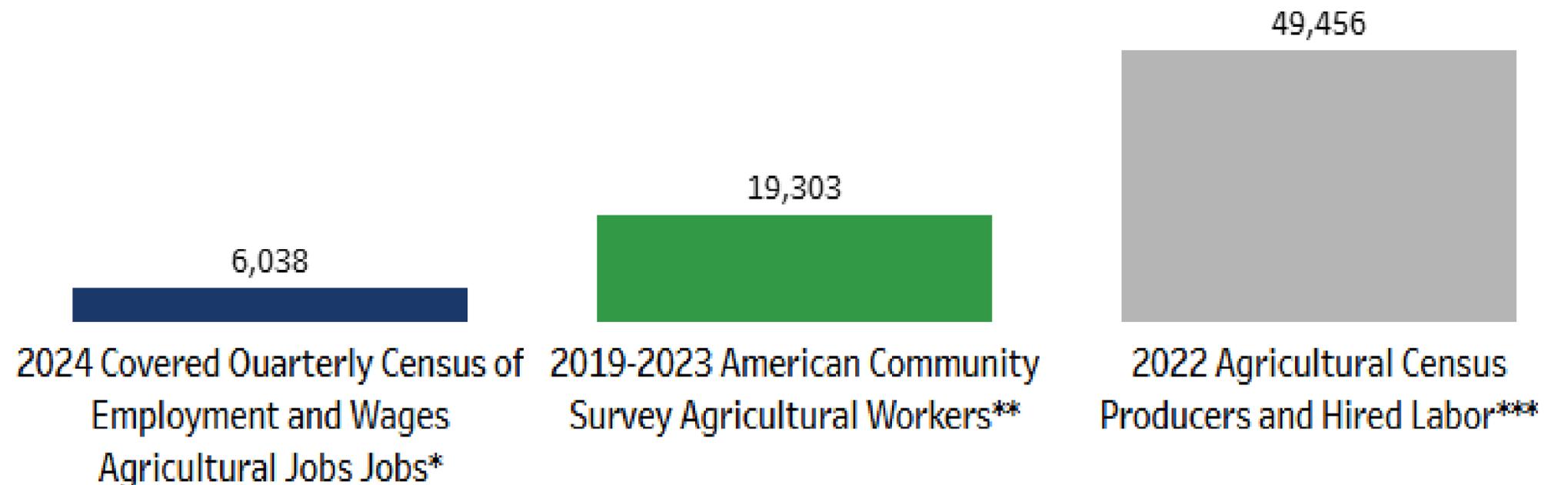
Photograph by David Condos

Measuring Agriculture

- QCEW counts the number of jobs but omits self-employed and firms with few/intermittent employees.
- ACS counts people working, sorting them by their primary industry of employment.
- National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) runs an Agricultural Census every 5 years.
- Because the Census is mandatory, coverage is high. Coverage is also broader, counting hired, unpaid, migrant, and seasonal labor from farms covered by QCEW, as well as small and UI-exempt farms missing from QCEW.

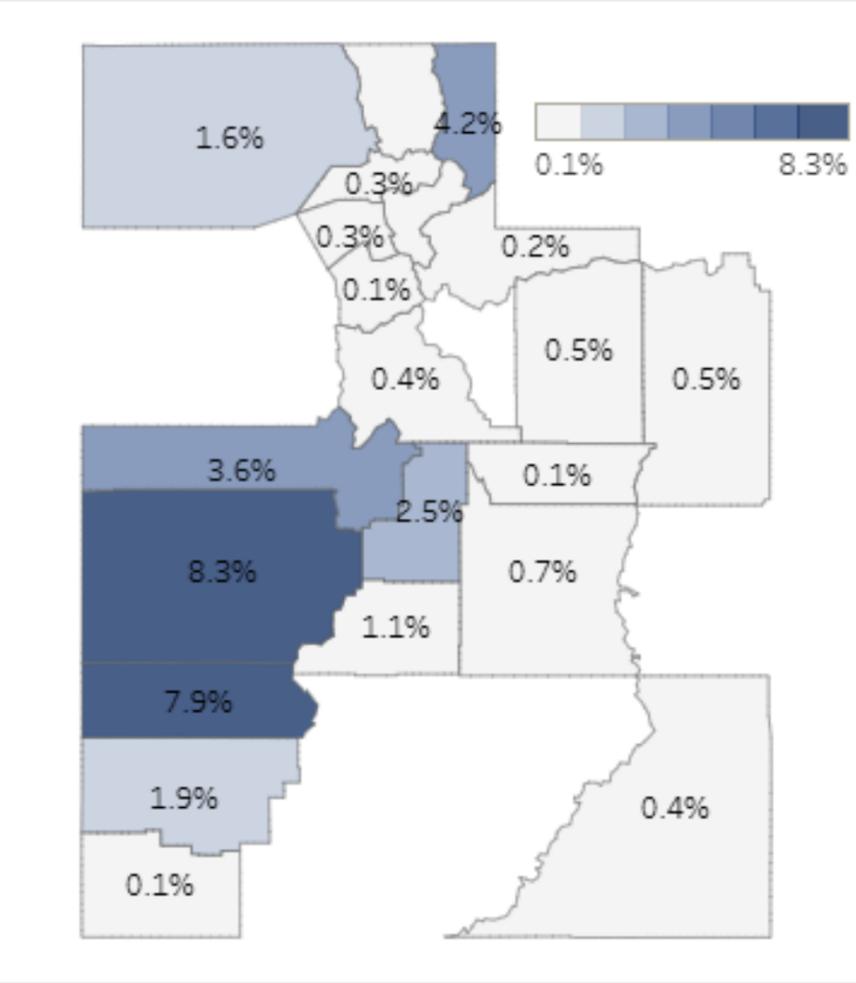


Agricultural Employment *State of Utah*

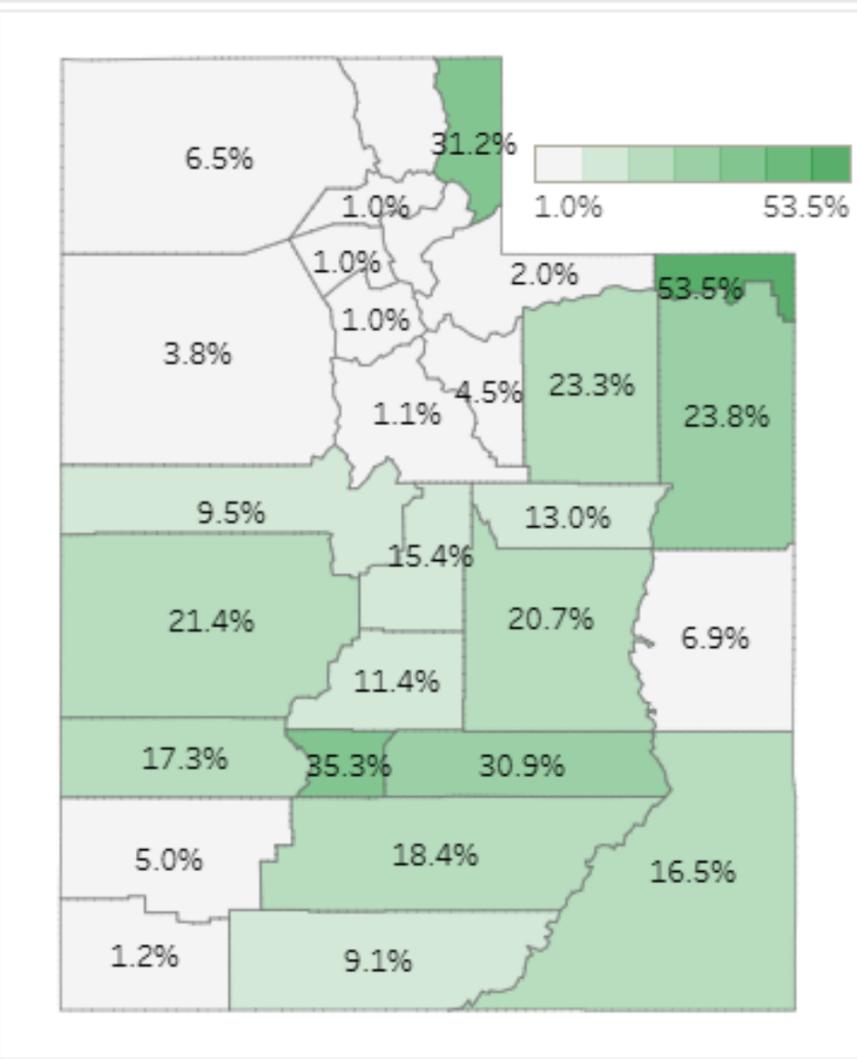


Agricultural Prevalence Varies by County

2024 Covered Agricultural Employment as a Percent of Total Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Jobs



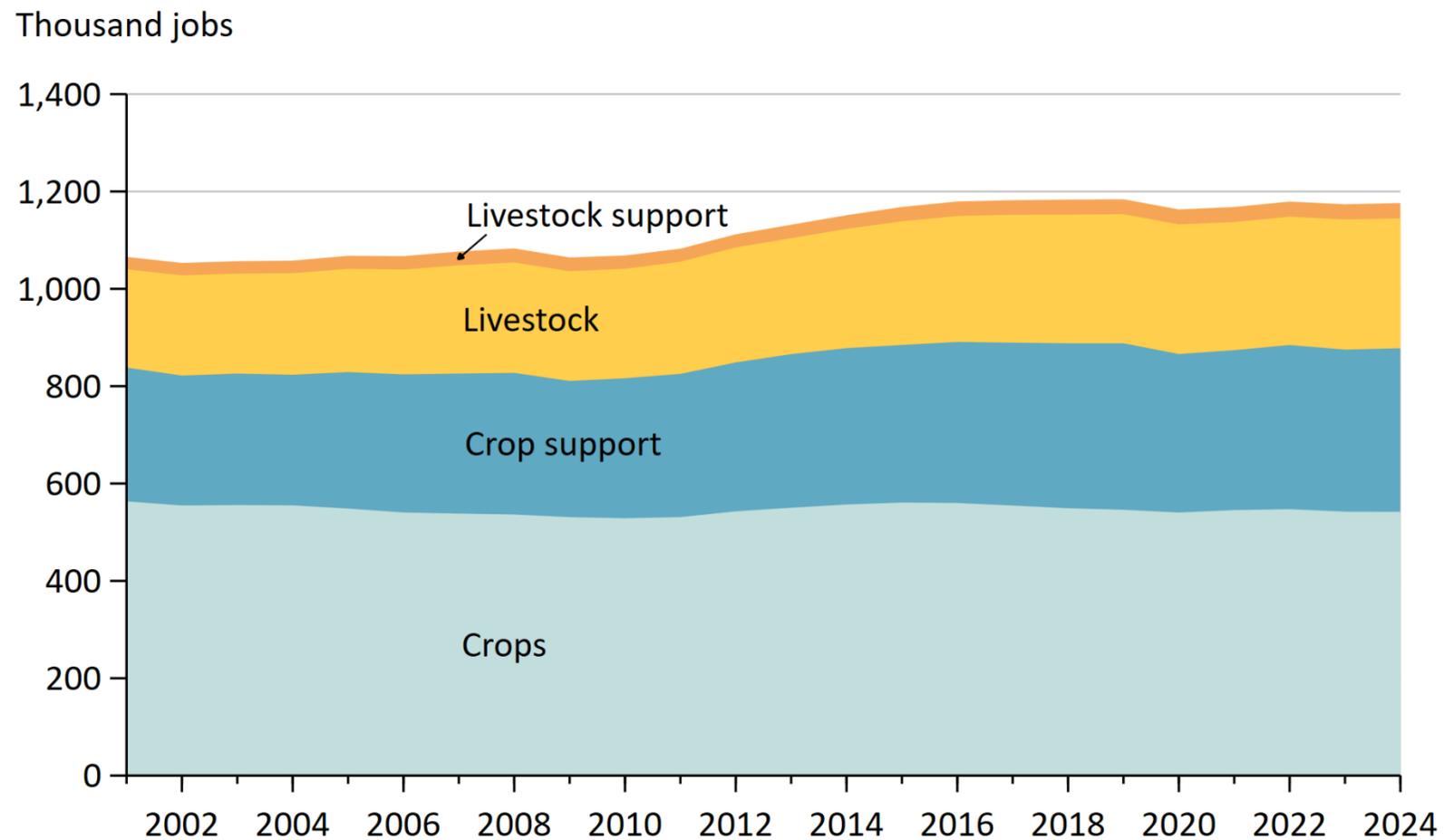
2019-2023 American Community Survey Agricultural Workers as a Percent of Total Workers



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau

Types of Agriculture

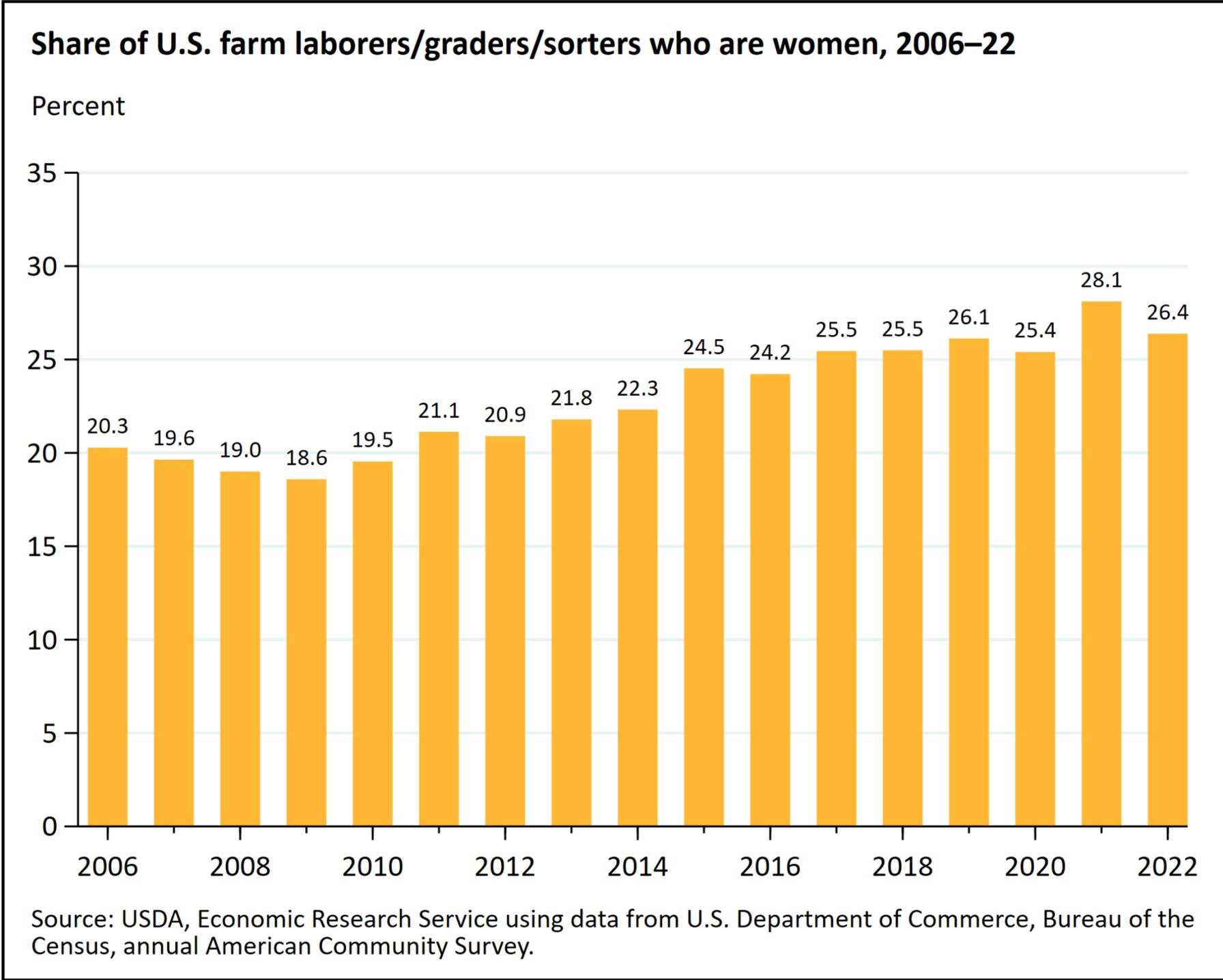
U.S. employment in agriculture and support industries, 2001–24



Note: Employment is measured as the annual average number of full- and part-time jobs. Data do not cover smaller farm employers in those States that exempt them from participation in the unemployment insurance system.

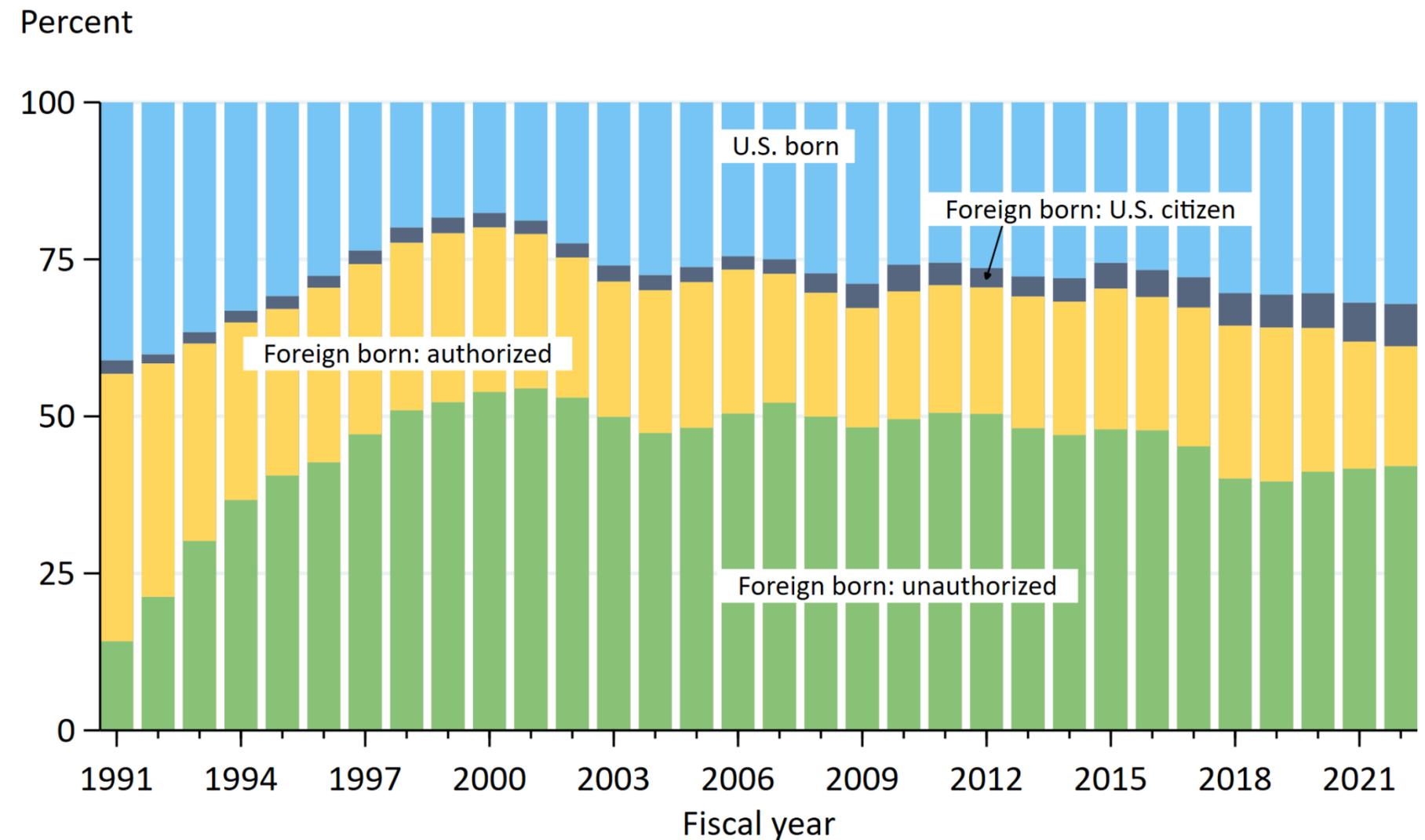
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

Increased share of Women



Increased Reliance on Imported Labor

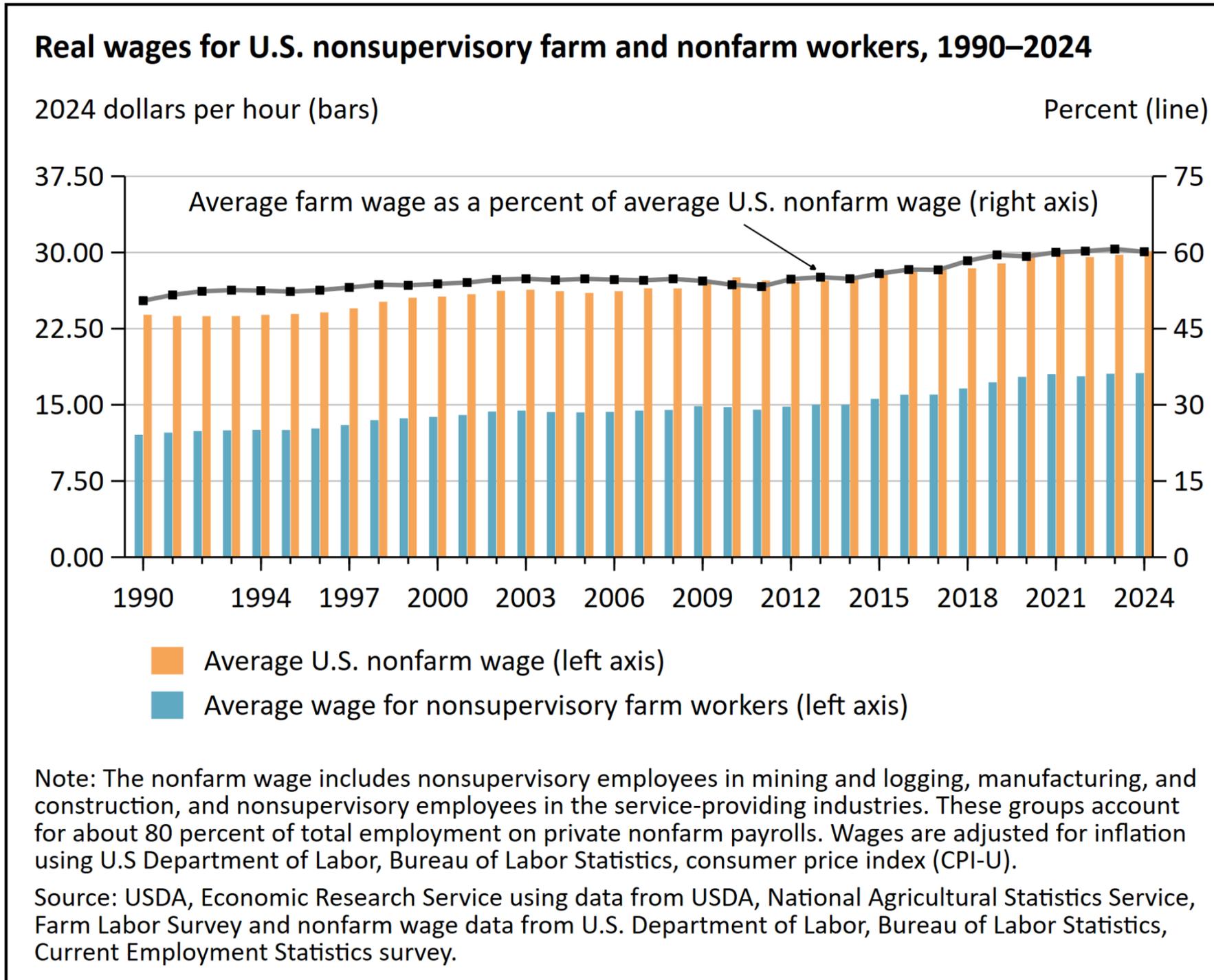
Legal status of hired crop farmworkers, fiscal years 1991–2022



Note: Values for each year are 3-year moving averages to smooth fluctuations due to small sample sizes: e.g. data reported for fiscal year 2022 are the average over fiscal years 2020–22. U.S. born includes those born in Puerto Rico.

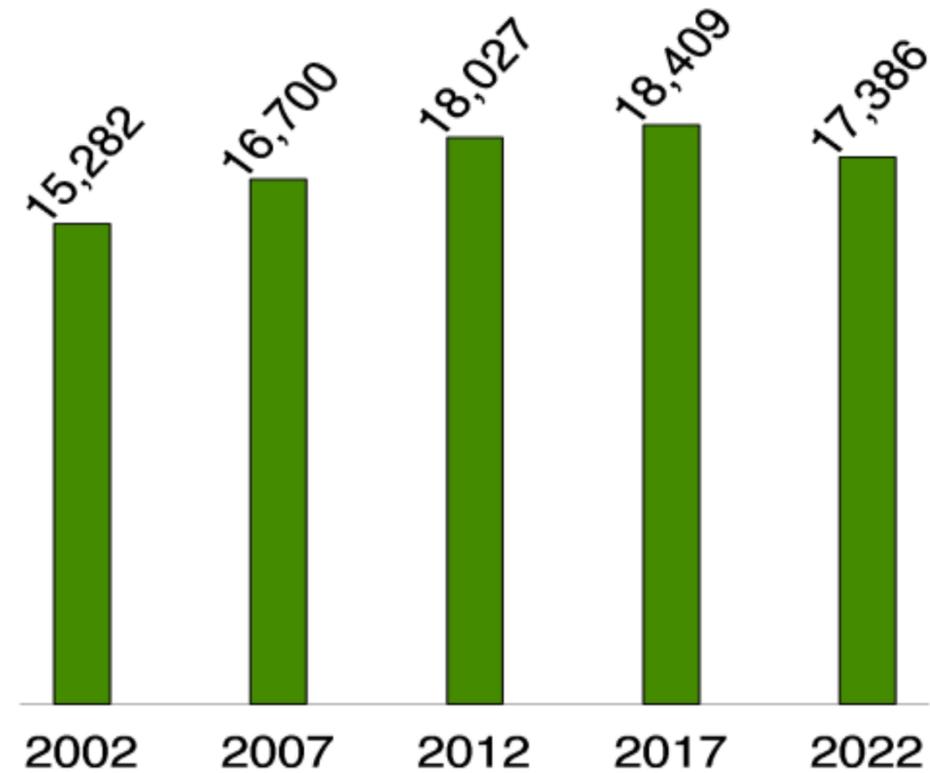
Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Labor, National Agricultural Workers Survey.

Lagging Wages

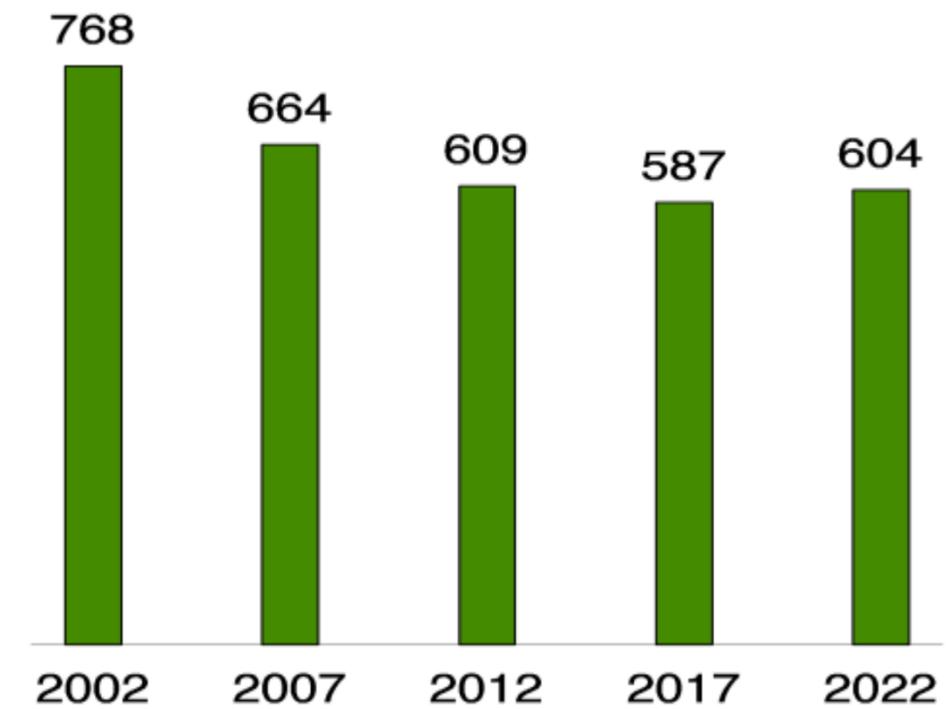


Agriculture in Utah

Number of Farms, 2002 - 2022

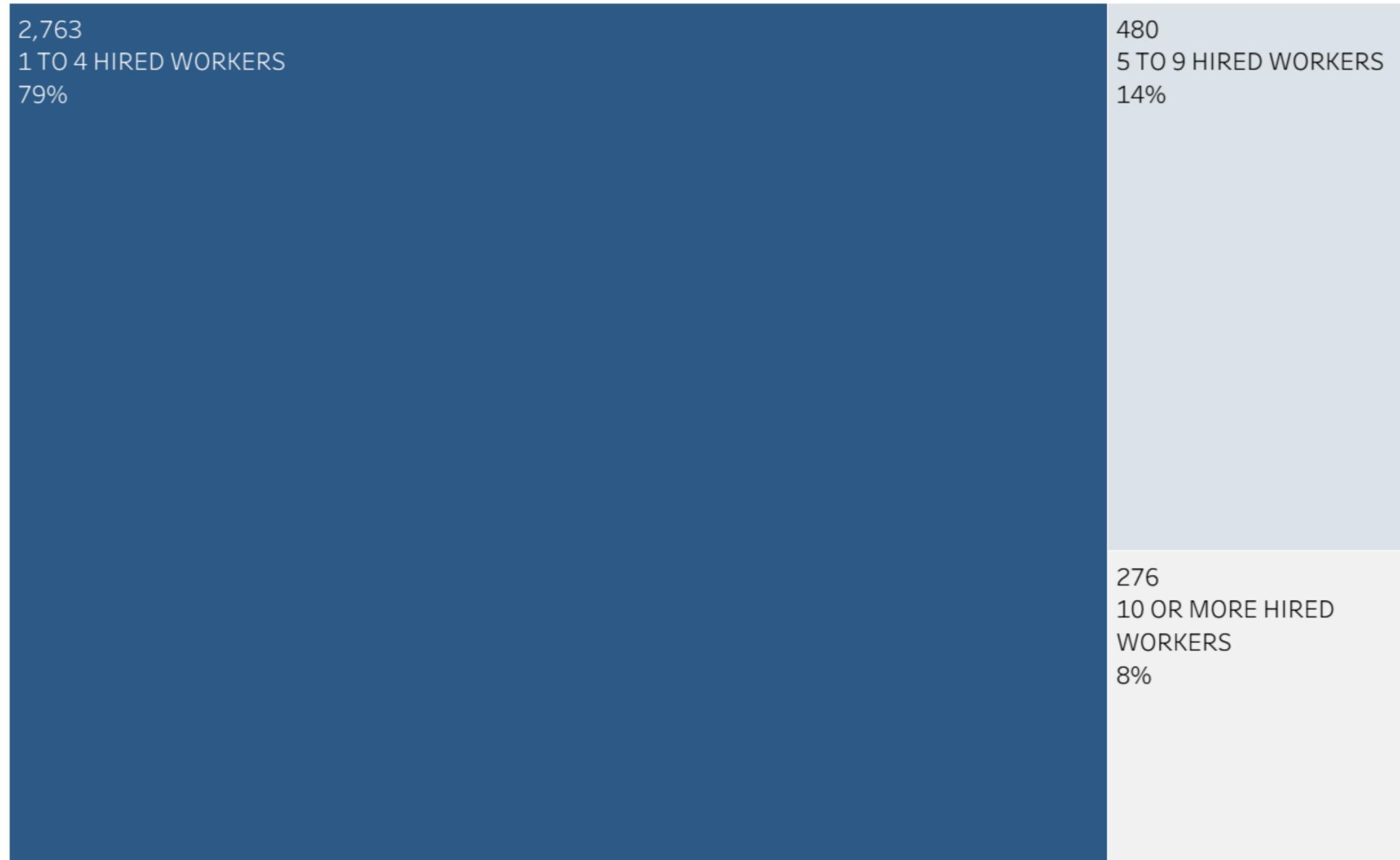


Average Farm Size, 2002 - 2022 (acres)



- Smaller farms since 2002, but more of them

Size of Utah Farm Operations



- The majority of farm operations in Utah are very small

Sales by Agriculture Type

\$1,623,782,000
69% of Total



Animal Sales

\$717,816,000
31% of Total

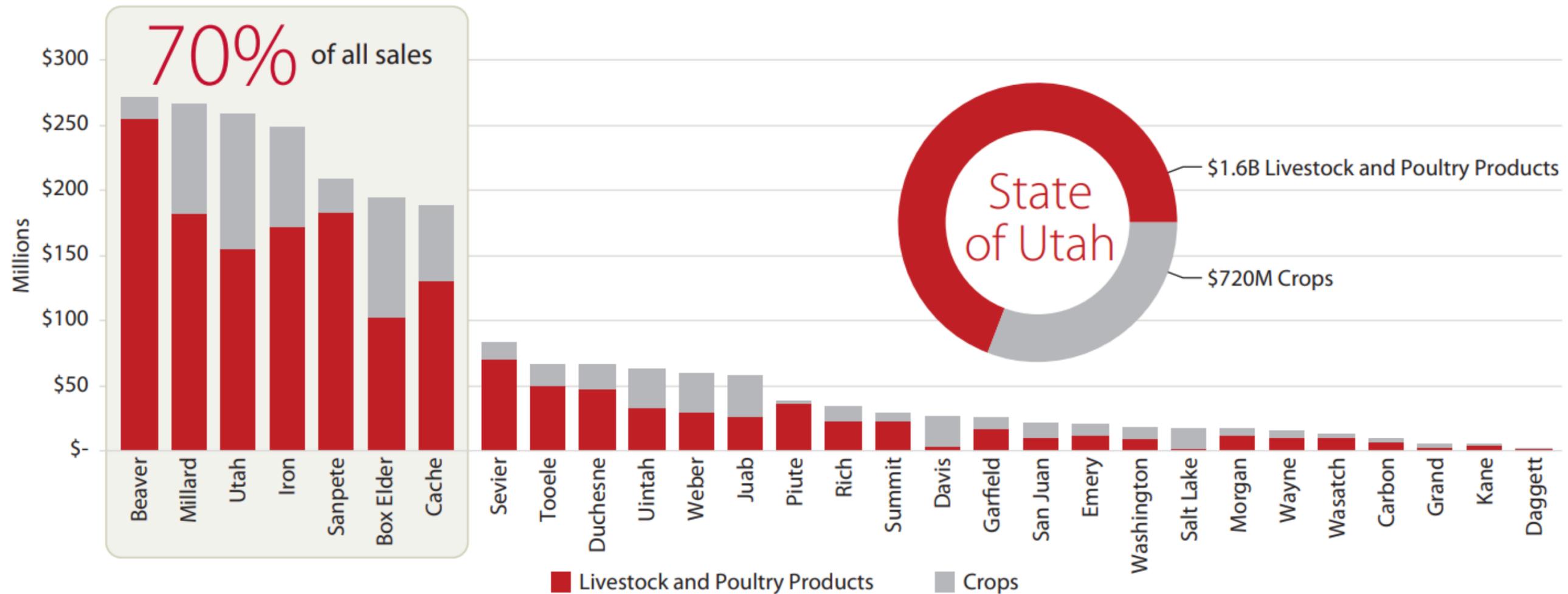


Crop Sales



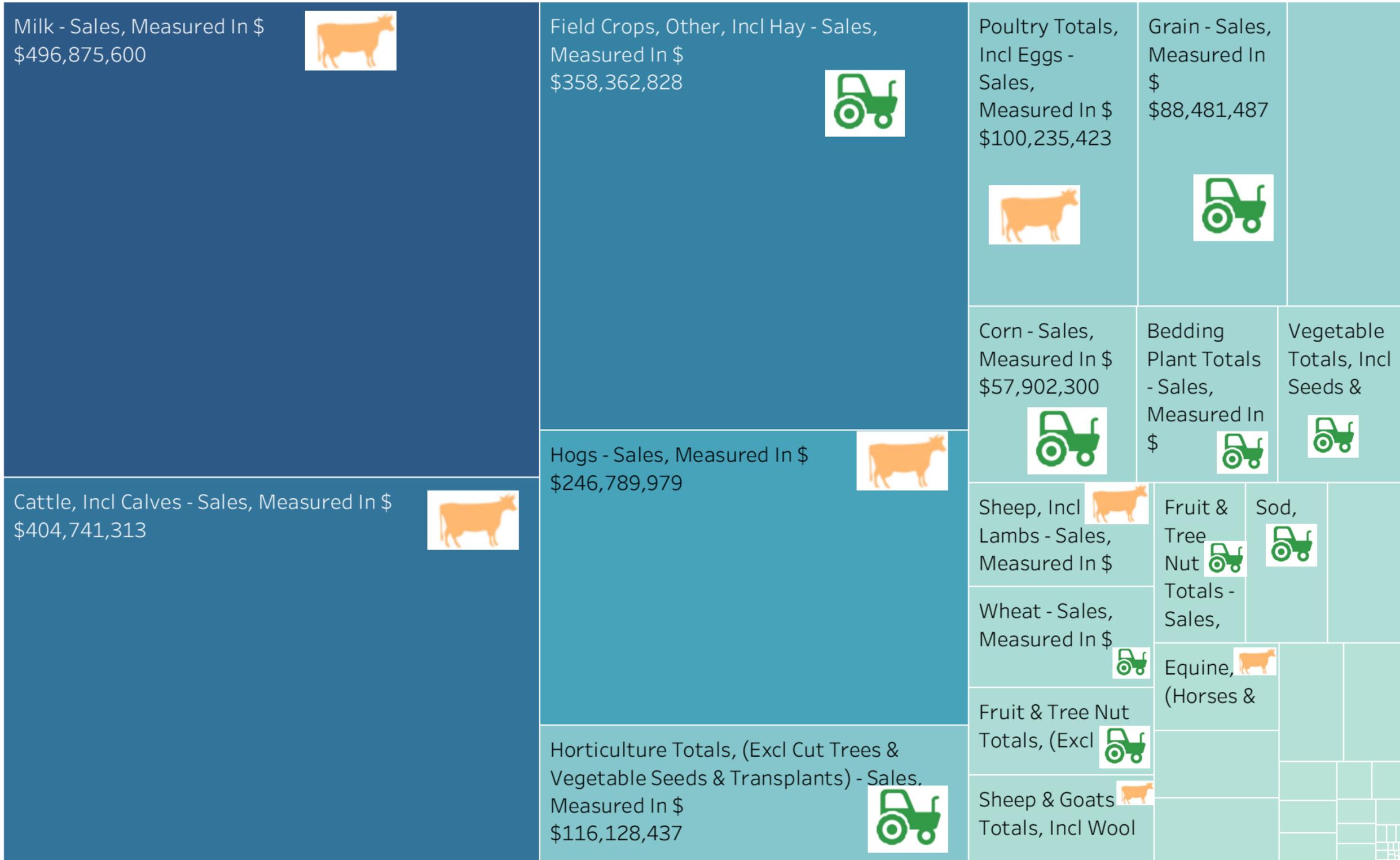
Sales by County

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold by County, 2022



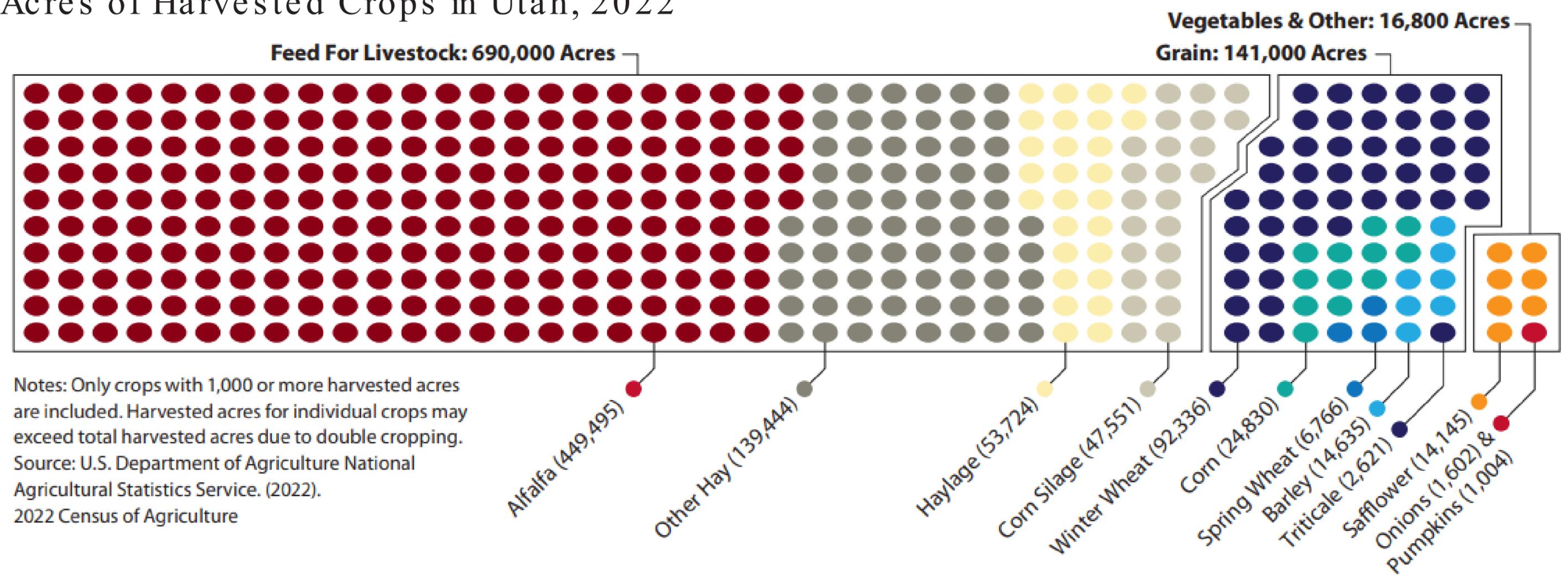
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022). 2022 Census of Agriculture

Detailed Sales



Much of Utah's Crops are for Livestock

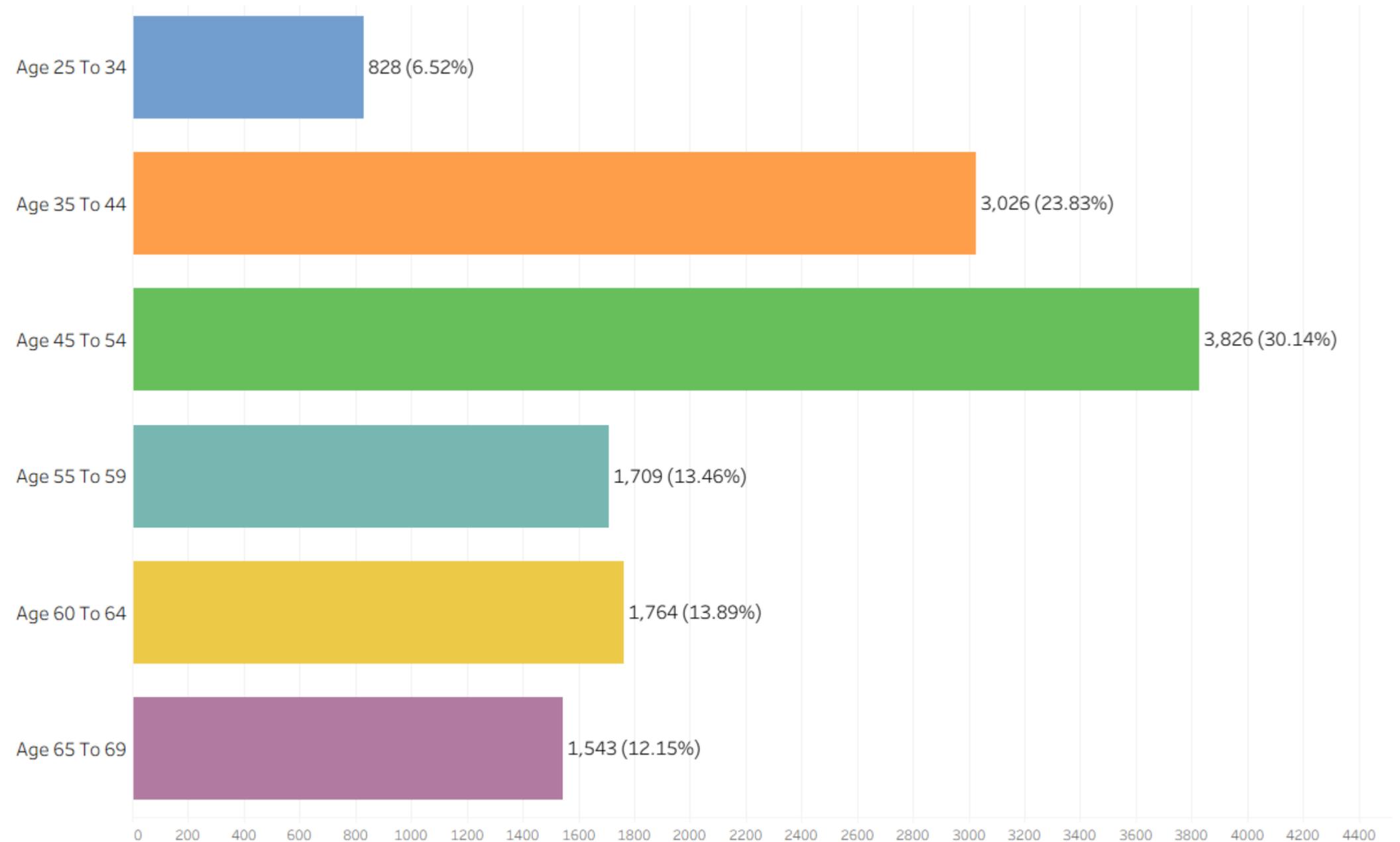
Acres of Harvested Crops in Utah, 2022



Notes: Only crops with 1,000 or more harvested acres are included. Harvested acres for individual crops may exceed total harvested acres due to double cropping.
 Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022).
 2022 Census of Agriculture



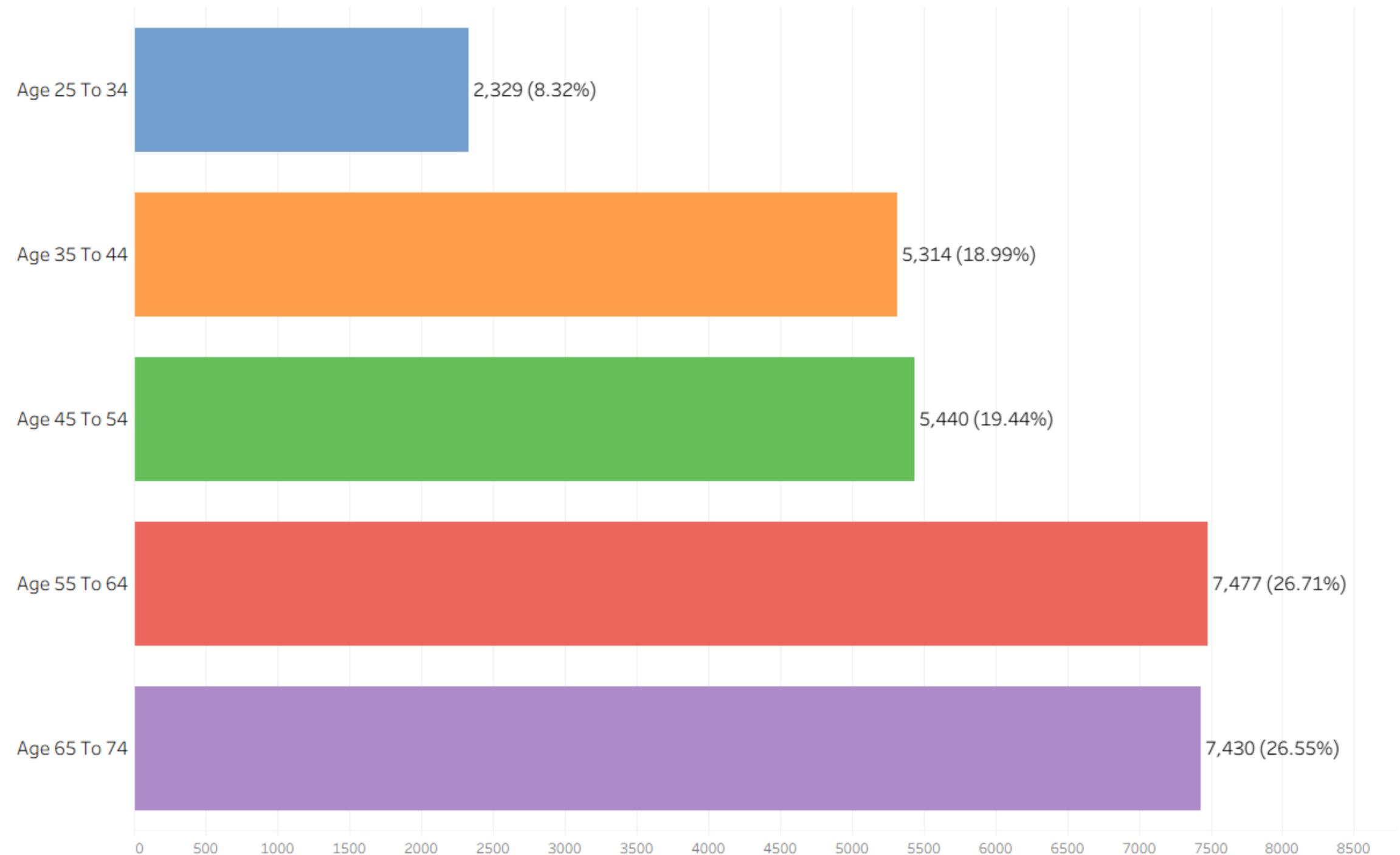
Age Distribution, 1997



Aging Workforce

- In 1997, 60.49% of Utah farmers were 54 or under

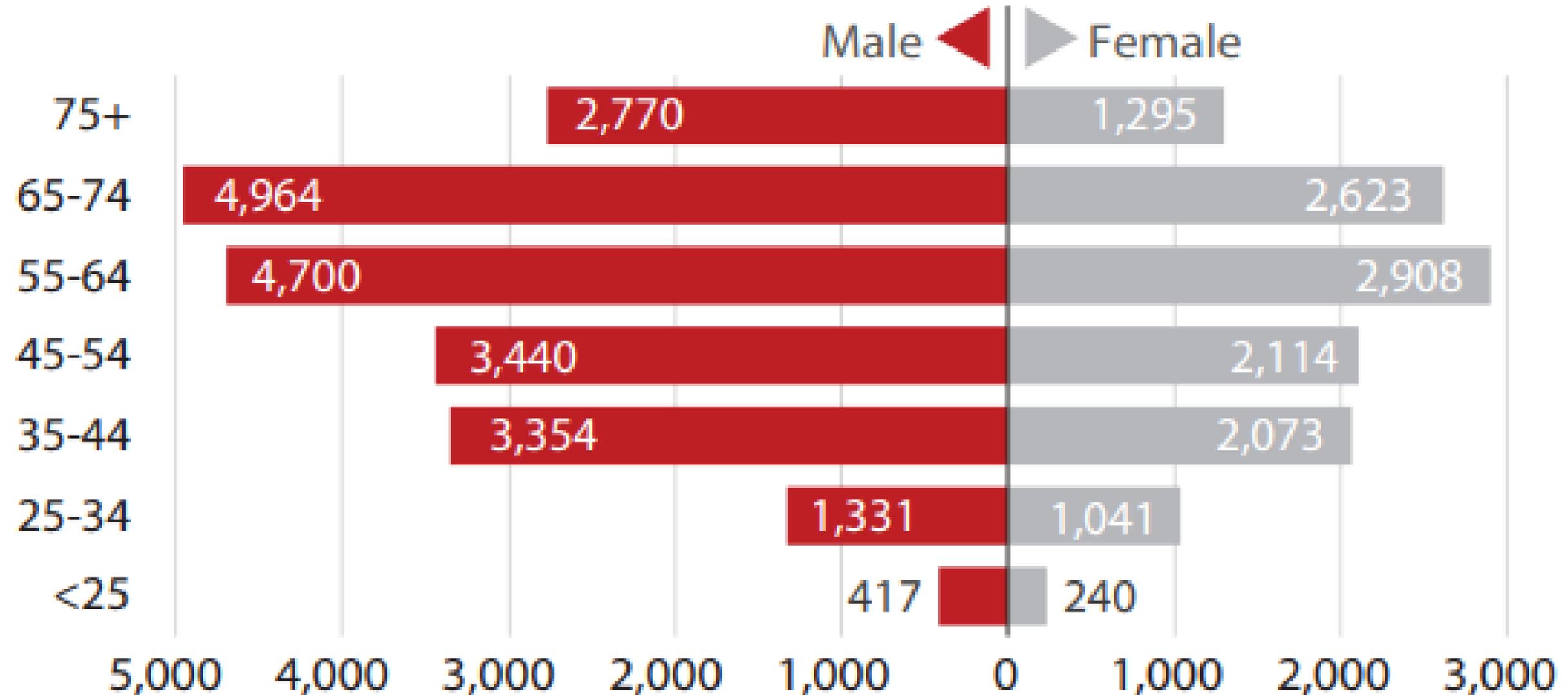
Age Distribution, 2022



Aging Workforce

- Agriculture’s workforce has gotten older – they changed the age categories to account for older workers
- 53.26% of the workforce is 55 and older

Population Pyramid of Utah's Agricultural Producers, 2022



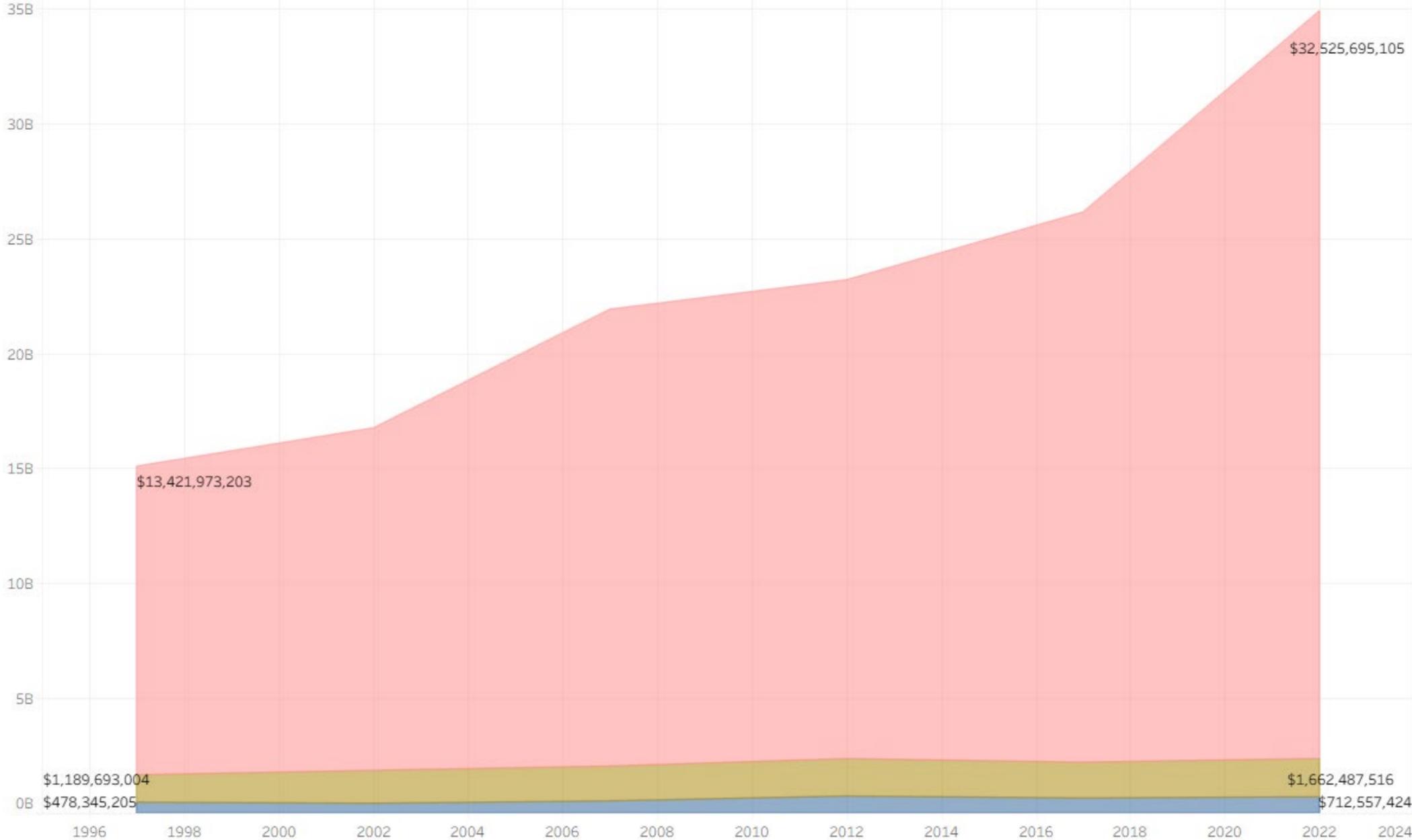
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service. (2022).
2022 Census of Agriculture

Aging Workforce

Runaway Value Of Land

- The value of land has gone way up while animal and crop total sales has stayed relatively flat

■ Ag Land, Incl Buildings - Asset Value
■ Animal Totals, Incl Products
■ Crop Totals



Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service, Utah DWS

'Once it's gone, it's gone;' Box Elder County farmer preserving farming land for farming

Raegan A. Edelman Tremonton Leader Jul 23, 2025 0

In 1997, Thayne Tagge bought a farm on a whim after a summer searching for good peaches.

"They don't have to buy it from me," Tagge explained. "I'm giving it to them. But they don't get to sell it either. They have to use it — to farm it, to keep it going."

"This land, it's beautiful, it's a work of art. They call this the 'million-dollar view,'" Tagge said, standing above the orchards with a full view of Willard Bay, thriving orchards and even the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge. "The best place to grow fruit is the best place to plant a home, too — everybody wants to build here."

"What I notice is that after the first, second or third generation, there's a quarrel that starts. One guy sticks around and keeps farming's daddy's property, right? And the other siblings get nothing from it, and then there's this big clash where they say, 'you either buy me out or we got to sell it,'" Tagge explained. "Usually they can't afford to buy them out, and selling is the only option."

"Less than 3% of our fruits and vegetables are grown in Utah," Tagge said. "Ninety-seven percent are trucked in. So when you stop at a fruit stand, or a farmer's market, you're not just buying a peach — you're casting a vote."

A vote for local food. For family farming. For keeping this land in trees instead of rooftops.

HJ NEWS



The market is creating a lot of pressure that is not entirely positive to agriculture.

Coordinated local and state ordinances may help address community concerns.

Save the heritage without sacrificing economic prosperity.

Box Elder County approves three new Ag protection areas

[Open Audio Article Player](#)

July 09, 2025

By Nelson Phillips Staff writer nphillips@benewsjournal.com

Ag heritage zone approved for 573 acres near Thatcher

[Open Audio Article Player](#)

September 03, 2025

By Nelson Phillips Staff writer nphillips@benewsjournal.com

Summit County buys 835-acre Ure Ranch to preserve Kamas Valley open space



by **Rebecca Brenner**

Published: Dec 16, 2025 at 7:06 am

Saving Utah's family farms

By Sonja Brown - | Feb 4, 2026





THANK
YOU

(801) 891-1581
marilyncannon@utah .gov
140 E 300 S, Salt Lake City, UT 84111
jobs .utah .gov