ASHLEY COUNTY PROFILE

2013

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The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service is pleased to release these updated county profiles in hopes that these publications may serve as a useful tool for local officials, community leaders and economic development professionals.

This publication provides a comparison and overview of the demographic, economic and social trends in Arkansas counties. The information is presented in graphs and maps to allow the reader to quickly grasp current trends and conditions and gain insight into local and regional contexts. We encourage leaders and decision makers to use this publication in conjunction with their knowledge of the local geography, culture and political environment to make wise decisions for Arkansas’ future.

The state agencies providing data and assistance for this publication include the State Data Center at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Department of Education, and the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services. We thank the many individuals at these departments and organizations for their quick response to our requests for information.

Several departments and individuals of the University of Arkansas worked in collaboration to publish these county profiles. Wayne Miller, Community and Economic Development, coordinated the project. Thai Nguyen compiled the data and developed graphs and charts. Vuko Karov developed the maps and checked the data for accuracy. Chris Meux designed the cover, and Donna Rinke published the profiles on the Cooperative Extension website. Their many hours of effort are greatly appreciated.

We hope you find this publication useful as you plan for the future of your communities.

Tony E. Windham, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Extension
and Director, Cooperative Extension Service
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(For Local Staff Chair See Inside Backcover)
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The population of Ashley County declined from a high of 26,538 in 1980 to 21,853 in 2010.

Population grew most rapidly in Northwest & Central Arkansas counties and declined in some East and South Arkansas counties between 2000 and 2010.
Population

Percent of Total County Population by Age and Gender, 2010

Ashley County

Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 85+</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 80-84</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 75-79</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 70-74</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65-69</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 60-64</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 55-59</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50-54</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 45-49</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40-44</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 35-39</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 30-34</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 25-29</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 20-24</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 15-19</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 10-14</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 5-9</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 0-5</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 2010 Census Summary File 1

There were more people living in Ashley County between the ages of 10 to 19 and between the ages of 45 to 54 than in any other age groups.

Population by Age, 2000 & 2010

Ashley County

Figure 4

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<th>Age Groups</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>1,633</td>
<td>1,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-19</td>
<td>5,475</td>
<td>4,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-39</td>
<td>6,295</td>
<td>4,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>6,336</td>
<td>6,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-79</td>
<td>3,538</td>
<td>4,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80+</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>824</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Except for the increase of population between the ages of 60 and 79, the population of all age groups in Ashley County declined from 2000 to 2010.
Counties in Northcentral Arkansas had the highest proportion of people aged 65 and older in 2010.

The elderly population as a proportion of the total population grew most rapidly in Central and Northwest Arkansas from 2000 to 2010.
Central & Northwest Arkansas had the highest domestic in-migration of people between 2005 and 2009, while Arkansas, Bradley, Clay, Desha, Mississippi, Pulaski, Sebastian, Sevier and Woodruff counties had the largest domestic out-migration of people during this period.

Most of the people (86%) in Ashley County lived in family households which was slightly higher than the state average.

*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
Sixty-nine percent of the people living in Ashley County were Caucasian. Twenty-six percent were African American. Other minorities represented about five percent of the population.

The proportion of Hispanic people living in Ashley County slightly increased from about three percent to about five percent between 2000 and 2010. The Hispanic population may be of any race: white, black or any other combination of races.

Educational Attainment, 2005-2009*

Ashley County had a larger percentage of people whose highest degree was high school and a smaller percentage of people who had bachelors and professional degrees as compared to the statewide average in the five-year period 2005-2009.

*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
Education Expenditure Per Child, County & State 2011-2012

Ashley County

Figure 13

S$9,275

$9,112

County

State

Source: Arkansas Public School Computer Network (www.apscn.org/reports/hld/asr/asr.htm), Arkansas Department of Education

Schools in Ashley County spent $9,275 per child in the 2011-2012 school year as compared to an average expenditure of $9,112 statewide.

Education Revenue By Source, County & State 2009-2010

Ashley County & State

Figure 14

Local

31%

State Aid

49%

Federal Aid

20%

Other Sources of Funds

0%

County

Local Revenue

31%

State Aid

49%

Federal Aid

20%

Other Sources of Funds

0%

State Average

Local Revenue

32%

State Aid

48%

Federal Aid

15%

Other Sources of Funds

5%

Source: Arkansas Public School Computer Network (www.apscn.org/reports/hld/asr/asr.htm), Arkansas Department of Education

Ashley County schools raised more of their revenue from state and federal aid than did the average of all Arkansas public schools in the 2009-2010 school year.
Ashley County employment decreased slightly and unemployment increased since 2000.

Employment growth was highest in Central & Northwest Arkansas between 2000 and 2010.
Unemployment rates in Ashley County increased significantly since 2008 and stayed above both state and national averages through 2010.

In general, Northwest, Central, and Western Arkansas counties had the lowest unemployment rates while Delta and Coastal Plain counties had the highest rates in 2010.
**Employment**

**Jobs by Sector, 2010**

*Ashley County*

![Bar chart showing employment sectors in Ashley County, 2010.](chart)

Source: Regional Economic Information System, Bureau of Economic Analysis (REIS)

A larger proportion of jobs in Ashley County were in the manufacturing sector (24%) as compared to the state average (11%) in 2010. There were considerable missing data due to non-disclosure of confidential information.

**Workforce by Occupation, 2010**

*The Natural State & the Nation*

![Bar chart showing workforce occupations, 2010.](chart)

Source: Minnesota IMPLAN Group, Inc.

More people were employed in service occupations in Arkansas and in the United States than in any other occupation in 2010.
Changes in Jobs by Sector, 2001 to 2010
Ashley County

The manufacturing sector lost more jobs, while the professional services sector gained more jobs between 2001 and 2010 than any other sectors in Ashley County. There were considerable missing data due to non-disclosure of confidential information.

Jobs in Top 10 Manufacturing Sectors, 2010
Arkansas State

Nearly 30 percent of the jobs in the manufacturing sector in 2010 in Arkansas were in the food processing industries.
Total personal income in Ashley County, in constant dollars, increased from $633 million in 1994 to $711 million in 2010.

Income from net earnings decreased, while income from transfer payments increased between 1999 and 2010 in Ashley County.
Income by Source, County and State 2010
Ashley County & State

Ashley County received a larger share of income from transfer payments; and a smaller share from net earnings and dividends, interest & rent as compared to the state average in 2010.

Median Household Income, 2005-2009
Ashley County & State

Median household income in 2005-2009 was lower in Ashley County than the state average.

*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
Ashley County per capita income increased and was similar to the state average from 1990 to 2010.

Per capita incomes were highest in Central & Northwest Arkansas and lowest in some West & Northcentral counties in 2010.
The manufacturing sector accounted for over forty percent of total earnings in Ashley County in 2010 and comprised a much larger share of total earnings as compared to the state average.

Ashley County residents received per capita unemployment insurance benefits that were higher than the state average from 2000 to 2010.
**Value Added of Manufacturing Sectors, 2010**  
*Arkansas State*

![Bar chart showing the value added of various manufacturing sectors in Arkansas in 2010.](chart)

Source: Minnesota IMPLAN Group, Inc.

Most of the value added in the manufacturing sector in Arkansas came from food, paper and fabricated metal products in 2010.

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**Average Weekly Earnings, 2010**  
*Arkansas State*

![Bar chart showing average weekly earnings in different manufacturing sectors in Arkansas in 2010.](chart)

Source: Labor Market Information, Arkansas Employment Security Department

Average weekly earnings in the manufacturing sector ranged from a high of $1,089 in the paper products industry to a low of $423 in the apparel industry in 2010.
Ashley County retail sales were generally on a declining trend from 1990 to 2010. Sales declined from a high of $194 million in 1999 to $155 million in 2010.

Retail sales per capita were highest in counties that are regional trade centers in 2010.
The estimated poverty level remained higher in Ashley County than the state average in 1989, 1999 and during the period of 2005-2009.

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The estimated poverty level was highest in the Delta with many counties having a poverty level over twenty-one percent in the five-year period from 2005 to 2009.

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*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
A larger proportion of children lived in poverty as compared to other age groups in the five-year period, 2005-2009. Ashley County had the same proportion of their children living in poverty as the state average.

There was a wide range in the proportion of students who received free and reduced price school lunches across the seventy-five counties in the 2009-2010 school year. Participation rates ranged from thirty-five percent to one-hundred percent with a higher percentage of youth in the Delta Region counties receiving free and reduced price lunches.

*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
A larger proportion of people living in the Delta counties and Columbia, Jefferson and Lafayette counties participated in the Supplemented Nutrition Assistance Program when compared to people in other parts of the state in 2010.

A substantial percentage of the population (between 30% and 51%) was eligible for Medicaid in thirty-six counties in 2010, primarily located in the Eastern and Southern parts of the state.
Infant Mortality Rate, 2006-2010
*The Natural State*

Figure 41

Source: Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families

The infant mortality rate was highest in the Bradley, Crittenden, Dallas, Newton, Ouachita, Perry, Prairie, and Stone counties in the five-year period from 2006 to 2010.

Teen Fertility Rate, 2006-2010
*The Natural State*

Figure 42

Source: Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families

The teen fertility rate varied from county to county and was highest in some Delta and Coastal Plain counties in the five-year period from 2006 to 2010. Counties with the highest teen fertility rates included Bradley, Crittenden, Desha, Hempstead, Mississippi, Monroe, Ouachita, Phillips, Poinsett, St. Francis, Scott, Sevier, and Yell counties.
Female-headed families as a proportion of total families in Ashley County increased from nine percent in 1970 to eighteen percent in 2005-2009, which was below the state average of nineteen percent.

The Delta counties and the Coastal Plains counties had the highest proportion of families with only a single parent present in 2010.

*Note: The data were from the five-year sample (2005-2009) collected by the American Community Survey. Since this is sample data, the margin of error for counties with small populations may be large.
The market value (in constant dollars) of agricultural products sold in Ashley County was in a declining trend, decreasing from $79 million in 1978 to $65 million in 2007.

The two counties with the highest market value of agricultural production were in Northwest Arkansas. However, many Delta and Highlands counties also ranked high in terms of the market value of agricultural production in 2007.
Seventy-eight percent of the farms in Ashley County had sales of less than $50,000 in 2007. These farms accounted for about two percent of total farm sales. Ten percent of the farms had sales of $500,000 or more and these farms accounted for seventy-nine percent of total sales.

The number of farms in Ashley County declined from 788 in 1964 to 436 in 2007.

*Note: Due to the lack of available data, the unknown column was added for the missing data
Crop sales were the major source of farm income for Ashley County farmers in 1999, 2003 and 2010. Income from crops reached a high of $83 million in 2003, followed by a decline to $60 million in 2010.

Ashley County farmers received a higher proportion of farm income from crops as compared to all Arkansas farmers in 2010.
Farm income from crop sales fluctuated in a declining trend from $71 million in 1994 to $60 million in 2010 in Ashley County from 1994 to 2010.

Timber output of Ashley County (both softwood and hardwood) increased substantially between 1999 and 2009.
The total timber acreage in Ashley county was 401,000 acres in 2010. Farmers/ranchers and private individuals owned a large share (over 95%) of the timberland in Ashley County.

Over seventy-five percent of the land area in many Coastal Plain and Ouachita Highland counties qualified as timber acreage in 2010.
The average property assessments per person in 2010 varied greatly among Arkansas counties, from $7,427 to $27,781.

In general, sparsely populated counties had more miles of county roads to maintain per person than more densely populated counties in 2010.
AGRICULTURAL SERVICES Includes establishments primarily engaged in performing soil preparation services, crop services, veterinary and other animal services, farm labor and management services, and landscape and horticultural services, for others on a contract or fee basis.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE The sum of all employed and unemployed persons 16 years of age or older. Members of the Armed Forces are excluded.

"CONSTANT $" Figures adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index, 1982-1984 = 100.

“CURRENT $” Figures not adjusted for inflation.

CONSTRUCTION Includes general building contractors (residential, operative, and nonresidential); heavy construction contractors (highway, street, etc.); and special trade contractors (plumbing, heating, air conditioning, painting, paper hanging, electrical, masonry, stonework, roofing, sheet metal, concrete, and miscellaneous special trade contractors).

DELIVERED VALUE OF HARVESTED TIMBER The value of harvested timber delivered to the first processing point. The value includes the value of the timber (stumpage value), the cost of harvesting, and the cost of transporting the timber to the first processing point.

EARNINGS Earnings include wages and salaries, other labor income, and proprietors' income by place of work.

EMPLOYMENT An estimate of the number of persons, on a place-of-residence basis, who worked anytime for pay or profit or worked 15 hours or more as an unpaid family worker during the week of reference (the week including the 12th of the month). Also included are those who, although not working, had some job attachment and were not looking for work, and persons involved in labor-management disputes.

FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS Includes a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. The number of family households always equals the number of families; however, a family household may also include non-relatives living with the family. Families are classified by type as either a married-couple family or other family which is further classified into "male householder" (a family with a male householder and no wife present) or "female householder" (a family with a female householder and no husband present).

FARMING Includes businesses whose primary source of revenue is from crop and livestock production.

FEMALE HEADED FAMILIES A family with a female householder and no husband present.

FINANCIAL SERVICES Financial, insurance, and real estate services.

GOVERNMENT Employees of city, county, state and federal governments.

IMPUTED & MISC. INCOME RECEIVED Consists of imputed income, such as gross rental value of dwellings and value of home consumption, and other farm related income components, such as machine hire and custom work income, rental income, and income from forest products.

INCOME Total income is the algebraic sum of the amount reported separately for wage or salary income; non-farm net self-employment income; farm net self-employment income; interest, dividend, net royalty or rental income; social security or railroad retirement income; public assistance or welfare income and all other income.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE The number of infant deaths (under one year of age) per 1,000 live births.

JOBS The number of full-time and part-time jobs in a geographic area.

MANUFACTURING Includes manufacturing industries dealing with food and kindred products; textile mill products; apparel products; lumber and wood products; furniture and fixtures; paper and allied products; printing and publishing; chemicals; petroleum and coal; rubber and miscellaneous plastics; leather; stone, clay and glass; primary metal industries; fabricated metal products; machinery; electrical and electronic equipment; transportation equipment; instruments; and miscellaneous industries.
**MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD**  The gross market value before taxes and production expenses of all agricultural products sold or removed from place regardless of who received payment. It includes sales by the operator as well as the value of any shares received by partners, landlords, contractors, or others associated with the operation. It does not include payment received for participation in federal farm programs nor does it include income from farm-related sources such as agricultural services, or income from non-farm sources.

**MINING**  Includes extraction of oil and gas, non-metallic minerals, sand and gravel.

**NET DOMESTIC MIGRATION**  The difference between domestic in-migration to an area and domestic out-migration from the area during the period.

**PER CAPITA INCOME**  The per capita income is the total personal income divided by the total population of the area studied. The per capita income measure should be used with care. In the short run, it may temporarily vary from the result of unusual conditions (bumper crops, a major construction project or a catastrophe). In the long run, it may misrepresent the economic well-being of the general population because of the presence of a large institutional population (college, prison). While per capita income reflects average income per person, it does not accurately reflect family unit spendable income.

**PERSONAL INCOME**  The total income received by residents of an area, including earnings, transfer payments, and interest, dividends and rent.

**POVERTY LEVEL**  An individual or household is considered to be living below the poverty level when their income is below an income threshold established by the Bureau of Census. The income cutoffs used by the Bureau of Census to determine the poverty status of families and unrelated individuals consist of a set of 48 thresholds arranged in a two-dimensional matrix consisting of family size cross-classified by presence and number of family members under 18 years old.

**RETAIL SALES**  Includes sales from general merchandise stores; department stores; variety stores; food, bakery and dairy stores; automotive dealers; gasoline stations; eating and drinking establishments; and other retail trade establishments.

**SINGLE HEAD OF FAMILY**  Single head of a family with no spouse present.

**SERVICES**  Includes a variety of items ranging from hotels to attorneys. Included in this category are hotels and other lodging places; personal services (laundry, photographic studios, beauty shops, shoe repair, funeral services); business services (advertising, mailing, news syndicates, personnel supply services, computer services); auto repair services and garages (retail, parking, repair); miscellaneous repair services (electrical, etc.); amusement and recreation services (orchestra, dance halls, etc.); health services (physicians, dentists, nursing care facilities, hospitals, medical labs, outpatient care); legal services; educational services; social services (job training, individual and family services, day care); membership organizations (business, professional, labor, civic, social, etc.); engineering and architectural services; and other similar services.

**STUMPAGE VALUE OF HARVESTED TIMBER**  The value of timber harvested going to the landowner.

**TEEN FERTILITY RATE**  is the birth rate for women 15 to 19 years of age. It is the number of live births per 1000 women 15-19 years of age.

**TRADE**  Includes wholesale and retail trade.

**TRANSPORTATION**  Includes railroads; trucking service and warehousing; other transportation services (bus, air, and U.S. postal service); communication systems (radio, T.V., etc.); and utilities and sanitary services.

**UNEMPLOYMENT**  An estimate of the number of persons who, for the entire week of reference (the week including the 12th of the month), did not work at all, were able to work, and available for work, and (1) were looking for work, or (2) would have looked for work except that (a) they were waiting to return to a job from which they had been laid off, or (b) they were waiting to report to a new job.

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**  The number of unemployed workers as a percentage of the civilian labor force.
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