



## The Power of Leveraging Local and Federal Dollars to Strengthen Agricultural Land Easement Investments

### Colorado, Palisade Fruitlands - FRPP Economic Research

#### Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program Investments

- Between 2002 and 2012, \$3.43 million of FRPP funds helped Mesa Land Trust protect 678 acres in the county, including 462 acres of Palisade Fruitlands.
- FRPP has helped Mesa Land Trust protect 20 properties including 16 in the Palisade Fruitlands. The program protected 13 properties with orchards, of which 7 also had vineyards.<sup>1</sup>

#### Colorado Agriculture Overview

- Colorado is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest peach producer in the nation. The state's produce is shipped throughout the US and to over 115 countries around the world.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2010, Colorado had 2,400 acres of peach orchards which produced 14,000 tons of peaches (12,000 were utilized). The average peach yield per bearing acre between 2001 and 2010 was 5.7 tons. In 2010, the price received per ton of peaches was \$1,870, a 13 percent increase from 2009. The utilized production value for peaches was \$22,440,000 in 2010.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2007, Colorado had 1,167 acres of grapes with 248 operations growing grapes.<sup>4</sup>
- The last USDA Census of Agriculture (2007) indicated that 679 Colorado farms offered agritourism and recreational services, totaling nearly \$33 million in annual farm income.<sup>5</sup>

#### Mesa County Agriculture Overview

- In 2007, Mesa County farms brought in over \$61.2 million in sales revenue. This includes \$10.2 million in fruits, tree nuts and berry sales, which makes the county the top producer in this category in the state, and in the top one-tenth of one percent in the nation.<sup>6</sup>
- There are about 280 orchards representing 2,742 acres in Mesa County. The average orchard is 9.8 acres. 53 percent of orchards are less than 5 acres in size. 93 percent are less than 25 acres.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to data provided by Mesa Land Trust

<sup>2</sup> Colorado Department of Agriculture. "Colorado's Produce Industry."  
<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/Agriculture-Main/CDAG/1248443572397> (last accessed 6/13/2012).

<sup>3</sup> U.S.D.A. National Agricultural Statistics Service. 2011 Colorado Annual Statistical Bulletin.  
[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Colorado/Publications/Annual\\_Statistical\\_Bulletin/bulletin2011.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Colorado/Publications/Annual_Statistical_Bulletin/bulletin2011.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

- The county has 1,806 acres growing peaches (75 percent of the state total) with 1,492 acres bearing peach fruit (as of the 2007 Census of Agriculture). 186 orchards grow peaches in the county (171 had acreage bearing peaches).<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, there were 566 acres of grape production in the county (432 acres bearing). A total of 80 operations grow grapes (70 with actual grape producing acreage in 2007). This represents 49 percent of all grape producing acres in the state and 32 percent of grape growing operations. The amount of land used for growing grapes in the county increased by 17 percent between 2002 and 2007.<sup>9</sup>
- Agriculture operations spend \$12.4 million on hired labor each year in Mesa County. In 2007, over 1,900 workers were hired.<sup>10</sup>
- The average principal farm operator in Mesa County is 57 years old. Only 13 percent of principal operators are under the age of 45.

### **Palisade Agriculture Overview**

- Palisade has 5,321 residents (81526 zip code population; town of Palisade population has 2,692 residents), only 3.6 percent of the county's population, yet has 64 percent of the orchards and 65 percent of all wineries in the county.
- The typical orchard is locally owned and operated. About 93 percent of farm operators reside on their operation. Many orchards are small family-owned operations. About 4 out of 5 Palisade farms are less than 15 acres in size.

### **How FRPP Supports Palisade Operations**

- One of the key investments that the program helps make possible is in land. Land prices in the region are expensive, reaching as high as \$40,000-\$50,000 per acre in some areas.<sup>11</sup> Conservation easements help make this productive agricultural land affordable to growers by allowing them to pay only the agricultural value of the land, while the conservation easements pays for the speculative or development value of the land. By helping growers purchase new lands, rather than lease them, the program provides the added benefit of allowing growers to use the equity to leverage the purchase of additional land. One local grower, Roblee Talbott of C & R Farms, used FRPP funds to buy two new parcels in order to increase production.
- FRPP also allows orchard owners to make capital investments in things such as worker housing, equipment, and infrastructure. Several Palisade operations have invested in new orchard trees. Peach trees have an average life-cycle of about 20 years and about 5 percent of an operation must be planted each year to be sustainable. A new peach tree costs \$7 on average and at an average density of 450 trees per acre represents an investment of over \$3,100 per acre.
- Conservation easements have an even more significant benefit beyond the compensation given to landowners. Permanently protected farmland removes the uncertainty for growers' long-term investments. Growers are less likely to invest in their operation if there is a threat of encroaching development. Growers are also more willing to invest in their operation knowing

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>11</sup> Bruce Talbott, Orchard and Vineyard Manager, Talbott Farms, personal communication, June 26, 2012.

that there will be critical mass of operations in the future to attract an adequate number of laborers to the area, which has become a bigger concern in recent years.

- Easements also help maintain a healthy profit margin for farmers. Margins are usually tight in the orchard industry. Planted peach trees take 3 to 4 years to start producing and it typically takes 7 years just to break even. Easements are especially beneficial to small orchards, characteristic of Palisade, because small operations don't benefit from the economies of scale enjoyed by larger farms.
- Easements are also beneficial to the local agriculture industry because they help prevent the fragmentation of farmland. This is important because conflicts, such as liability issues of spraying chemicals on trees which may also impact houses nearby, arise when agriculture is next to residential areas. This is especially true for peach orchards because spraying trees involves spraying chemicals higher into the air than with row crops.

### **Economic Impact of Peaches**

- Mesa County has 75 percent of the peach producing land in Colorado, most of which is in the Palisade area. From this land, an estimated 8,500 tons of peaches are produced annually by local orchards.<sup>12</sup> At the 2010 price received for peaches, these peaches have an annual value of \$15.9 million.
- The annual production value of an acre of peaches is nearly \$11,000. Of Colorado's top four field crops, the next highest production value per acre is potatoes at only \$5,000, less than half the value of peaches. An acre of wheat, meanwhile, only brings in \$255 per acre each year.<sup>13</sup>

### **Per Acre Value Comparison with Colorado's top four field crops**

<b>Commodity</b>	<b>Annual Per-Acre Production Value</b>
Peaches	\$10,902
Potatoes	\$4,992
Corn for grain	\$795
Hay	\$314
Wheat	\$255

Source: National Agricultural Statistics Service Colorado Field Office. Colorado Agricultural Statistics 2011.

- Palisade peaches are not only sold locally, but are also exported to markets across the country. While Colorado is the top market for peach growers, much of the fruit is exported by the truckload to many states in the Midwest region of the U.S., including Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, where it is sold fresh at local markets.
- Peach growing also provides a source of employment, especially for general laborers hurt during the recent economic downturn and slowdown in the construction industry. During harvest time one Palisade orchard operation hires as many 100 workers. Even during off-peak times such as in the late fall or early spring the operation still employs a force of 30 for tasks such as thinning and pruning. Even a smaller 50-acre orchard hires as many as 12 workers during harvest time. A rough estimate from local surveys is that every 3.6 acres of peaches generates one job during harvest time. This means that there are approximately 418 seasonal jobs plus an additional 45 full-time jobs generated by local peach orchards.

<sup>12</sup> Based on an estimated annual yield of 5.7 tons per acre.

<sup>13</sup> National Agricultural Statistics Service Colorado Field Office. Colorado Agricultural Statistics 2011.

## Economic Impact of Orchards

	Mesa County	FRPP Protected
Number of orchards	280	13
Number of peach orchards	186	
Acres of orchards*	2,742	353
Acres of peaches (fruit bearing)*	1,492	
<b>Tree Value</b>		
Value per tree	\$7	
Trees per acre	450	
<b>Total Tree Value</b>	<b>\$4,699,800</b>	<b>\$158,850</b>
<b>Sales</b>		
Yield per acre of peaches	5.7 tons	
Price received per ton	\$1,870	
Revenue per acre	\$10,700	
<b>Total Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$15,903,228</b>	<b>\$3,777,100</b>
<b>Jobs</b>		
Average Seasonal jobs per acre	.28	
Average Full time jobs per acre	.03	
Total average Jobs per acre	.31	
<b>Total Number of Jobs</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>109</b>

FRPP Protected numbers generated based on assumption that all FRPP protected acres are peach growing

\*Acreage estimates from U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

## Economic Impact of Palisade Area Wine Industry

- FRPP funds have helped the Mesa Land Trust protect seven vineyards in Palisade since 2003.<sup>14</sup>
- Palisade is at the heart of Colorado's growing wine industry. Between 2001 and 2010 Colorado's wine production increased by over 180 percent or 18 percent on average each year.<sup>15</sup> The area is the greatest producer of grapes for the state's burgeoning wine industry – 80 percent of wine grape production in the state comes from Mesa County.<sup>16</sup> There are approximately 80 grape growing operations in Mesa County with approximately 566 acres of vineyards.<sup>17</sup> Between 2002 and 2007 the acreage dedicated to grape growing grew by 17 percent or at a rate of 3.4% each year.<sup>18</sup>
- Along with grape production, the area leads the state in wine production. According to the Colorado Wine Industry Development Board there are 13 wineries in Palisade and a total of 20 in the entire Grand Valley (which includes Palisade).<sup>19</sup> While Grand Valley has 20 percent of the wineries in the state, they produce 47 percent (132,000 gallons) of all wine

<sup>14</sup> According to data provided by Mesa Land Trust.

<sup>15</sup> Colorado Wine Industry Development Board. *Colorado Wine Production Statistics*.

<[http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175\\_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm](http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm)>

<sup>16</sup> Mauro, Rich. Colorado Springs Gazette, October 3, 2011. "2011 was a good year for Colorado wines."

<[http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/186\\_23/2011-was-a-good-year-for-colorado-wines.cfm](http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/186_23/2011-was-a-good-year-for-colorado-wines.cfm)>

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2002, 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>19</sup> Colorado Wine Industry Development Board. Grand Valley Wineries.

<<http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.ehwwmap#;areaid=1>>

in Colorado.<sup>20 21</sup> The local wine industry continues to grow. Between 2001 and 2011, wine production in the Grand Valley region increased by over 73 percent.<sup>22</sup>

- The average vineyard produces approximately \$3,250 worth of grapes per acre annually. That acre's worth of grapes, however, is transformed into over \$13,000 worth of wine (wholesale value). In Mesa County that adds up to \$7.43 million wholesale or \$14.9 million retail value of wine produced using locally grown grapes. Mesa County wineries, which produce much of this wine, spend an estimated \$560,000 in annual labor costs. The total economic impact of the county's wine industry is estimated to be about \$14.3 million. When tourism is considered, the economic impact is much greater. A 2005 study estimated that \$24 million is contributed to the Mesa County economy through tasting room and educational visitors.<sup>23</sup>

### Estimated Economic Impact of Mesa County's Wine Industry

<b>Vineyards:</b>	
Average yield of grapes per acre	2.5 tons
Price received per ton of grapes	\$1,300
Value per acre	\$3,250
Mesa County grape acres	566
<b>Mesa County Annual Grape Value</b>	<b>\$1.84 million</b>
<b>Wine Sales:</b>	
Gallons of wine per acre of grapes	375
Wine bottles (750 ml bottle) per gallon	5
Price per bottle of wine	\$14
Annual Gross profit per acre (wholesale)	\$13,125
Mesa County Acres	566
<b>Total gross revenue from wine sales</b>	<b>\$7,428,750</b>
<b>Jobs</b>	
Average winery annual labor cost	\$28,000
Number of Mesa County wineries	20
<b>Total annual spending on labor</b>	<b>\$560,000</b>
<b>Economic Impact:</b>	
Direct effects	\$7,428,750
Indirect effects	\$3,142,361
Induced effects	\$3,706,946
<b>Total Economic Impact</b>	<b>\$14,278,057</b>

Methodology Sources:

Titus, Stephen. ColoradoBiz, July, 2005. "Making wine on the western slope: Grand Junction, Palisade Vineyards appealing to a national taste."

Kress, G., D. Thilmany, and P. Watson. The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry. 2006. *The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry*. Colorado State University.

<sup>20</sup> Mauro, Rich. Colorado Springs Gazette, October 3, 2011. "2011 was a good year for Colorado wines." <[http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/186\\_23/2011-was-a-good-year-for-colorado-wines.cfm](http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/186_23/2011-was-a-good-year-for-colorado-wines.cfm)>

<sup>21</sup> Colorado Wine Industry Development Board. *Colorado Wine Production Statistics*. <[http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175\\_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm](http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm)>

<sup>22</sup> Colorado Wine Industry Development Board. *Colorado Wine Production Statistics*. <[http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175\\_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm](http://www.coloradowine.com/cms/index.cfm/feature/175_41/colorado-wine-production-and-market-share.cfm)>

<sup>23</sup> Kress, G., D. Thilmany, and P. Watson. The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry. 2006. *The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry*. Colorado State University.

## Local Businesses

- Fruit and other agricultural outputs support a variety of local businesses that ship or process these goods. For example, while Palisade is a small town of just 2,700, there are six businesses involved in the wholesaling of non-durable goods (which include locally grown orchard fruits) and 15 businesses involved with manufacturing or processing foods and beverages including several wineries, a local distillery, and a brewery.<sup>24</sup>
- One local business, Alida’s Fruits, uses locally grown fruits to manufacture value added products such as jams, jellies, syrups and salsas.<sup>25</sup> These are made in Palisade and sold along with fresh fruit and vegetables at retail outlets in downtown Grand Junction and East Orchard Mesa and through an online store.<sup>26</sup> The business receives customers from all 50 states and many international visitors according to the owner.<sup>27</sup>
- Gelato Junction on the main street of nearby Grand Junction makes Gelato using locally grown ingredients such as peaches, plums, cherries, and apricots to produce seasonal flavors such as “Palisade Peach.”<sup>28</sup>
- Palisade growers also support businesses when they buy agriculture-related goods and services used for production. Agricultural operations in Mesa County spend \$10.4 million annually on agricultural services plus an additional \$6.99 million on supplies and repairs.<sup>29</sup>

### Annual Spending by Farm Operations – Mesa County

Spending Category	Amount
Labor	\$12,414,000
Agricultural Services	\$10,538,000
Supplies and Repairs	\$6,987,000
Plants and Seeds	\$1,990,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,929,000</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

## Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

- The town is within a half day’s drive of over four million people in the Denver and Salt Lake City areas. It is also conveniently located along the I-70 corridor making it an easily accessible tourist destination. Visitors are also drawn from the resort communities of Aspen and Vail during the summertime.
- Tourism is a major economic driver in the region. In 2010, overnight travelers to Mesa County spent \$242 million, an increase of 20 percent since 2000. Spending by overnight visitors supports 2,860 jobs in the county and provides local governments with \$6.6 million in annual tax revenue.

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<sup>24</sup> Town of Palisade GIS Map. Local Business Data. Accessed online at <[http://arcgis-fs.ci.grandjct.co.us/palisade\\_map/index.html](http://arcgis-fs.ci.grandjct.co.us/palisade_map/index.html)>

<sup>25</sup> [www.alidasfruits.com](http://www.alidasfruits.com)

<sup>26</sup> The Business Times, January 24, 2012. “Alida’s Fruits garners national and state publicity.” <<http://thebusinesstimes.com/alidas-fruits-garners-national-and-state-publicity/>>

<sup>27</sup> The Business Times, July 13, 2011. “Alida’s fruits moves downtown outlet to larger location.” <<http://thebusinesstimes.com/alida%E2%80%99s-fruits-moves-downtown-outlet-to-larger-location/>>

<sup>28</sup> Ludwig, Paul. Grand Valley Magazine. 2009. “Molto Dolce: Gelato Junction.” <<http://www.gelatojunction.com/Gelato%20Junction%20story.pdf>>

<sup>29</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

### Mesa County Overnight Travel Impact – 2010

Category	2010 Impact	2000 to 2010 Percent Change
Travel Spending	\$241,500,000	20%
Earnings	\$56,100,000	23%
Employment	2,860	16%
Local Taxes	\$6,600,000	30%
State Taxes	\$5,600,000	13%

Source: Dean Runyan Associates. 2011. The Economic Impact of Travel on Colorado 1996 – 2010. Prepared for the Colorado Tourism Office.  
[http://www.deanrunyan.com/doc\\_library/COImp.pdf](http://www.deanrunyan.com/doc_library/COImp.pdf)

- In 2007, agri-tourism and recreation services accounted for \$297,000 in total combined revenue for 27 Mesa County farms.<sup>30</sup> Growers also benefit by selling products directly to tourists. A total of 92 out of 254 (36%) of operations sell products directly to customers. By contrast, only 7.5% of Colorado farms sell directly to consumers.<sup>31</sup> Roadside fruit stands have increased dramatically in the past 20 years as tourism to the area has increased. For many small growers this represents their primary market. One local grower with 25 acres makes a quarter of his revenue selling directly to customers through his fruit stand.
- The typical Colorado winery sells an even greater share of products directly to consumers. According to a 2005 survey, only 42 percent of Colorado winery sales were wholesale, while the majority of wine was sold directly to customers at the winery.<sup>32</sup>
- Palisade is a visitor destination in large part because of its growing wine industry. In a 2010 survey, wine tasting was the top activity participated in for visitors to Mesa County with 77 percent of respondents participating.<sup>33</sup> According to one study, the average winery sees over 2,900 visitors each year. The average expenditure per winery visitor is approximately \$75.<sup>34</sup> This is spent on things such as tours, bottles of wine, wine tasting, and program fees. Based on these figures it is possible to estimate that visitors spend \$4.42 million combined at local wineries each year. The total economic impact when secondary economic effects are considered is \$7.72 million annually.

<b>Wine Industry Tourism:</b>	
Number of wineries	20
Average number of annual visitors per winery	2,948
Average expenditure per visitor	\$75
Total visitor spending	\$4,422,000
<b>Total Economic Impact:</b>	<b>\$7,719,763</b>

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2007 Census of Agriculture.

<sup>32</sup> Kress, G., D. Thilmany, and P. Watson. The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry. 2006. *The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry*. Colorado State University.

<sup>33</sup> Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau: 2010 Conversion Study. Prepared by Hill Aevium.

<sup>34</sup> Kress, G., D. Thilmany, and P. Watson. The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry. 2006. *The Economic Contribution of Colorado's Wine Industry*. Colorado State University.

- During peak times there is even a special train that shuttles visitors from Denver to Grand Junction. The “Train to Colorado’s Wine Country” provides an 8 hour trip complete with a crash course in Colorado Wine, a jazz guitarist, and wine tasting with professional vintners. There are typically two to four trains each year. Since it started there have been 29 trains to the area with a total economic impact of \$500,000. All or almost all of the trains have been sold out due to high demand.<sup>35</sup>
- Taking a scenic drive is the third most popular visitor activity in the area according to one survey (54 percent).<sup>36</sup> The new Palisade Fruit & Wine Byway is an automobile and bike route that travels through local orchards, lavender gardens, vineyards and past wineries and fresh fruit stands. The byway was created as way to help capitalize on the area’s scenic views and local agriculture by attracting tourists and connecting them to local businesses and growers. Many orchard, vineyard, and winery owners along the route offer tours to visitors. There are even local limousine companies that provide luxury tours of the area.<sup>37</sup>
- Farmland preservation also helps support the local outdoor recreation industry. Approximately 3.4 million visitors visit the Mesa County region each year to participate in outdoor recreation activities including fishing, biking, camping, and winter sports. Mountain biking alone constitutes more than a \$1.6 million annual economic impact to the county.<sup>38</sup> Mountain biking is popular in the area due largely to the scenic character of the valley, which is preserved when farmland is protected according to a local bike shop owner.
- Besides orchards, vineyards, and wineries, Palisade tourism also supports other businesses in the community including local restaurants and lodging businesses. The growing wine industry recently led to the establishment of the Wine Country Inn, an 80-room Victorian-style hotel adjacent to two local wineries.<sup>39</sup> Other businesses supported by an increasing influx of tourists include a local bike rental shop, brewery, and distillery. Peach Street Distillers in Palisade is an artisanal distillery that has a tasting room open to visitors. It has been successful in large part due to the growing craft beer and wine scene which has led to spillover interest in other liquors.<sup>40</sup> Business owners and entrepreneurs are willing to invest in these businesses knowing that visitors will be drawn to the area for years to become because of agriculture land protection efforts.

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<sup>35</sup> Barbara Bowman, Grand Junction Visitor and Convention Bureau, July 3, 2012, personal communication.

<sup>36</sup> Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau: 2010 Conversion Study. Prepared by Hill Aevium.

<sup>37</sup> Palisade Map and Guide. 2010. Prepared by The Palisade Chamber of Commerce and the Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau. Available online at <<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1251653848848&cssbinary=true>>

<sup>38</sup> Grand Junction Economic Partnership. Mesa County Outdoor Industry Statistics. Available online at <<http://www.gjep.org/media/docs/Stats/Mesa%20County%20Outdoor%20Industry.pdf>>

<sup>39</sup> Harms, Nicole. Go Colorado! “The Wine Country Inn Makes It Easy to Enjoy Colorado Vineyards.” <<http://www.gocolorado.com/lodging/hotels/the-wine-country-inn-palisade-co-makes-it-easy-to-enjoy-colorado-vineyards/>>

<sup>40</sup> Dorris, Jennie, 5280 Denver’s Magazine, December, 2009. “Boost Your Spirits: Colorado’s microdistilleries carve a niche in the liquor market.”

## Special Events

According to a recent survey, nearly half of visitors to Mesa County attend a festival or event during their trip. Of those visitors, 90 percent went to the Wine Festival and 21 percent went to the Peach festival.<sup>41</sup>

Major Events	Estimated Annual Attendance
<b>Festivals:</b>	
Peach Festival	31,500 (over 4 days)
Colorado Mountain Wine Festival	7,000
Lavender Festival	3,000
<b>Bike Events:</b>	
Palisade Bike Festival	400
Tour of the Valley	1,000 riders
Pedal, Paddle, Pedal	30 teams of riders
Tour de Vineyards	1,000 riders

## The Demand for FRPP

- Palisade residents view the local agriculture industry as being an important part of the economy as evidenced by a recent community survey which found that a vast majority of residents would support incentives to encourage agri-business (orchards, vineyards, wineries) and agri-tourism by a ratio of nearly 6-1.<sup>42</sup>
- Residents also overwhelmingly believe in the importance of maintaining the town's agricultural and small town character by an average score of 4.6 out of 5. The majority also strongly agreed that Palisade should become a recreation and tourist destination while preserving that character.<sup>43</sup>
- Land in the Palisade area has a unique-microclimate unparalleled anywhere else in the state. This makes the land especially valuable for agriculture, but the area faces threats from development. In some opinions the town has already become a bedroom community of Grand Junction, which grew by 28% between 2000 and 2010.
- In Mesa County, over the ten year period between 1997 and 2007 an average of almost 6 orchards have disappeared each year representing a loss of almost 26 acres of orchard land annually. At this rate the direct annual economic loss of these acres is nearly \$280,000 in production value.

## The Need for FRPP – Mesa County

	2007	1997-2007	Per Year
Orchards	280	-16.9%	- 5.7 orchards
Orchard Acres	2,742	-8.5%	- 25.5 acres
Average production value per orchard acre*			\$10,902
<b>Annual Economic Loss</b>			<b>\$278,000</b>

\*Colorado Average Based on 2010 peach production and prices  
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture. Census of Agriculture.

<sup>41</sup> Grand Junction Visitor & Convention Bureau: 2010 Conversion Study. Prepared by Hill Aevium.

<sup>42</sup> Town of Palisade Resident Survey. Accessed online at [http://www.townofpalisade.org/gen\\_info/town\\_survey\\_results.pdf](http://www.townofpalisade.org/gen_info/town_survey_results.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> Town of Palisade Resident Survey. Accessed online at [http://www.townofpalisade.org/gen\\_info/town\\_survey\\_results.pdf](http://www.townofpalisade.org/gen_info/town_survey_results.pdf)

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**About the Land Trust Alliance**

The mission of the Land Trust Alliance is to save the places people love by strengthening land conservation across America. Land trusts are nonprofit organizations that work with private landowners to voluntarily conserve forests, farms, parks and other cherished places that enrich our lives. We focus our work on three strategic goals: accelerating the pace, improving the quality, and ensuring the permanence of conservation. By building highly effective and well-governed land trusts that protect lands with the highest values to their communities and ensure their protection in perpetuity, we can preserve healthy human and natural communities, clean air and water, beautiful vistas, recreation areas and working lands.

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