

About Dallas County

Dallas County was created by the Alabama Territorial Legislature in 1818 from land ceded by the Creek Indians. It was named for U. S. Treasury Secretary Alexander J. Dallas of Pennsylvania. It is located in the heart of the Black Belt surrounded by Wilcox, Lowndes, Perry and Autauga counties.

The largely rural county's population of 42,867 is about 67% black and 33% white. There are approximately 20,866 household units in the county and the median household income in 2007 was \$27,647.00. Approximately 30.2 percent of its people live below poverty, and in November 2009 the unemployment stood at 25.9 percent.

There are 17 elementary schools, three middle schools, four high schools, two alternative schools, a vocational school and three private schools (grades K-12). The graduation rate in 2007 was 50.1%, with 10.4% of students enrolled in Special Education. Selma, the county seat is home to one community college and two four year colleges, with extension campuses for two other four year colleges.

Agricultural products in Dallas County include timber, livestock, soybeans, corn, cotton, peanuts, aquaculture and horticultural products. Gross cash receipts for farm and forestry products in Dallas County are more than \$50,000,000. Major employers include International Paper Company, Bush Hog, Vaughan Regional Medical Center, Dallas County Public Schools, Plantation Patterns Furniture Co., and American Apparel, Inc.

Tourist attractions include the Voting Rights Museum, Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church and King Monument, Old Cahawba, Old Depot Museum, Sturdivant Hall and Vaughan-Smitherman Museum. Annual events include The Bridge Crossing Jubilee and the Civil War Battle Re-enactment.

The Dallas County Extension Office houses seven full-time and one part-time employee. More than 200 volunteers help with Extension programs. Some popular programs include Master Gardener, Making the Older Years Golden, New Leaf Weight Loss Program, and Leadership Selma-Dallas County. More than 700 youth are involved in 4-H both through school-based and community based clubs and other youth development programs including Youth Leadership Selma-Dallas County and the 4-H Jr. Leadership Program.