

# Half of city is Hispanic, census shows

Almost half of the city's population is of Spanish origin, according to recently released U.S. Census figures.

The figures show 11,509 of the city's 23,543 residents listed themselves as being of Spanish origin (defined as Mexican, Mexican-American, Cuban, Puerto Rican, or "other" Spanish). The figures are not comparable with the 1970 census, when the "Spanish origin" category was based on what language people spoke.

In the South County area (including La Selva Beach, Corralitos, Freedom, Watsonville and the area around the city), 40 percent of the people are of Spanish origin, according to the census.

Of the 27,650 people of Spanish origin in Santa Cruz County, 11,509 (41 percent) are in Watsonville and 19,059 (69 percent) are in South County. There are 3,624 (13 percent) in Santa Cruz, 581 (2 percent) and 264 in Scotts Valley. In the City of Santa Cruz, 8.7 percent of the people are of Spanish origin.

The Spanish origin category in the census is separate from the racial breakdown. In Watsonville, 63 percent of the people listed themselves as white, although they may also be listed in the Spanish origin category. A breakdown on how many people listed themselves in both categories won't be available until the fall.

Asians and Pacific Islanders comprise 5.4 percent of the city population (5.2 percent in South County), while blacks and Indians are less than one percent each.