

A Look at California Agriculture



Capital: Sacramento

Population: 36,961,664

Founded: September 9, 1850 (31st)

State Bird: California quail

State Tree: Redwood

State Flower: Poppy

Number of Counties: 58

Largest City: Los Angeles - 9.9 million

Nickname: The Golden State

Number of Farms: 81,500

Average Farm Size: 313 acres

Total Farmland: 25.3 million acres



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Climate & Soil

- California's moderate, Mediterranean climate, coupled with the state's fertile soil and diverse land resources, allows year-round production of many commodities. Some of those with year-round crop seasons include lemons, artichokes, avocados, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, mushrooms, potatoes, spinach and squash.
- California is home to more than 2,000 soils, located in the state's unique blend of valleys, foothills, mountains, coastal areas and deserts.
- The San Joaquin series is the state soil.

Crops & Livestock

- California produces more than 350 crops. Of those, the following are commercially-produced only in California: almonds, artichokes, dates, kiwifruit, figs, olives, persimmons, pomegranates, dried plums, raisins, clingstone peaches, pistachios, sweet rice, ladino clover seed, and walnuts.
- California grows more than half of the nation's fruits, vegetables and nuts.
- The second leading commodity, grapes, account for \$2.99 billion in cash receipts annually.
- Livestock and poultry account for about 27% of California's gross cash income, with a combined total of \$10.6 billion.
- California leads the nation in milk production with over 1.8 million dairy cows, \$6.92 billion in cash receipts.
- Over 5.3 billion eggs are produced each year by 19 million hens and pullets of laying age.
- Bee colonies, of which there are over 650,000 in the state, are included in the category of livestock.
- They are used both for pollination and production of honey, and their value is over \$25 million.

General

- California is the nation's top agricultural state, and has been for more than 50 years. Agriculture generates approximately \$36.2 billion a year, more than any other state.
- More than 60% of the state's farms are less than 50 acres in size, one indicator of the growing number of specialty crop operations.
- More than 90 percent of California farms are family farms or partnerships.
- The top 10 commodities include: milk and cream, all grapes, nursery products, almonds, cattle and calves, all lettuce, strawberries, all tomatoes, hay, and rice.