

# A Look at California Agriculture



Capital: Sacramento

Population: 33,871,648

Founded: September 9, 1850 (31<sup>st</sup>)

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: 81,700

Average Farm Size: 311 acres

Total Farmland: 25.3 million acres

Area: 155,959 square miles



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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 400 crops. Of those, the following are commercially produced only in California: almonds, artichokes, dates, figs, raisins, kiwifruit, olives, clingstone peaches, pistachios, dried plums, pomegranates, sweet rice, ladino clover seed, and walnuts.
- California grows nearly half of the nation's fruits, vegetables and nuts.
- The leading commodity is milk and cream, accounting for nearly \$6 billion in cash receipts.
- The second leading commodity, grapes, account for \$3.2 billion in cash receipts annually.
- Livestock and poultry account for about 24% of California's gross cash income, with a combined total of \$9.8 billion.
- California leads the nation in milk production with over 1.75 million dairy cows, \$5.9 billion in cash receipts
- Over 5.3 billion eggs are produced each year by more than 19 million hens and pullets of laying age.
- Bee colonies, of which there are over 410,000 in the state, are included in the category of livestock.
- Bees are used both for pollination and production of honey, and their value is over \$42 million.

## General

- California is the nation's top agricultural state, and has been for more than 50 years. Agriculture generates approximately \$37.5 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% of California farms are family farms or partnerships.
- The top 10 commodities include: milk and cream, all grapes, almonds, nursery products, cattle and calves, all lettuce, pistachios, walnuts, and flowers and foliage.