

**THE  
MEASURE  
OF  
CALIFORNIA  
AGRICULTURE  
2000**



**NICOLAI V. KUMINOFF**  
Staff Research Associate  
University of California  
Agricultural Issues Center

and

**DANIEL A. SUMNER**  
Director, University of California  
Agricultural Issues Center;  
Frank H. Buck Jr., Professor  
Department of Agricultural and  
Resource Economics  
University of California, Davis

with

**GEORGE GOLDMAN**  
Economist  
Department of Agricultural and  
Resource Economics  
University of California, Berkeley

**Summary Cards**

OCTOBER 2000

**CALIFORNIA** agriculture is large, diverse, complex and dynamic. **The Measure of California Agriculture, 2000**, published by the University of California Agricultural Issues Center, documents the industry and its relationships to the rest of the economy by providing statistical details and an overview of unifying forces and trends. The summary cards in this folder contain information from that 120-page publication. These key facts are listed in bullet form under four sections:

- **Land and People**
- **Productive Inputs**
- **Demand and Supply**
- **Broad Economic Impacts**

Consider the following:

- California agriculture generated about \$24.8 billion in cash receipts in 1999. Farmers in the state have gradually increased their share of United States farm cash receipts from 9.5% in 1960 to 13.1% in 1999.
- California has been the nation's top agricultural state in cash receipts every year since 1948.
- Through multiplier effects based on 1998 data:
  1. Farmers generate about \$59 billion in personal income for Californians, or 6.6% of the state's total annual personal income.
  2. Agriculture supports 1.1 million jobs in California, accounting for about 7.4% of all employment.

# The Measure of California Agriculture, 2000

## PRODUCTIVE INPUTS

- By weight, agriculture accounts for about one-third of all pesticides sold in California. Total pounds of agricultural pesticides used have expanded gradually, but weight does not reflect toxicity of the pesticides.
- On average, agriculture accounts for about 43% of the total annual ground and surface water use in California. Environmental uses account for 46% and urban areas use 11%.
- Surface supplies provide 70% of the water for agriculture and urban consumption in a normal year. The remainder comes from groundwater.
- The number of University of California Agricultural Experiment Station scientists decreased from 490 to 393 between 1990 and 1998, but the funding per scientist increased from \$349,000 to \$435,000.
- The share of California farms with computer access increased from 51% to 61% between 1997 and 1999, while those with internet access increased from 23% to 46% and those using computers for their business increased from 30% to 40%.
- Average yield per acre increased significantly for California crops between 1976-78 and 1996-98. For example, strawberry yields grew by 41%, rice by 38%, processing tomatoes by 27% and cotton by 23%.
- Cash receipts (in constant dollars) per acre-foot of applied water increased by 35% between 1960 and 1995.
- California accounts for about 13% of national cash receipts from agriculture, but receives only about 3% of direct government payments to agriculture.

## DEMAND AND SUPPLY

- In 1998, Americans spent 11% of their disposable personal income on food, compared with 21% in 1952. We also ate more meals away from home.
- Between 1970 and 1997 the largest increases in United States per capita consumption were in fresh fruit and tree-nuts (24% or 58 lbs), and vegetables (24% or 81 lbs), both important categories for California.
- Dairy is the top agricultural commodity in California with \$4.1 billion in 1999 cash receipts and California is the nation's largest dairy producer with 18% of national production value.
- About half of the state's 1999 agricultural cash receipts were from fruits, tree-nuts, and vegetables.
- Farms in each of 11 California counties accounted for over \$1 billion in gross production value in 1999.
- In 1997-98, the 1,500 registered organic growers in California reported more than \$155 million in gross sales on about 68,000 acres. Their combined gross sales represented about six-tenths of 1% of the state's total agricultural sales.
- Between 16% and 19% of California's agricultural production is exported to international markets annually.
- In 1999, international exports were valued at about \$6.1 billion.

# The Measure of California Agriculture, 2000

## LAND AND PEOPLE

- More than one-quarter of California's landmass is used for agriculture—about 27.7 million acres, including 5 million acres of federal grazing land. About half of this total is pasture and range, another 39% is cropland, and the remainder is divided between woodland and other land.
- Roughly 1.5% of the state's total agricultural land (including a similar percentage of its cropland) was converted to urban uses between 1988 and 1998.
- About 97% of California's 74,000 farms are family or individually operated, with 76.6% organized legally as proprietorships, 14.6% as partnerships and 6.0% as family owned corporations.
- About 5,000 of the largest farms (those with over \$1 million in sales) account for 75% of all market value of agricultural products sold.
- About 62,000 farms (84% of the total) have annual market sales of less than \$250,000. Together, they account for less than 10% of the state's total sales.
- Roughly 20% of the state's farm operators are under 44 years old and another 20% are over 70.
- The number of female farm operators almost doubled between 1978 (7.6%) and 1997 (13.6%).
- California has a greater share of farm operators of Hispanic origin (6%) than the United States as a whole (1.4%). Similarly, those with Asian or Pacific Islander origins represent 4.5% of California farm operators and four-tenths of one percent for the United States.
- The hired farm labor workforce in California is almost entirely foreign-born (95%) and largely young (63% under 34 years old) and male (82%).
- Two-thirds of all hired farm workers were hired for less than 150 days in 1997.

## BROAD ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- California agriculture generated about \$24.8 billion in cash receipts in 1999. Farmers in the state have gradually increased their share of United States farm cash receipts from 9.5% in 1960 to 13.1% in 1999.
- California farm-related employment increased by 15% between 1977 and 1997, while aggregate state employment increased by 73%.
- Through multiplier effects based on 1998 data:
  1. Farmers generate about \$59 billion in personal income for Californians, or 6.6% of the state's total annual personal income.
  2. Agriculture supports 1.1 million jobs in California, accounting for about 7.4% of all employment.
  3. Fresh and processed fruits, tree-nuts and vegetables have the greatest impact of any commodity group, leading to \$30 billion in personal income and 567,000 jobs.
  4. Animal products account for \$11 billion in personal income and 214,000 jobs.
  5. Food and feed grains account for \$10 billion in personal income and 192,000 jobs.
  6. Agriculture is especially significant to the economy of California's Central Valley where it accounts for 21% of all income and 25% of all employment.

To order a hard copy edition of

## The Measure of California Agriculture, 2000

or Summary Card sets, contact:

Agricultural Issues Center  
University of California  
One Shields Avenue  
Davis, CA 95616-8514

Email: [agissues@ucdavis.edu](mailto:agissues@ucdavis.edu)  
Telephone: 530 752 2320  
Fax: 530 752 5451  
Web: <http://aic.ucdavis.edu>

The UC Agricultural Issues Center has posted the complete edition of **The Measure of California Agriculture, 2000**, and additional related material on its web site. Certain tables and graphics in the internet version will be updated as new data becomes available.



### Internet Release

<http://aic.ucdavis.edu/pubs/moca.html>

## To Order AIC Publications and Videos

- 1 Mail check (payable to UC Regents) to  
UC Agricultural Issues Center, One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616-8514
- 2 E-mail Visa/Mastercard information to [agissues@ucdavis.edu](mailto:agissues@ucdavis.edu)

Prices include postage and sales tax; orders are shipped immediately.

For a complete list of AIC books and videos go to: <http://aic.ucdavis.edu>

## Recent publications

No.	Title	Price
MOCA	Measure of California Agriculture, 2000	\$15.00
SUM	Measure of California Agriculture, 2000 - Summary Card set	1.00
CFCE	California Farmers and Conservation Easements: Motivations, Experiences, and Perceptions in Three Counties (2000)	10.00
SR	Agriculture in the Sacramento Region: Trends and Prospects (2000)	12.00
EPD	Exotic Pests & Diseases: Biology, Economics, Public Policy (1999)	20.00
EIW	Economic Impacts of Irrigation Water Cuts in the Sacramento Valley (1999)	12.00
FMD	Potential Impact of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in California (1999)	20.00
CFUP	California Farmland and Urban Pressures: Statewide and Regional Perspectives (1999)	20.00
OR-1	Statistical Review of California's Organic Agriculture, 1992-1995 (1998)	18.00
CF-1	California's Future: Maintaining Viable Agriculture at the Urban Edge (1997)	15.00
NF-1	Farmers and Neighbors: Land Use, Pesticides and Other Issues (1996)	13.00

