

SANTA CLARA COUNTY CROP REPORT



2016

Agricultural Commissioner's Office

sccagriculture.org

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Photo courtesy of Love's Tropicals

The County of Santa Clara Agricultural Commissioner's Office would like to acknowledge the growers of Santa Clara County for providing photographs or allowing our staff to photograph their facilities.



Karen Ross, Secretary

California Department of Food and Agriculture and
The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Santa Clara County

District 1 – Mike Wasserman

District 4 – Ken Yeager

District 2 – Cindy Chavez

District 5 – S. Joseph Simitian

District 3 – Dave Cortese

It is my pleasure to present the 2016 Santa Clara County Crop Report. The efforts of our agricultural industry are displayed as the acreage, yield and gross value of commodities produced in Santa Clara County. It is important to note that the values presented in this report are gross values and do not reflect net profits or losses to our agricultural producers.

The gross value of Santa Clara County's agricultural production for 2016 is \$310,132,000, an increase of 11% from the 2015 value of \$279,162,600.

The County's top three crops for over 10 years continue to be nursery crops (\$81,537,000), mushrooms (\$79,020,000) and bell peppers (\$19,822,000). In 2016, 21 different agricultural commodities grown in Santa Clara County exceeded \$1,000,000 in crop value.

Both nursery crops and mushrooms increased in value in 2016, each rising 8.1% because of improving economy, availability of water and improved efficiency in growing practices.

The 2016 cherry crop experienced the fourth year of a very poor crop. Lack of chill hours and late rain reduced the crop to one of its lowest levels recorded. Of the over 1,000 acres of mature cherry trees, only 321 were reported to be harvested with a 0.4 ton per acre yield for a total value of \$437,000.

This year's Crop Report highlights the livestock industry. Cattle ranching has a rich history in Santa Clara County and continues to play an important role in the region. We have included information that touches on the history and eco-benefits of livestock production as well as some interesting facts that you may not be aware of.

I would like to express my gratitude for the continuing cooperation of all individuals, growers, and agencies who contribute the information necessary to prepare this report. I wish to thank my staff and, in particular, acknowledge the efforts of Agricultural Biologists Lori Oleson and Jennifer Pate, who made the publication of this report possible.

Sincerely,



Joseph C. Deviney
Agricultural Commissioner

Million Dollar Crops By Commodity



2016	
Agricultural Products	Value
1. Nursery Crops	\$81,537,000
2. Mushrooms	\$79,020,000
3. Peppers, Bell	\$19,822,000
4. Spinach	\$16,617,000
5. Tomatoes, Fresh	\$15,493,000
6. Lettuce, All	\$14,731,000
7. Peppers, Wax & Chili	\$10,569,000
8. Corn	\$8,996,000
9. Wine Grapes, All	\$7,649,000
10. Chinese Vegetables	\$6,610,000
11. Garlic	\$6,505,000
12. Beans	\$6,025,000
13. Celery	\$5,159,000
14. Salad Greens	\$4,183,000
15. Steers & Heifers	\$3,561,000
16. Range	\$3,437,000
17. Broccoli	\$2,405,000
18. Tomatoes, Processing	\$2,077,000
19. Cabbage	\$1,947,000
20. Cut Flowers	\$1,755,000
21. Hay, Grain	\$1,116,000
All Other Crops	\$10,918,000
2016 Total Gross	\$310,132,000



2015

Agricultural Products	Value
1. Nursery Crops	\$65,974,000
2. Mushrooms	\$64,533,000
3. Peppers, Bell	\$19,247,000
4. Spinach	\$14,088,000
5. Salad Greens	\$11,880,000
6. Tomatoes, Fresh	\$10,148,000
7. Lettuce, All	\$10,116,000
8. Peppers, Wax & Chili	\$8,779,000
9. Corn	\$8,383,000
10. Cabbage	\$8,104,000
11. Chinese Vegetables	\$6,981,000
12. Garlic	\$6,125,000
13. Wine Grapes, All	\$5,509,000
14. Steers & Heifers	\$5,208,000
15. Beans, All	\$4,033,000
16. Tomatoes, Processing	\$3,980,000
17. Range	\$3,424,000
18. Pumpkins	\$2,181,000
19. Cut Flowers	\$1,661,000
20. Cherry	\$1,599,000
21. Celery	\$1,488,000
22. Hay, Grain	\$1,114,000
23. Strawberry	\$1,024,000
All Other Crops	\$13,583,600
2015 Total Gross	\$279,162,600

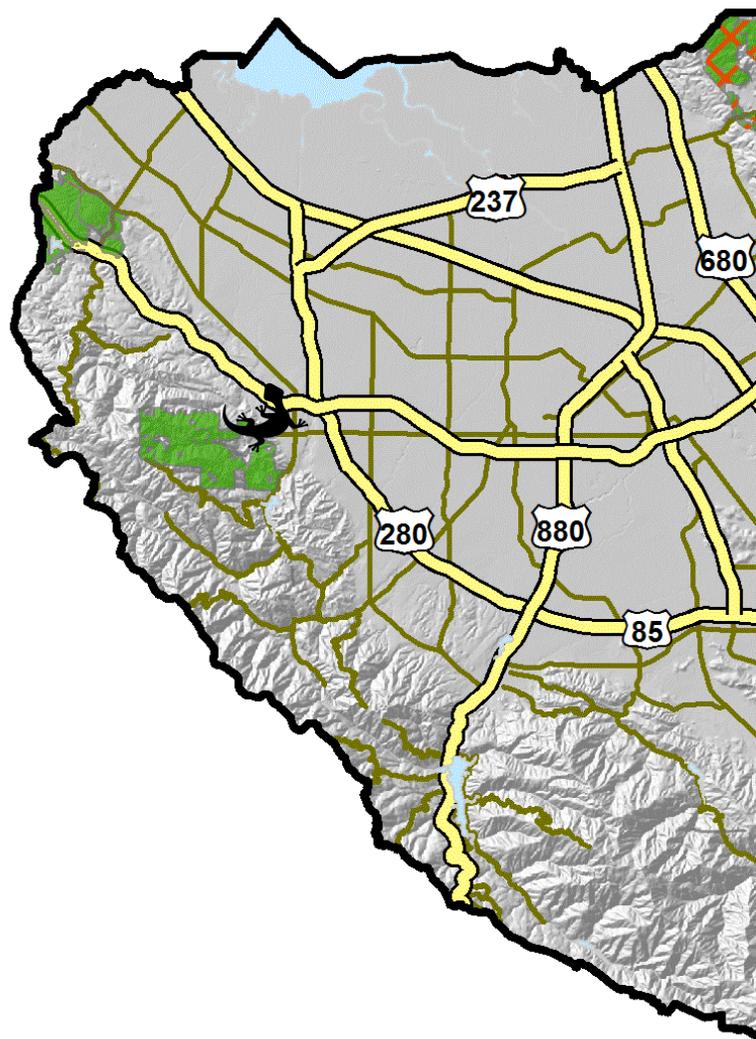
Vegetable Crops



ITEM	YEAR	HARVESTED ACREAGE	TONS PER ACRE	PRODUCTION TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Beans	2016	1,123	5.0	5,615.0	TON	\$1,073	\$6,025,000
	2015	715	4.2	3,003.0	TON	\$1,343	\$4,033,000
Broccoli	2016	412	6.9	2,842.8	TON	\$846	\$2,405,000
	2015	143	4.2	600.6	TON	\$826	\$496,000
Cabbage	2016	132	11.4	1,504.8	TON	\$1,294	\$1,947,000
	2015	661	21.7	14,343.7	TON	\$565	\$8,104,000
Celery	2016	393	29.9	11,750.7	TON	\$439	\$5,159,000
	2015	157	15.9	2,496.3	TON	\$596	\$1,488,000
Chinese Vegetables	2016	551	21.5	11,846.5	TON	\$558	\$6,610,000
	2015	503	20.5	10,311.5	TON	\$677	\$6,981,000
Corn	2016	1,627	9.5	15,456.5	TON	\$582	\$8,996,000
	2015	1,534	8.9	13,652.6	TON	\$614	\$8,383,000
Garlic	2016	828	4.0	3,312.0	TON	\$1,964	\$6,505,000
	2015	653	6.7	4,375.1	TON	\$1,400	\$6,125,000
Salad Greens *	2016	1,133	4.0	4,532.0	TON	\$923	\$4,183,000
	2015	1,099	9.2	10,110.8	TON	\$1,175	\$11,880,000
Lettuce (Romaine, Leaf, Head)	2016	2,703	10.9	29,462.7	TON	\$500	\$14,731,000
	2015	1,433	19.5	27,943.5	TON	\$362	\$10,116,000
Mushrooms	2016	143	128.3	18,346.9	TON	\$4,307	\$79,020,000
	2015	147	127.1	18,683.7	TON	\$3,454	\$64,533,000
Onions, Dry	2016	42	4.4	184.8	TON	\$750	\$139,000
	2015	19	10.7	203.3	TON	\$778	\$158,000
Peppers (Bell)	2016	1,484	29.1	43,184.4	TON	\$459	\$19,822,000
	2015	1,438	31.2	44,865.6	TON	\$429	\$19,247,000
Peppers (Wax & Chili)	2016	667	28.5	19,009.5	TON	\$556	\$10,569,000
	2015	566	27.6	15,621.6	TON	\$562	\$8,779,000
Pumpkins	2016	----	----	----	TON	----	----
	2015	224	26.1	5,846.4	TON	\$373	\$2,181,000
Spinach	2016	1,642	7.9	12,971.8	TON	\$1,281	\$16,617,000
	2015	1,452	10.3	14,955.6	TON	\$942	\$14,088,000
Squash	2016	128	12.9	1,651.2	TON	\$591	\$976,000
	2015	120	8.2	984.0	TON	\$735	\$723,000
Tomatoes (Fresh)	2016	879	27.2	23,908.8	TON	\$648	\$15,493,000
	2015	1,086	14.6	15,855.6	TON	\$640	\$10,148,000
Tomatoes (Processed)	2016	480	56.2	26,976.0	TON	\$77	\$2,077,000
	2015	795	61.8	49,131.0	TON	\$81	\$3,980,000
Miscellaneous **	2016	826	----	----	----	----	\$5,074,000
	2015	741	----	----	----	----	\$6,802,000
TOTAL	2016	15,193					\$206,348,000
	2015	13,486					\$188,245,000

* Arugula, Endive, Frisee, Mizuna, Mustard, Radicchio, Spring Mix, Swiss Chard

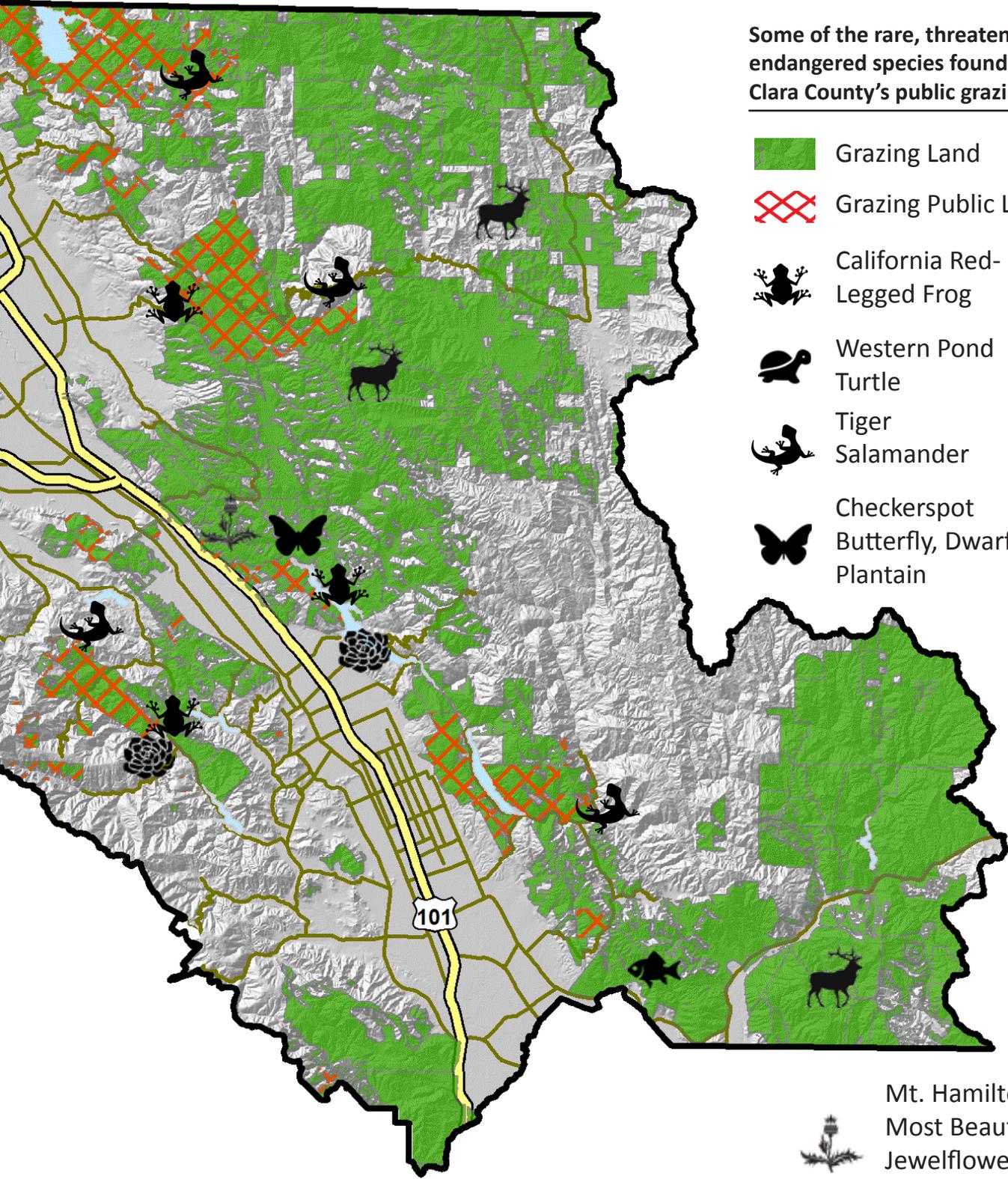
** Artichokes, Cauliflower, Cucumber, Herbs, Parsley, Shallots, etc.



Interesting Santa Clara County Ranching Facts

- Early Santa Clara County ranchers Joseph Grant, Thomas Snell, and the Coe Brothers names are still associated with county places or landmarks.
- Over 25 different public agencies use livestock grazing to manage open space lands in the San Francisco Bay Area including Santa Clara County Parks, Santa Clara Valley Water District, San Francisco Water Department, and the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority with lands in Santa Clara County.
- Based on the assessor's report in 1896 there were 25,097 head of cattle in the county, whereas today we have just over 5,000 head.
- Around 10 to 15 acres of rangeland in Santa Clara County are required to support one cow year round. On some less productive rangeland sites it may take as much as 40 acres to support a cow year round.
- Calves born in Santa Clara County are normally sold before full maturity, and leave the state to be finished for market.

Some of the rare, threatened and endangered species found in Santa Clara County's public grazing lands.



-  Grazing Land
-  Grazing Public Land
-  California Red-Legged Frog
-  Western Pond Turtle
-  Tiger Salamander
-  Checkerspot Butterfly, Dwarf Plantain

-  Mt. Hamilton Thistle, Most Beautiful Jewelflower, & Lessingia
-  Steelhead Trout
-  Tule Elk
-  Dudleya

Santa Clara County's most prevalent land use largely goes unnoticed by the public. Beef cattle graze over 236,700 acres of public and private rangeland in the county. Grazing lands shelter 27 rare, threatened and endangered species. Learn more about how managed grazing can benefit rare species on page 10.



The Ecological Benefits of Managed Grazing

“In addition to contributing to beef production, cattle grazing in Santa Clara County is now recognized by resource management professionals as essential to conserving open space and maintaining habitat for many native plants and animals. At the landscape level, ranching maintains extensive open spaces that support species-rich wildlife communities.”

— Sheila Barry, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for University of California Cooperative Extension, Santa Clara County



By Sheila Barry, Livestock and Natural Resources Advisor for University of California Cooperative Extension, Santa Clara County

Grazing, A Bounty Of Benefits

There are over 20,000 acres of grazed public land in Santa Clara County. It provides scenic landscape, opportunities for outdoor recreation, and also supports the area’s most prevalent land use -- cattle ranching. To ensure a healthy environment in the future, cattle ranchers make decisions based on land use objectives and the compatibility with nature conservation.

Managed cattle grazing and other good range management practices can add greatly to the health and vitality of this important native landscape. In addition to contributing to beef production, cattle grazing in Santa Clara County is now recognized by resource management professionals as essential to conserving open space and maintaining habitat for many native plants and animals.

At first glance rangeland seems simply to be waves of grass

dotted by wildflowers, however, modern ranchers manage rangeland as a complex system. They take into consideration the establishment and spread of invasive plants. With the arrival of the Spanish missionaries, California’s grasslands were permanently changed and dominated by non-native annual plants. The invasive plants cause increased fire hazards and a lack of biological diversity in both plant, insect and animal wildlife.

The buildup of dying and dead non-native grass creates a unique problem -- a thick layer of thatch. In a normal rainfall year, many of the state’s annual grasslands, especially the non-native grasses, produce huge amounts of dead and dying plants each year – more than two tons of grass per acre. Livestock grazing, primarily by cattle, has become an essential tool to manage thatch build up. A cow eats nearly its weight in vegetation each month, almost five tons of forage (vegetation) per year. Grazing minimizes fine fire fuels vegetation, reducing fire fuel and the risk of catastrophic



- *Increased diversity of plant and animal species.*
- *Control of invasive plant species, such as yellow starthistle.*
- *Habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species.*
 - *Reducing wildfire threat from rangeland fires.*
 - *Offering visually attractive vistas.*
 - *Preserving open space in a rapidly growing state.*
 - *Providing food for consumers.*
 - *Offering recreational opportunities, such as hiking and wildlife viewing.*
 - *Preventing fragmentation of habitat from housing and commercial development and maintaining connected wildlife corridors.*

wildfire.

Cattle grazing and ranch management promotes biological diversity. Unless vegetation is reduced via fire, grazing and/or mowing, the thatch from invasive plants also leads to declines in wildlife habitation, pollination, and plant diversity.

Grazing controls non-native vegetation, reducing competition for native endangered and threatened wildflower plants. Santa Cruz tar plant, Contra Costa goldfields, and Sonoma spineflower require grazing to maintain viable populations in the rare serpentine soil found in Santa Clara County's pastureland. Serpentine is a waxy green and black rock that is low in certain nutrients. Santa Clara County is home to these specialized plants that have adapted to serpentine soils. The plants, in turn, support some unique species of insects and animals. Managed grazing in these rocky serpentine areas promotes the rare wildflower growth in areas where other methods of assisting their survival are impractical.

There are 27 threatened and endangered species found on grazed lands in the County. The Bay checkerspot butterfly and California tiger salamander benefit from cattle grazing grass and keeping grasses short. In addition, ranchers develop and maintain hundreds of livestock ponds in the County that provide habitat for the California tiger salamander, California red-legged frog and Western pond turtle. Keeping these working landscapes viable on both private and public rangelands has been recognized as the most effective strategy to sustain biological conservation efforts.

The UC Cooperative Extension Bay Area Livestock and Natural Resources group conducts applied research and outreach to provide information on keeping rangelands viable in spite of urban encroachment. Best management practices have been identified that reduce the risks of catastrophic wildfires, promote habitats for native plants and animals, protect water quality and maintain open space. Learn more about working rangelands online at: ucanr.edu/bayarearangeland

Nursery Crops: Indoor & Outdoor Grown

CROP	YEAR	HOUSE (SQ. FT.)	FIELD ACRES	SOLD BY PRODUCERS	UNIT	VALUE PER ACRE	TOTAL
Bedding Plants	2016	1,915,800	36	1,463,900	Flats	Various	\$16,212,000
	2015	1,823,667	32	1,447,306	Flats	Various	\$16,511,000
Christmas Trees	2016	-----	168	5,786	Tree	\$56	\$322,000
	2015	-----	166	7,901	Tree	\$51	\$403,000
Ornamental, Trees	2016	147,900	205	1,138,057	Plants	Various	\$28,659,000
Roses & Shrubs	2015	85,000	204	1,151,305	Plants	Various	\$17,484,000
Miscellaneous*	2016	2,125,603	184	----	----	----	\$36,344,000
	2015	2,103,542	174	----	----	----	\$31,576,000
TOTAL	2016						\$81,537,000
	2015						\$65,974,000

*Includes herbaceous perennials, orchids, indoor decorative, propagative materials, succulents, turf, vegetables, etc.

Floral Crops: Cut Flowers

CROP	YEAR	HOUSE (SQ. FT.)	TOTAL
Chrysanthemums	2016	393,350	\$549,000
	2015	602,460	\$623,000
Miscellaneous*	2016	----	\$1,206,000
	2015	----	\$1,038,000
TOTAL	2016		\$1,755,000
	2015		\$1,661,000

*Includes Asters, Carnations, Eucalyptus, Gardenias, Lisianthus, Roses, Snapdragons, Stephanotis, Sunflowers, etc.

Seed Crops

CROP	YEAR	HARVEST ACREAGE	TOTAL
Vegetable and Flower	2016	503	\$2,221,000
	2015	407	\$823,000

Forest Products

ITEM	YEAR	PRODUCTION TOTAL	UNIT	TOTAL
Timber	2016	6	MBF	\$42,000
	2015	38	MBF	\$50,000

Fruits & Nuts

ITEM	YEAR	HARVESTED ACREAGE	TONS PER ACRE	PRODUCTION TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Apricots	2016	177	2.0	354.0	TON	\$800	\$283,000
	2015	203	1.9	385.7	TON	\$870	\$336,000
Cherries	2016	321	0.4	128.4	TON	\$3,406	\$437,000
	2015	502	0.8	401.6	TON	\$3,981	\$1,599,000
Grapes, Wine: White	2016	464	3.2	1,484.8	TON	\$1,241	\$1,843,000
	2015	420	2.6	1,092.0	TON	\$1,357	\$1,482,000
Grapes, Wine: Red	2016	1,113	2.7	3,005.1	TON	\$1,932	\$5,806,000
	2015	1,118	1.9	2,124.2	TON	\$1,896	\$4,027,000
Total Red & White	2016	1,577					\$7,649,000
	2015	1,538					\$5,509,000
Walnuts	2016	221	1.2	265.2	TON	\$3,009	\$798,000
	2015	217	1.0	217.0	TON	\$4,356	\$945,000
Miscellaneous *	2016	264	----	----	----	----	\$1,948,000
	2015	257	----	----	----	----	\$1,435,000
TOTAL	2016	2,560					\$11,115,000
	2015	2,717					\$9,824,000

*Includes Apples, Asian Pears, Bushberries, Kiwis, Nectarines, Olives, Peaches, Persimmons, Plums, Prunes, Strawberries, etc.



Bushberries & Strawberries

ITEM	YEAR	HARVESTED ACREAGE	TONS PER ACRE	PRODUCTION TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Bushberries	2016	----	----	----	TON	----	----
	2015	10	1.4	14.0	TON	\$5,900	\$82,600
Strawberries	2016	----	----	----	TON	----	----
	2015	35	12.7	445.0	TON	\$2,302	\$1,024,000
TOTAL	2016	----					----
	2015	45					\$1,106,600

14 *2016 Bushberries and Strawberries are included in Fruits and Nuts Miscellaneous because there are fewer than three growers.

Field Crops

ITEM	YEAR	HARVESTED ACREAGE	TONS PER ACRE	PRODUCTION TOTAL	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Hay (Grain)	2016	3,863	2.7	10,430	TON	\$107	\$1,116,000
	2015	4,044	1.9	7,684	TON	\$145	\$1,114,000
Pasture, Irrigated	2016	342	----	----	ACRE	\$220	\$75,000
	2015	349	----	----	ACRE	\$220	\$73,000
Range	2016	264,387	----	----	ACRE	\$13	\$3,437,000
	2015	263,375	----	----	ACRE	\$13	\$3,424,000
Miscellaneous *	2016	254	----	----	----	----	\$445,000
	2015	495	----	----	----	----	\$631,000
TOTAL	2016	268,846					\$5,073,000
	2015	268,263					\$5,242,000

*Includes Alfalfa, Triticale etc.



Historical Comparison of Acreage

	1956	1976	1996	2016
Field Crops*	22,640	231,345	232,030	268,846
Floral Crops - Cut Flowers	313	792	533	52
Fruit & Nut Crops	75,984	15,922	5,580	2,560
Nursery Crops	not available	440	908	689
Seed Crops	595	960	500	503
Vegetable Crops**	25,746	15,250	10,338	15,193
Total Acres	125,261	278,423	252,820	287,843
* 1956 Field Crops does not include Range or Pasture				
** includes multiple crops at same site				

Livestock & Poultry

ITEM	YEAR	NUMBER OF HEAD	PRODUCTION TOTAL (LIVE WEIGHT)	UNIT	VALUE PER UNIT	TOTAL
Steers & Heifers	2016	3,941	26,187	CWT	\$136.0	\$3,561,000
	2015	3,787	24,145	CWT	\$216.0	\$5,208,000
Cows & Bulls	2016	380	4,907	CWT	\$79.0	\$388,000
	2015	462	5,508	CWT	\$117.0	\$644,000
Miscellaneous *	2016	----	----	----	----	\$313,000
	2015	----	----	----	----	\$385,000
Total	2016	----	----	----	----	\$4,262,000
	2015					\$6,237,000

* Includes Chickens Eggs, Goats, Llamas, Pigs, Sheep, etc.



RANCHING IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

While ranchers who manage the beef cattle might access rangeland in a pickup truck or on a four-wheeler, most still monitor and work cattle from horseback like the generations before them.

Cattle grazing has been part of the landscape of Santa Clara County since the 1780's when cattle and horses were first introduced to the area by Spanish explorers. Many ranchers in Santa Clara County represent fourth or fifth generations, stewarding the land and their livestock.

THE CATTLE KING OF CALIFORNIA, HENRY MILLER



In the mid-1800s several large cattle ranches were established in Santa Clara County, including the Bloomfield Ranch in the area of the present day City of Gilroy. This ranch served as a headquarters for the Miller and Lux cattle empire, providing easy access for cattle driven from Central Valley ranches over Pacheco Pass to markets in San Francisco. Although the extent of his land holdings were said to be exaggerated, Miller gradually purchased much of the southern portions of the Santa Clara Valley around Gilroy, claiming to own 192 square miles. By the end of the 1800s, Henry Miller known as the “Cattle King of California”, was the largest landowner in the United States, owning millions of acres between Mexico and Oregon. It has been said that Henry Miller liked to brag that he could travel from Oregon to the Mexican border sleeping on his own land every night. In 1875, he also acquired a summer retreat which was about 13,000 acres, part of which is now Mount Madonna County Park, which became a favorite family retreat.

THE TULE ELK STORY

Tule elk are found only in California and once ranged from the foot of the Tehachapi Mountains in the south to Shasta County in the north and from the Sierra foothills to the Pacific Ocean. At their peak population, there may have been 500,000 elk in the state. Elk numbers began to decline with the introduction of nonnative grasses to their habitat in the late 1700s and early 1800s. This was followed by commercial hunting that, by 1845, was exporting approximately 3,000 elk and deer hides a year from the state. But it was the discovery of gold that created an extinction crisis. The demand for meat skyrocketed and by 1850 all the tule elk in the Sacramento Valley were gone. A careful count of surviving elk in 1895 revealed that after 22 years of protection, just 28 animals were left.

At this point Henry Miller of the Miller and Lux ranching empire stepped in and began actively protecting elk on his land. The animals protected by Miller formed the core of the species' recovery. There are now approximately 3,800 elk in the state. In 1978 California Fish & Game introduced 32 animals to the Mt. Hamilton foothills. Santa Clara County now has its own population of tule elk that range freely in the eastern foothills.



A close-up photograph of a hand in a blue sleeve reaching into a basket filled with yellow tulips. The tulips are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is dark, making the yellow flowers stand out.

Certified Farmers Markets

There were 40 Farmers' Markets registered in Santa Clara County last year. For a list of times and locations, please visit our website at sccagriculture.org

A Certified Farmers' Market is an approved site where farmers may sell produce directly to consumers. These markets and the participating growers are approved by the agricultural commissioner's office. Growers can only sell what they themselves have produced and are prohibited from buying and re-selling produce at Certified Farmers' Markets.

Organic Agriculture

In 2016 Santa Clara County had 39 registered organic farms operating on 68 growing locations totaling 1,885 acres.

REGISTRANT TYPE	REGISTRANT NUMBER
Producers-primary county	33
Handlers	8
Processors	1

I'M IN WHAT?

Surprising things that have cow by-products, and other fun facts

Did you know that there are hundreds of uses for cattle by-products? Do you own a car, take a bus or ride a bike? If so, you're utilizing cattle by-products in the tires on your vehicle and the asphalt on the road.

Even items that may seem trivial, such as dyes, inks, adhesives and plastics are derived from cattle by-products. Look to see how many of these cattle by-products you use nearly every day!



Anti-aging cream	Adhesives	Fabric softener
Medicines	Candies	Deodorant
Refined sugar	Imitation eggs	Shaving cream
Charcoal	Dyes and inks	Perfume
Fertilizer	Adhesives	Cosmetics
Glass	Plastics	Crayons
Airfilters	Shampoos	Cement
Brushes	Conditioners	Ceramics
Felt	Leather	Fireworks
Insulation	Tennis strings	Antifreeze
Plaster	Baseball gloves	Linoleum
Textiles	Shoes	Oils & lubricants
Gelatin	Jackets	Matches
Emery boards	Gum	Rubber
Sheetrock	Candles	Car Tires
Wallpaper	Detergents	Asphalt

- An average cow has more than 40,000 jaw movements in a day.
- Cows actually do not bite grass; instead they curl their tongue around it.
- Cows have almost total 360-degree panoramic vision.
- Cows have a single stomach, but four different digestive compartments.
- Cows are pregnant for 9 months, just like people.
- The average cow produces 70 lbs. of milk, that equals 8 gallons per day!
- Cows are social animals and they naturally form large herds. Like people, they will make friends and bond to some herd members while avoiding others.
- The first cows in the Americas arrived with Christopher Columbus on his second voyage.

County of Santa Clara
Consumer & Environmental Protection Agency
OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

**AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/
SEALER OF WEIGHTS & MEASURES**
Joseph C. Deviney

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