

Calaveras County 2016 Crop Report



Presented by Calaveras County Department of Agriculture

Board of Supervisors

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Cover photo: Pete Padelford, Tree Mortality and Fuel Reduction Coordinator at Blue Lake Springs, looks over a few of the 11,000 pine trees that were killed by bark beetles. The blue stain caused by the fungus carried by the bark beetle is readily seen here on the base of these salvaged logs. Trees near power lines were cut by PG & E; however, homeowners had to cut and remove most of the trees on private property. Pete helped obtain a grant to help with a percentage of the cost of removal. The majority of the timber can only be chipped for fuel for cogeneration plants but some, like these, may be taken to a lumber mill and used for paneling. Beetles and dry conditions have combined to kill pine trees throughout the higher elevations in the county. Removal of dead trees is ongoing.



Calaveras County

Department of Agriculture

Kevin Wright ♦ Agricultural Commissioner / Director of Weights and Measures

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
and
The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Calaveras

It is my privilege to present the 2016 Calaveras County Crop report as prepared pursuant to Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code.

Cattle and calves, the bedrock of Calaveras Agriculture, were once again the leading commodity despite a precipitous 35 percent fall in cattle prices. Rangeland forage recovered from the Butte fire with the easing of the drought in the fall of 2016.

Wine Grape yields were up 17 percent from last year and demand for Calaveras wines remained firm. Weather at harvest was favorable and, thankfully, there was no smoke or fires to contend with.

Poultry prices eased as the avian flu epidemic in the mid west no longer affected supply.

New walnut orchards, and the counties first commercial almond orchard on the west side of the county continued to flourish, but have yet to reach maturity. Walnuts growers continued to contend with the lower prices that hit the export market the previous year and yields remained steady.

Olive production fell with poor yields and lack of interest in harvesting olives from older orchards, although a few small olive operations with a retail outlet flourished.

Harvesting of salvage timber from the Butte fire and bark beetle infestations drove a 500% increase in volume of timber from the depressed levels of 2014 and 2015. Despite the low value of the salvage logs, total value of timber production increased 180 percent.

Overall, the agricultural production value of the county remained steady at about 25,000,000 dollars, with timber activity from burn and beetle logs offsetting a downturn in cattle prices.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the producers who provide data to help us compile a meaningful report. Numbers do not adequately represent the effort that it takes to grow and market an agricultural commodity in Calaveras County. Finally, I would like to thank the staff at the Department of Agriculture for their help in compiling this report and who do the wide variety of tasks necessary to fulfill our mandates, serve the county's varied agricultural interests, and represent the Commissioner's office in a thoughtful and professional manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Wright
Agricultural Commissioner

Calaveras County Statistics

Total Land Area	662,791 Acres
Rangeland	198,000 Acres
Government Land	105,311 Acres
Water	16,300 Acres
Farms in County	663
All Farm Land	212,140 Acres
Irrigated Pasture	2,000 Acres
Land in Agricultural Preserves	143,000 Acres
Land in Timber Preserves	77,500 Acres



Cows grazing in the upper elevations of Calaveras County provide the added benefit of reducing the fuel load and maintaining open space to reduce fire hazard.

Leading Farm Commodities

Cattle and Calves	\$5,556,000	Apiary	\$235,000
Timber	\$4,802,011	Sheep and Lambs	\$192,000
Poultry	\$4,085,210	Vegetable crops	\$165,000
Wine Grapes	\$2,765,016	Nursery Products	\$160,000
Walnuts	\$1,980,232	Misc. livestock	\$140,000

Cattle and calves remain the leading agricultural commodity in Calaveras County. In 2016 the price of cattle fell in California, as production from ranches in the midwest returned to normal following the end of the drought there.



Small scale farmers in Calaveras County like Alison Charter-Smith, raise vegetables, livestock and poultry products for farmers markets in the Bay area to receive top dollar for their labor.

Livestock and Poultry

Item	Year	Number of Head	Live Weight	per CWT	Gross Value
Cattle &	2016	8,200	46,300	120	\$5,556,000
Calves	2015	8,400	50,400	185	\$9,324,000
Poultry*	2016				\$4,085,210
	2015				\$5,250,000
Sheep &	2016	1200	1200	160	\$192,000
Lambs	2015	1200	1200	155	\$186,000
Misc**	2016				\$140,000
	2015				\$120,000
Totals	2016				\$10,465,210
	2015				\$14,880,000

*includes chickens, turkeys, game birds, etc.

**includes goats, llamas, emus, etc.

Livestock and Poultry Products

Item	Year	Total
Livestock & Poultry Products	2016	\$38,000
	2015	\$33,000

* includes wool, mohair, eggs etc.

Field Crops

Item	Year	Acres	Yield	total amt	value/unit	total value
Grain Hay	2016	200	2T	400	150	\$60,000
	2015	200	2T	400	170	\$68,000
Pasture	2016	2,000		acre	150	\$300,000
	2015	2,000			130	\$260,000
Rangeland	2016	197,805		acre	20	\$3,956,100
	2015	197,805			17	\$3,362,000
Misc	2016					\$50,000
	2015					\$50,000
Total	2016					\$4,366,100
	2015					\$3,740,000



Although Calaveras County does not produce large amounts of hay, there are lands in the county where farmers are able to bale hay and cut grass for cattle.

Vegetable Crops

CROP	YEAR	TOTAL
VEGETABLE CROPS	2016	\$165,000
	2015	\$215,000



Eric and Christine Taylor, pioneers of the Farm to Fork Movement in Calaveras County, market their beautiful heirloom tomatoes and other vegetables through Community Supported Agriculture sales and a catering business at Outer Aisle in Murphys, Ca.

Organic

NUMBER OF FARMS	ACRES
6	100

Fruit and Nut Crops

CROP	YEAR	ACRES	TONS/ACRE	TOTAL TON	PRICE/TON	TOTAL
WINE GRAPES*	2016	696	2.82	2008	1377	\$2,765,016
	2015	900	1.90	1710	1300	\$2,223,000
WALNUTS	2016	794	1.17	932	2124	\$1,980,232
Walnuts non bearing****	2016	65	0	0	0	\$ 0
Walnuts	2015	790	1.20	948	2104	\$1,994,592
Almonds non bearing****	2016	180	0	0	0	\$ 0
OLIVES**	2016	65	1.0	65	632	\$ 41,080
	2015	138	1	138	755	\$ 104,190
MISC***	2016					\$ 120,000
	2015					\$ 250,000
Total	2016					\$4,906,328
Total	2015					\$4,571,782

*includes 502 acres of red and 194 acres white wines adjusted from 2015 to exclude non producing and non commercial vineyards.

**includes fresh and oil, adjusted acreage to exclude non producing and non commercial orchards

***includes apples, berries, cherries, peaches, pears, pistachios, various nuts, etc.

****new plantings of almonds and walnuts 2015-16



Jose Aguilar, manager of Six Mile Land Company Vineyard, checks his grapes after veraison to see if they have completed ripening in Vallecito, Ca. Calaveras County has a thriving tourist industry, largely due to the local wineries that produce a variety of wines and hold special events and concerts. 2016 saw a rebound in yield for grapes and healthy demand for Calaveras wines.

Apiary Products

ITEM	YEAR	TOTAL
APIARY	2016	\$235,000
	2015	\$210,000

Over 20,000 beehives from Montana, Minnesota and the Dakotas over winter in Calaveras County before getting put to work pollinating almonds in the Central Valley. Local beekeepers are also taking advantage of the growing demand for bees and honey.

Nursery Crops

Christmas Trees	2016	\$20,000
	2015	\$25,000
Nursery Products	2016	\$165,000
	2015	\$165,000



Jane Childress, owner of Wild Geese Garden Herbs, propagates and grow herbs, garden vegetable seedlings, native plants and more for other nurseries and gardeners in Calaveras, Tuolumne and Amador County.

Timber

	Year	mbf	value
Timber	2016	57,873	\$4,802,011
Production	2015	9,717	\$1,719,073



Salvage operations for Butte fire and bark beetle timber were ramped up in 2016. Shipments of logs for export, cogeneration chips and ground cover material were prepared from a staging facility in Wallace, Ca. The increase in timber production can be attributed to the harvesting of burn and beetle logs in 2016.

Comparative Production Values

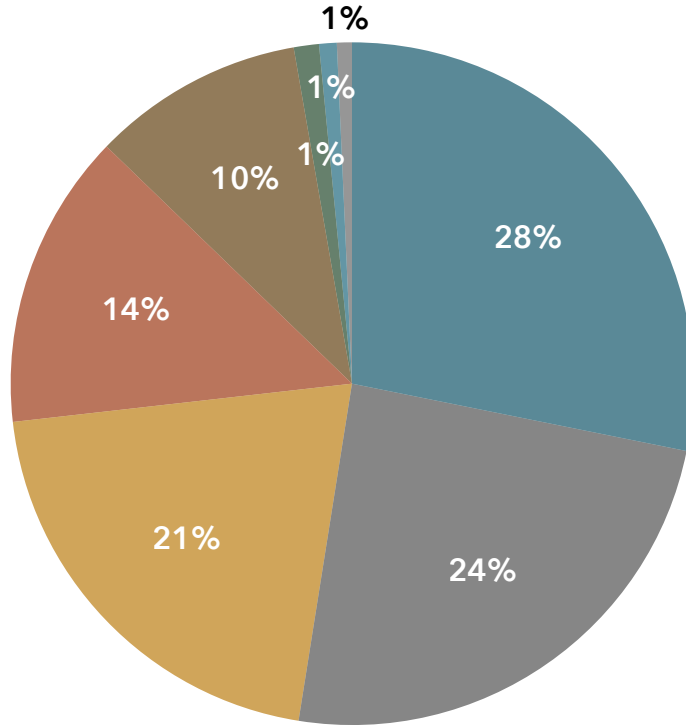
ITEM	2014	2015	2016
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	\$16,091,400	\$14,880,000	\$10,465,210
LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY PRODUCTS	\$30,000	\$33,000	\$38,000
FIELD CROPS/RENT	\$4,366,000	\$3,740,000	\$4,366,100
VEGETABLE CROPS	\$210,000	\$215,000	\$165,000
FRUIT AND NUT CROPS	\$5,384,600	\$4,572,000	\$4,906,328
APIARY PRODUCTS	\$220,000	\$210,000	\$235,000
NURSERY PRODUCTS	\$160,000	\$165,000	\$162,000
TIMBER	\$340,000	\$1,719,100	\$4,802,011
TOTAL	\$26,807,000	\$25,534,100	\$25,139,649



Value of our agricultural commodities cannot be measured by gross production value alone, as our vineyards, wineries, forests and rangeland invite visitors from around the state to enjoy the fruits of Calaveras County.

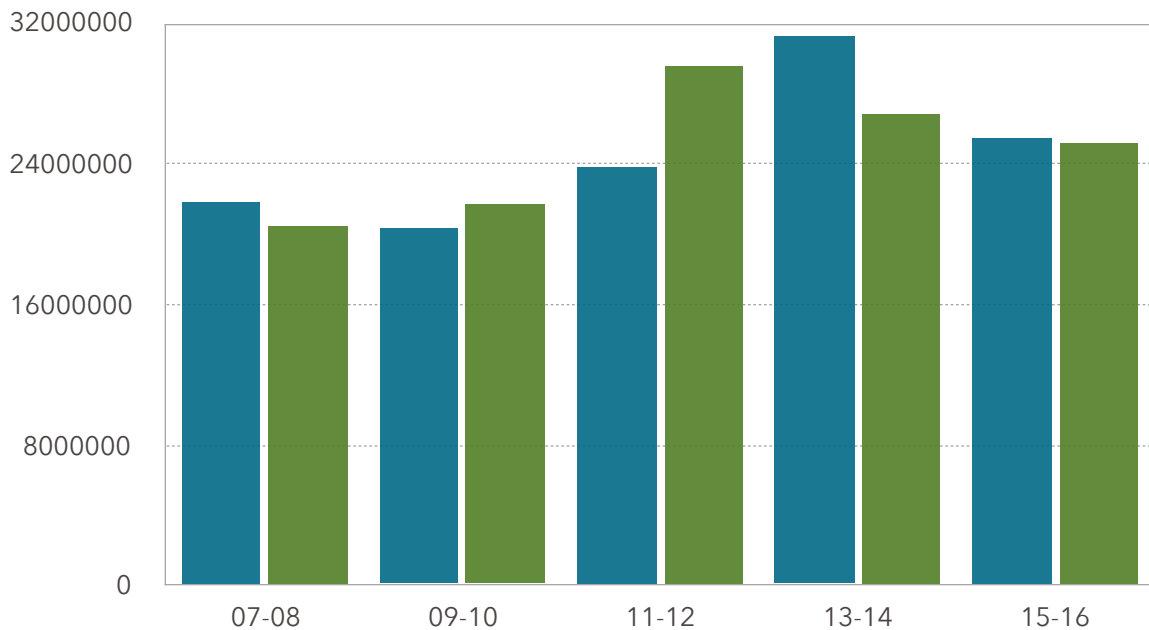
2016 Agricultural Production Summary

- Cattle and calves
- Timber
- Poultry
- Wine Grapes
- Walnuts
- Apiary
- Nursery Proucts
- misc. livestock



Cattle and timber provide for over half of all agricultural production in Calaveras County. In 2016, an increase in timber activity from the harvest of burn and beetle logs offset a downturn in cattle prices. Overall, agricultural production held at over 25,000,000 dollars.

Ten Year Agricultural Production History



Acknowledgements and Credits

photo credits

Beetle logs at Blue Lake Springs, cover photo, Kevin Wright

Cows in snow, Page 4, Mindy Rasmussen

Alison chickens, page 5, Kevin Wright

Haying, page 7, Amelia Tower

Taylor Vegetables, page 8, Kevin Wright

Aguilar grapes, page 10, Kevin Wright

Wild Geese Nursery, page 11, Kevin Wright

Shredder, page 12, Nick Baptista, ValleySprings News

Wine tasting, page 13, Calaveras Winegrape Alliance

Morning Roundup, back cover, Rebecca Fischer

layout, design and narration

Kevin Wright

agricultural production data

thanks to the many people who submitted their production reports to the Department of Agriculture and who took the time to talk with the Commissioner and staff.

final word

This years crop report is dedicated to Michael Kriletich

