

Antelope Valley Economic RoundTable Report: AGRICULTURE



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The Valley's first agricultural boom occurred during the 1880s and early 1890s, when heavy rainfall attracted homesteaders who successfully cultivated alfalfa, barley, wheat, and a variety of fruits and nuts. However, a serious drought between 1894 and 1904 – the worst in Southern California's recorded history-devastated farms, forcing many settlers to abandon their land in the valley. With the drought's end came an agricultural resurgence after 1905 in the form of irrigation, thanks to pumps powered first by gasoline and later by electricity, which proved more reliable than the former reliance on artesian wells. Irrigation, besides allowing for the replanting of the crops that previously thrived, also allowed the large-scale cultivation of alfalfa, which by 1920 was the Antelope Valley's major crop.

www.colapublib.org/history/antelopevalley/faq.html#q10

"From 2003 through 2013 California farmers invested almost \$3 billion upgrading irrigation systems to drip and micro-sprinklers on nearly 2.4 million acres to help keep our economy and fresh food flowing."

SPOTLIGHT ON TEHACHAPI AGRIBUSINESS, A GROWING LEGACY

Greater Tehachapi is abundant with thriving agribusiness. Today, large-scale, organic farming enterprises and family-owned, local ventures share the landscape. The region yields impressive wines, quality grass-fed beef and farm-fresh produce. Tehachapi's four seasons provides a unique growing climate including warm summer days, precious spring rains, and occasional winter snowfall. Mix in the afternoon breeze, and you have a natural formula for success.

Currently, the region boasts a combination of planted fields and greenhouses – totaling several thousand acres in production. With apples, tomatoes, onions, bell peppers, carrots and grapes as a part of the area's offerings, all operations are mindful of natural resources and employ sustainable farming practices.

The continued economic growth of the region, netting millions of dollars annually, is proof positive that Tehachapi's agribusinesses share an unconditional commitment to quality, strong fiscal stewardship and evident responsiveness to consumer demand.

(Source: Mary Beth Garrison)

Los Angeles County Crop Report	Kern County Crop Report
Value of agricultural production: \$189,883,000	Value of agricultural commodities: \$6,769,855,590
State ranking: 33	
Top five crops, by value: Woody Ornamentials \$43,184,000 Vegetables \$40,506,000 Bedding Plants \$25,352,000 Fruits & Nuts \$18,480,000 Alfalfa Hay \$16,904,000	Top five commodities for 2013: Grapes Almonds Milk Citrus Cattle & Calves Which make up more than \$4.6 Billion (68%) of the Total Value

STATISTICS: 2012 ACWM.CO.LA.CA.US

STATISTICS: 2013 KERNAG.COM

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