

HISTORY OF MARIN COUNTY DAIRY INDUSTRY

Historically, agriculture was the fundamental lifeblood of the local population. Marin's native people, the Coast Miwoks, lived contentedly off the land, hunting, fishing and gathering their food. Today's ranchers supply quality milk products into local, state, national and international markets.

Marin's sunny, moderate climate, much like the Mediterranean, were prized by the early European settlers. The Spanish missionaries (Mission San Raphael, 1817-1834) brought in steers from the Texas region of Mexico. These steers roamed semi-wild, wandering as far east as the Central Valley. The steers were agile in steep terrain, aggressive against predators, not easily fattened, and poor milkers. Although they were not good beef cattle, their hide and tallow, used for candles, supplied a steady demand back East.

Tallow for candles gave way to a large demand for butter, cheese and meat created by the exploding population of nearby San Francisco in response to the 1849 Gold Rush. This created a boom for good milk cows which commanded a price of \$300 to \$500 a head. Herds were gathered along the Missouri River and brought in mass overland.

Marin's pasture was known throughout the cattle industry as the country's finest. Cows grazed in fog and rainfall fed pastures nearly year round. Dairy herds were small, approximately 15-20, and all milking was done by hand. In 1867, Marin's dairy ranchers produced 1 ½ million pounds of butter or about one quarter of the state's butter supply.

Today, dairying in Marin is far from the "boom" days of the 1850's and 1860's. Marin ranchers face new challenges. Current milk and herd quality standards are extremely rigorous. Dairies require a working knowledge of genetics, nutrition, animal medicine, computer technology, farm equipment, policy analysis, finance, marketing, and human resource management. The dairy industry continues to develop herd profiles, records standards, Performance Economics and Electronic Milk Metering to help monitor and forecast milk production.

Through scientific advancement and technologies, the supplies of milk and milk byproducts is overtaking the demand, thereby reducing the price of milk, but not its production costs. With ranchers already working 12 to 14 hour days, seven days a week, the family dairy business becomes less attractive than other careers options. However, Marin dairy families strongly identify with the land and their community. Many of whom are only three or four generations removed from the early settlers. Their family history and way of life are not easily abandoned.

In recent times Marin dairies have endured pressures peculiar to living life next door to a major metropolis. They are excellent stewards of the land and make a major contribution to our local economy, producing greater than \$30 million in dairy products.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

April 1, 1996

STACY K. CARLSEN
COMMISSIONER/DIRECTOR

ANDREA DEGRASSI
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER/DIRECTOR

Ann M. Veneman, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
and

Marin County Board of Supervisors:

Harold C. Brown, Jr., Chairman, District 2

John Kress, District 1

Gary Giacomini, District 4

Annette Rose, District 3

Harry Moore, District 5

In accordance with the provisions of Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code, I am pleased to submit the Annual Crop Report for 1995. This report is a summary of counts, acreage, yields, and gross value of agricultural production in Marin County. The report represents gross returns to the producer and does not indicate actual net profit.

The total agricultural production in 1995 was \$50,727,222. This is a 3.3% decrease from the 1994 value. The decrease is largely attributed to excessive rain and moisture which impacted livestock, field and orchard production activities.

As usual, milk was Marin's number one product, although market milk value fell due to temporary production and quality problems caused by the severe storms in January and March. Fruit and vegetable production suffered a substantial decrease due to flooding and a decreased growing season. Livestock value was down by \$2.7 million due largely to lower market prices for cattle sold. Nursery products dropped 45% in value because of cut backs in production. High production costs, availability of a reliable water supply and market prices have made business difficult for some larger nursery producers. A large value gain was recorded from silage production due to a three fold increase in crop acreage.

Aquaculture values nearly doubled to over \$4 million with the addition of the category of Herring and Trout to the aquaculture commodities. Oyster values increased despite continued problems with oyster juvenile seed mortality and harvest closures of Tomales Bay during the heavy storms. Lamb values increased with higher lamb production and market prices.

I wish to thank all of the individuals and organizations for their cooperation in providing the information required for this report. I wish to especially thank Andrea deGrassi, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, Anita Sauber, Agricultural/Weights and Measures Inspector II, and Jan Warren, Senior Secretary for compiling and producing the document.

Respectfully submitted,

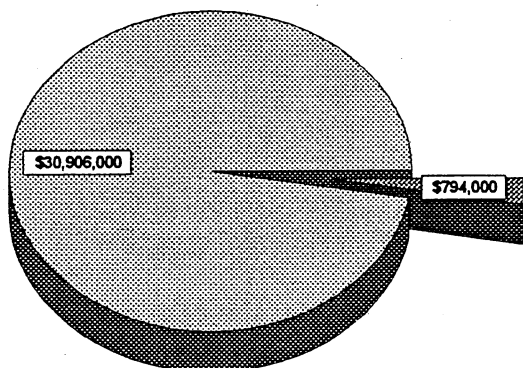
Stacy K. Carlsen
Agricultural Commissioner

FIELD, FRUIT, NUT & VEGETABLE CROPS

	YEAR	HARVESTED ACREAGE	TOTAL UNITS	DOLLAR VALUE	
				PER UNIT	TOTAL
Hay	1994	2,785	6,141	73.54	\$451,615.00
	1995	3,396	7,187	57.71	\$414,811.00
Silage	1994	905	9,920	22.84	\$226,593.00
	1995	3,067	32,820	15.16	\$497,787.00
Pasture, Irrigated	1994	820		110.0	\$90,200.00
	1995	820		110.0	\$90,200.00
Pasture, Other	1994	154,000		29.00	\$4,466,000.00
	1995	154,000		29.00	\$4,466,000.00
Fruits, Nuts & Vegetables	1994	142			\$1,691,366.00
	1995	199			\$1,090,080.00
TOTAL	1994	158,652			\$6,925,774.00
	1995	161,482			\$6,558,878.00

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS				
			DOLLAR VALUE	
ITEM	YEAR	PROD. UNIT	PER UNIT	TOTAL
Milk: Market	1994	2,619,401 Cwt	12.08	\$31,635,000.00
	1995	2,503,612 Cwt	12.34	\$30,906,000.00
Milk:Manufact.	1994	29,902 Cwt	10.12	\$303,000.00
	1995	72,171 Cwt	11.01	\$794,000.00
Wool	1994	66,394 Lbs	.51	\$34,115.00
	1995	55,124 Lbs	.68	\$38,537.00
Mohair	1994	N/A	N/A	N/A
	1995	1,144 Lbs	2.88	\$3,299.00
TOTAL	1994			\$31,972,115.00
	1995			\$31,741,836.00

MILK PRODUCTION VALUES



■ MILK: MARKET

■ MILK:MANUFACTURING

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY			
ITEM	YEAR	NO. OF HEAD	DOLLAR VALUE TOTAL
Cattle	1994	20,528	\$7,070,616.00
	1995	16,452	\$4,567,637.00
Lambs	1994	8,069	\$554,521.00
	1995	9,963	\$741,777.00
Poultry and Eggs: Hatching	1994		\$2,783,708.00
	1995		\$2,425,856.00
TOTAL	1994		\$10,408,845.00
	1995		\$7,735,270.00

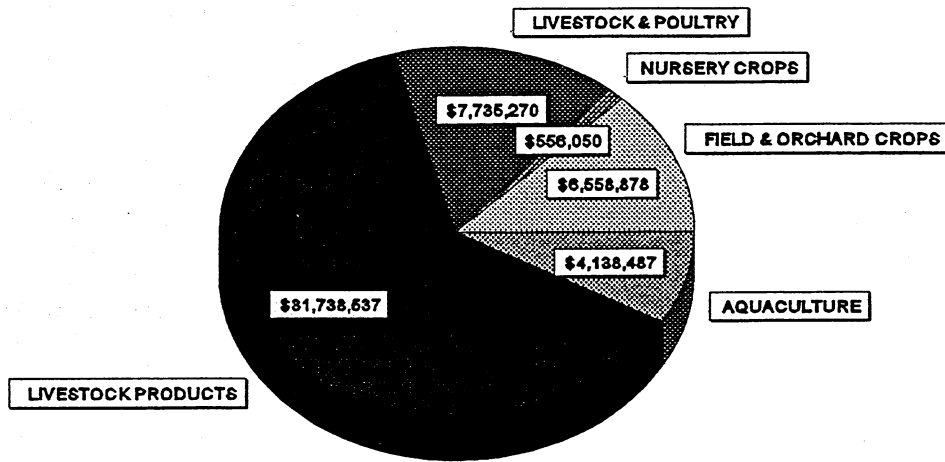
INVENTORIES OF LIVESTOCK & POULTRY		
ITEM	January 1, 1995	January 1, 1996
All Cattle	44,000	44,000
Dairy Cows	13,500	13,500
Beef Cows	10,000	10,000
Stock Sheep	11,400	11,400
Poultry	407,843	431,782

NURSERY PRODUCTS				
		PRODUCTION AREA		TOTAL
		HOUSE SQUARE FT	FIELD AREAS	
ITEM	YEAR			
NURSERY	1994	235,000	54.75	\$1,000,317
	1995	224,000	50.50	\$556,050

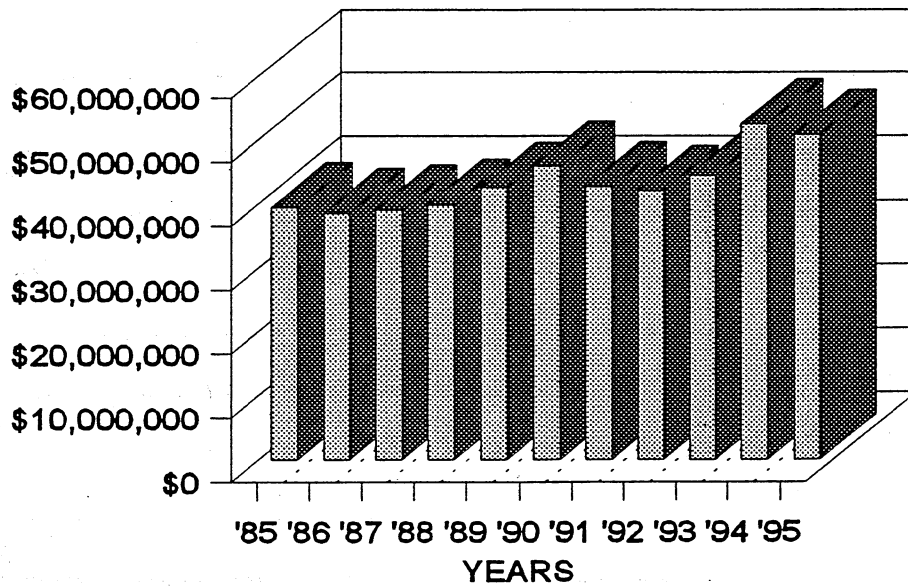
AQUACULTURE PRODUCTS			
	YEAR	PRODUCTION ACREAGE	DOLLAR VALUE
Oysters, Clams, Mussels, Abalone	1994	1,295	\$2,139,980.00
	1995	1,295	\$2,733,487.00
Herring, Trout	1994	N/A	N/A
	1995	N/A	\$1,405,000.00
TOTAL	1994		\$2,139,980.00
	1995		\$4,138,487.00

COMPILATION		
	1994	1995
Field & Orchard Crops	\$6,925,774.00	\$6,558,878.00
Nursery Crops	\$1,000,317.00	\$556,050.00
Livestock & Poultry	\$10,408,845.00	\$7,735,270.00
Livestock Products	\$31,972,115.00	\$31,738,537.00
Aquaculture Products	\$2,139,980.00	\$4,138,487.00
TOTAL	\$52,447,031.00	\$50,727,222.00

1995 COMPILATION



AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION GROSS VALUE TEN YEAR SUMMARY



SUMMARY OF THE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL

Biological pest control is the use of natural enemies to help suppress pest populations to acceptable levels. Once the agent becomes established, control is self-perpetuating, potentially reducing the need to use pesticides.

PEST

Gorse
Bull Thistle
Yellow Star Thistle
Scotch Broom
Ash White Fly
Italian Thistle
Puncture Vine
Kalamath Weed
Canada Thistle
Plumeless Thistle

BIOLOGICAL AGENT/MECHANISM

Gorse Mite, Seed Weevil
Bull Thistle Gall Fly
Seed Head Weevil, Gall Fly, Hairy Weevil
Seed Weevil, Stem Boring Moth
Parasitic Wasp
Seed Weevil
Seed Weevil
Beetle
Mechanical removal
Mechanical removal

PEST PREVENTION

Pest prevention is the systematic search for injurious pests before they have become established to help prevent costly and environmentally disruptive eradication programs.

Exclusion

5,427 shipments of incoming plant material inspected at UPS, Federal Express, Postal and delivery trucks.
62 shipments placed under quarantine for violation of plant quarantine laws.

Detection

726 exotic pest traps are placed in Marin County as front line to detect pests such as Medfly, Japanese Beetle, and Gypsy Moth.

ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION

Organic farming emphasizes a greater cooperation with nature without reliance on synthetic chemical inputs. All organic producers register in their principal county of operation.

Organic commodities produced in Marin County included: Beans, berries, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, chard, cucumbers, garlic, herbs, leaf lettuce, mixed salad greens, onions, parsley, potatoes, spinach, squash, tomatoes, turnips, and watercress. Organic dairy products included: Milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, and whipping cream.

There are 24 registered organic producers in Marin County farming 124 acres, producing a total gross value of 2.4 million dollars.

1995

**ANNUAL CROP REPORT
COUNTY OF MARIN**

*Agricultural Commissioner
Director of Weights and Measures*

STACY K. CARLSEN

*Deputy Agricultural Commissioner
Deputy Director of Weights and Measures*

ANDREA DE GRASSI

Agricultural/Weights and Measures Inspectors

ALBERT POWELL

LOU SIAN

ANITA SAUBER

CHARLES HSU

Senior Secretary

JAN WARREN

Departmental Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve the public's interest by insuring equity in the market place, promoting and protecting agriculture, protecting environmental quality and health and welfare of Marin County's citizens.

This document is available in alternative format upon request.