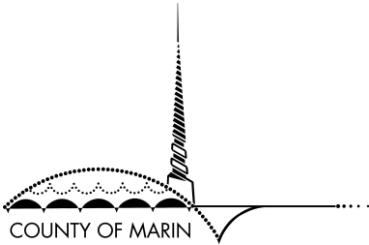


Marin County

Livestock & Agricultural
Crop Report 2011



MARIN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE • WEIGHTS AND MEASURES



STACY K. CARLSEN
COMMISSIONER/DIRECTOR
STEFAN PARNAY
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER/DIRECTOR

May 2012

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
and
Marin County Board of Supervisors
Steve Kinsey, President, District 4

Susan L. Adams, District 1
Katie Rice, District 2

Kathrin Sears, District 3
Judy Arnold, District 5

In accordance with the provisions of Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code, I am pleased to submit the Annual Livestock and Agricultural Crop Report for 2011. This report is a summary of counts, acreage, yields, and gross value of agricultural production in Marin County. The 2011 gross value of all production was \$70,076,404, which is the highest value ever recorded. This represents an increase of \$13,895,066, 24.7 percent from the 2010 total agricultural production value. The report represents gross returns to the producer and does not indicate actual net profit.

Milk is the long standing, premier commodity for Marin, and this year accounts for 44.7 percent of the crop report's total value. The average Market Milk Price for 2011 was higher than 2010, contributing to an 18 percent increase in the overall milk value of \$4,835,000. 2011 was the third year milk values were not at least 50 percent of Marin County's total agricultural production value; the only other years being 2009 and 2010.

Field Crop values for 2011 increased by \$4,082,157, representing a 74.1 percent increase when compared to 2010. This increase was a result of increased pasture values and greater survey participation. It is postulated that the 74.1 percent increase in value is a correction to 2010's 38.2 percent decrease, and pasture production value being realized by livestock producers as purchased livestock feed costs increase.

The value of aquaculture increased 9.3 percent or \$398,566, as production in the industry as a whole expanded following a ten year trend. Wine grape value decreased 16.7 percent compared to 2010. Participation in the annual Livestock & Crop Report is voluntary for agricultural producers.

My appreciation goes to the many growers, producers, individuals and organizations for their cooperation in providing the information necessary for this report. I would like to extend special thanks to members of my staff.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy K. Carlsen
Agricultural Commissioner/Director of Weights and Measures

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Cover photo:

Oysters of Marin, By: William Quirt Courtesy: UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

This crop report is available on our web site:
<http://www.marincounty.org/depts/AG/Main/cropreports.cfm>

Marin County Aquaculture

The Marin aquaculture industry is an interesting example of people fostering a natural system for agricultural production. For over one hundred years, aquaculture operations have relied on Marin's bays for protection from the Pacific Ocean's overwhelming force and eroding effects, while still maintaining access to the cold, clean, nutrient rich salt water. Oysters are the major aquaculture commodity being produced in Marin's coast; though operations in Tomales Bay also produce mussels and clams commercially.

Tomales Bay is a 15 mile-long, mile-wide drowned rift valley on the San Andreas Fault, a trough between the Point Reyes Peninsula and the undulating hills that are mostly used for grazing cattle to the east. Another major growing location is in Drakes Estero located on the west side of Point Reyes Peninsula. This area is used for cattle grazing and is part of the National Seashore Park system.

Oysters were first planted in Tomales Bay in 1875; the year the Northwestern Pacific Railroad was linked with Sausalito which provided a good ferry service to San Francisco. Daily communication was maintained between Tomales Bay and San Francisco from 1875 to 1930, the period during which the railroad operated. Road development and advancement of the trucking industry have made San Francisco one of the biggest seafood markets, due to its close proximity to Marin. Restaurants' preference for fresh local food has created a strong, sustained demand for Marin's oysters.

Marin is California's second-largest shellfish producer and growers are gearing up to expand production of oysters, clams, and mussels. While the oyster industry elsewhere in the nation and in the state is struggling, Tomales growers have managed to carve out a niche for themselves. Only because local residents have successfully worked to protect the bay's water and restore their watershed is the Tomales Bay shellfish industry alive and well today. The 223-square-mile watershed drains into one of the least despoiled major coastal bays in California. Today, two-thirds of the Tomales Bay watershed remains in agricultural use. There are more cattle residing in this region than people.

Tomales Bay and Drakes Estero oyster companies sell directly to the consumer and to various Bay Area wholesale seafood dealers. The fresh packed oysters are trucked to San Francisco by the producer and delivered to the wholesalers, who in turn distribute them to retailers and restaurants in the San Francisco Bay area. People from all parts of the Bay area drive many miles over a narrow winding road to buy oysters harvested directly from the beds. Weekend tourists and sportsmen are also customers. The strong consumer desire for fresh shellfish is the principal reason for the success of this marketing aquaculture market arrangement.



Oyster of Plenty

by

Jesse Harrington Au, 2012

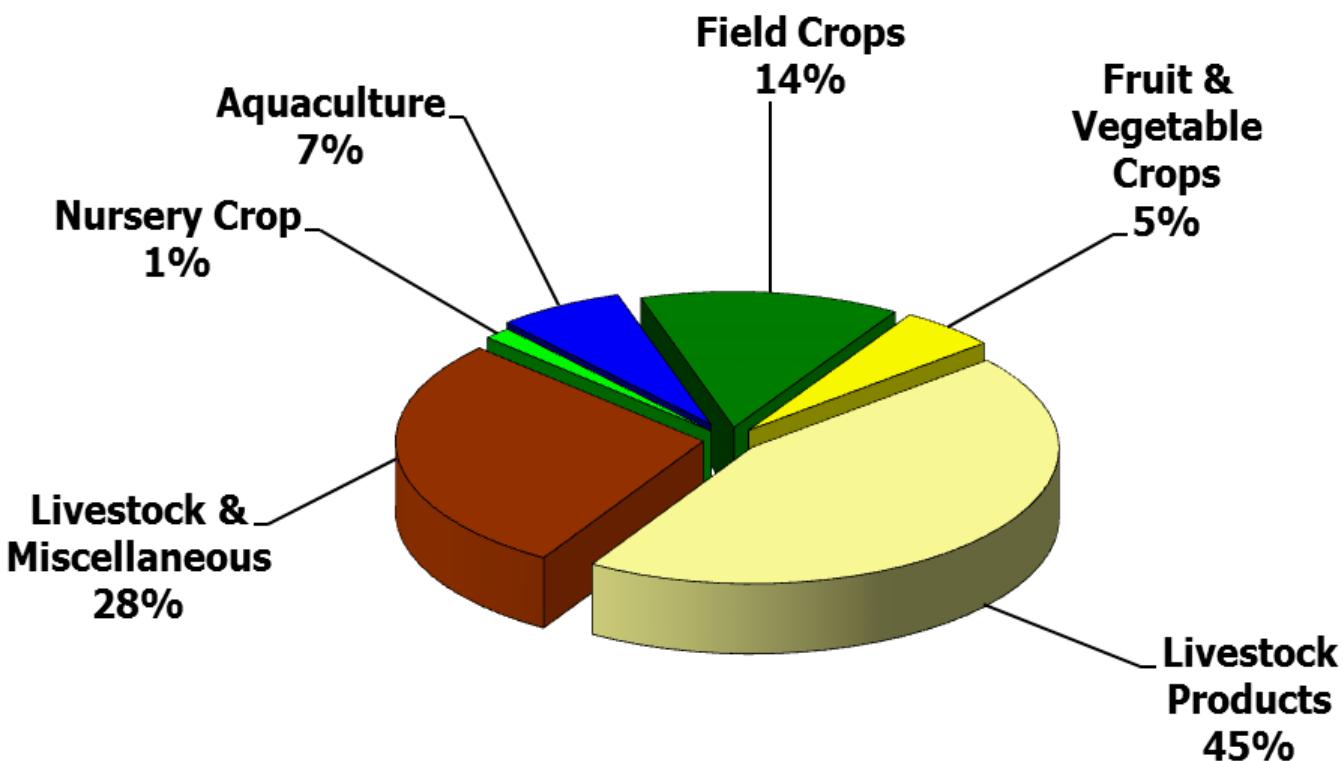
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Agricultural Production Summary

Type of Agricultural Production	2011	2010
Livestock Products	\$31,369,320	\$26,533,463
Livestock & Miscellaneous	\$19,883,814	\$15,339,407
Field Crops	\$9,589,461	\$5,507,574
Fruit, Grape, & Vegetable Crops	\$3,570,942	\$3,549,337
Aquaculture	\$4,658,103	\$4,259,537
Nursery Crops	\$1,004,764	\$991,983
AGRICULTURAL GROSS VALUE	\$70,076,404	\$56,181,301

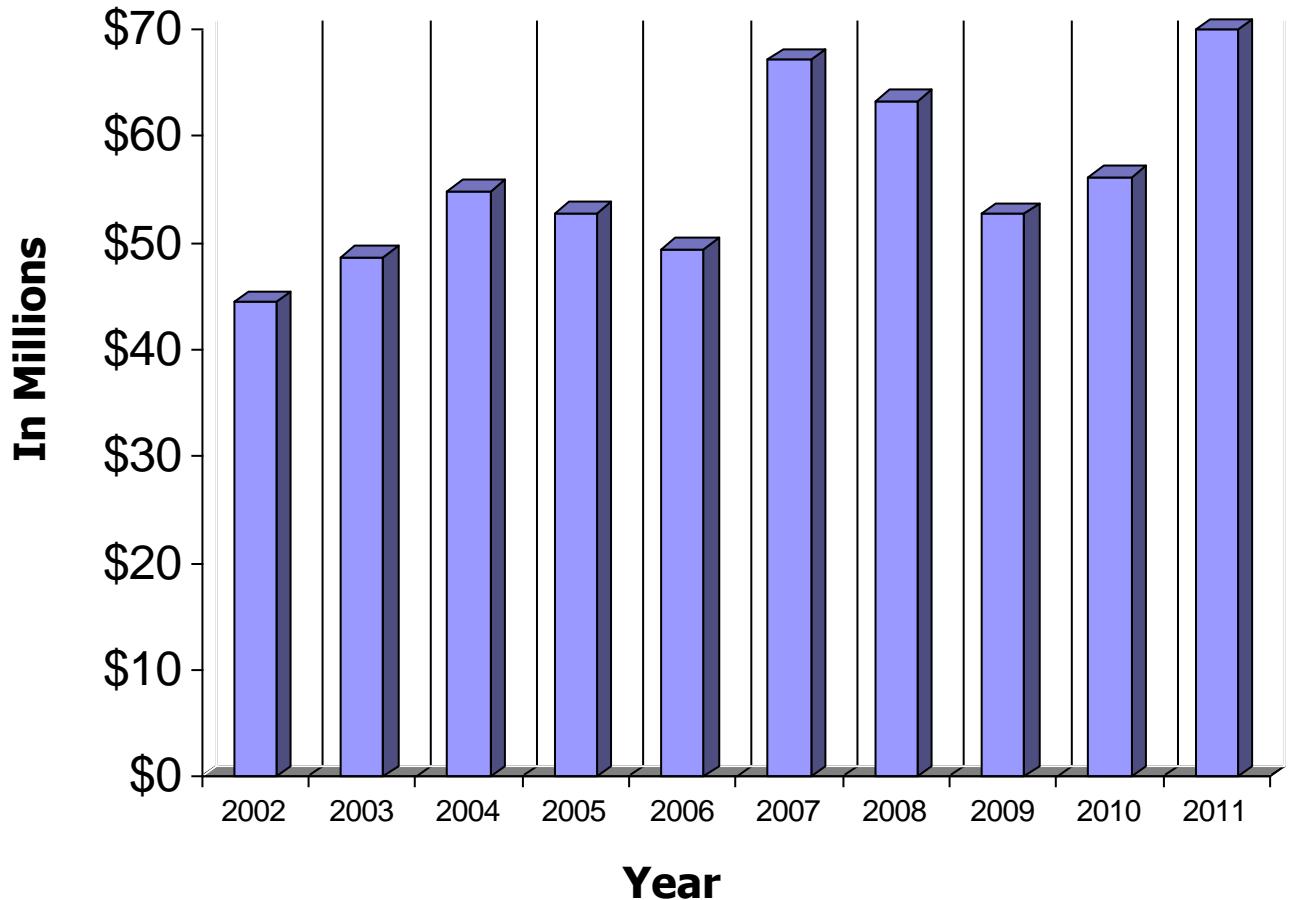
The 2011 gross value of all agricultural production was \$70,076,404. This represents an increase of approximately \$13,895,066 (24.7%) from the 2010 agricultural production gross value.

This graph illustrates how the 2011 agricultural gross value breaks down across the various types of agricultural production.



Agricultural Production Gross Value

Ten Year Summary



Comparison of 2010 Agricultural Production Values for Select North Coast Counties

	Marin	Napa	Sonoma*	Solano
Livestock, Livestock Products, & Misc	\$41,872,907	\$3,832,782	\$155,939,700	\$46,011,100
Field Crops	\$5,507,574	\$145,529	\$9,054,700	\$57,071,600
Fruit, Grape, and Vegetable Crops	\$3,549,337	\$455,034,896	\$404,522,100	\$132,963,500
Aquaculture	\$4,259,537	\$0	\$1,605,343	\$0
Nursery Crops	\$991,983	\$2,466,899	\$18,501,600	\$23,352,000

* Aquaculture figure is based on 2009 data.

Livestock and Aquaculture

Item	Year	Number of head	Live Weight	Unit	\$/Unit	Dollar Value Total
Cattle & Calves~	2011	12,861	-	Head	\$984.89	\$12,666,703
	2010	14,563	-	Head	\$515.67	\$7,509,702
Sheep & Lambs~	2011	10,912	11,785	cwt	\$92.02	\$1,084,479
	2010	15,326	16,552	cwt	\$92.02	\$1,523,155
Miscellaneous [†]	2011	6,604				\$207,640
	2010	6,604				\$412,250
Poultry*	2011	253,888				\$5,924,992
	2010	278,833				\$6,254,300
Aquaculture	2011	Oysters, Mussels, & Clams				\$4,658,103
	2010	Oysters, Mussels, & Clams				\$4,259,537
Total	2011					\$24,541,917
	2010					\$19,598,944

[†] Miscellaneous figures include goats, hogs, and rabbits.

* Poultry 2010 figures include poultry fryers and chicken eggs for consumption.

~ Values provided by USDA switched units of measure from CWT (hundredweight) to HEAD for 2011. 2010 values have been revised to match the change in units.



Tomales Bay Clams

By: William Quirt Courtesy: Marin County UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

Livestock Products

Item	Year	Production	Unit	\$ / Unit	Dollar Value Total
Milk~ (Market)	2011	1,622,137	cwt	\$19.31	\$31,325,000
	2010	1,701,328	cwt	\$15.57	\$26,492,000
Milk~ (Manufacturing)	2011	178	cwt	\$16.85	\$3,000
	2010	65	cwt	\$15.38	\$1,000
Wool~	2011	71,241		\$0.58	\$41,320
	2010	82,652	lbs	\$0.49	\$40,463
Total	2011				\$31,369,320
	2010				\$26,533,463

~ Due to unavoidable computational rounding, the Dollar Value Total value is overestimated by less than 0.01%.



Holsteins by Tomales Bay

By: William Quirt Courtesy: Marin County UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

Inventories of Livestock and Poultry

Commodity		Head	Number
Cattle [†]	Total Cattle*	27,506	-
	Milk cows & heifers (2 years and over)	9,766	-
	Beef cows & heifers (2 years and over)	6,128	-
Sheep and Lambs, all [†]		8,905	-
Poultry		-	253,888
Miscellaneous**		-	6,240

[†] Number of Head as of January 1, 2011.

* Includes cows, heifers, calves, and bulls.

** Miscellaneous 2011 figures include goats, hogs, and rabbits.



Marin County Free Range Chickens!

By: William Quirt Courtesy: Marin County UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

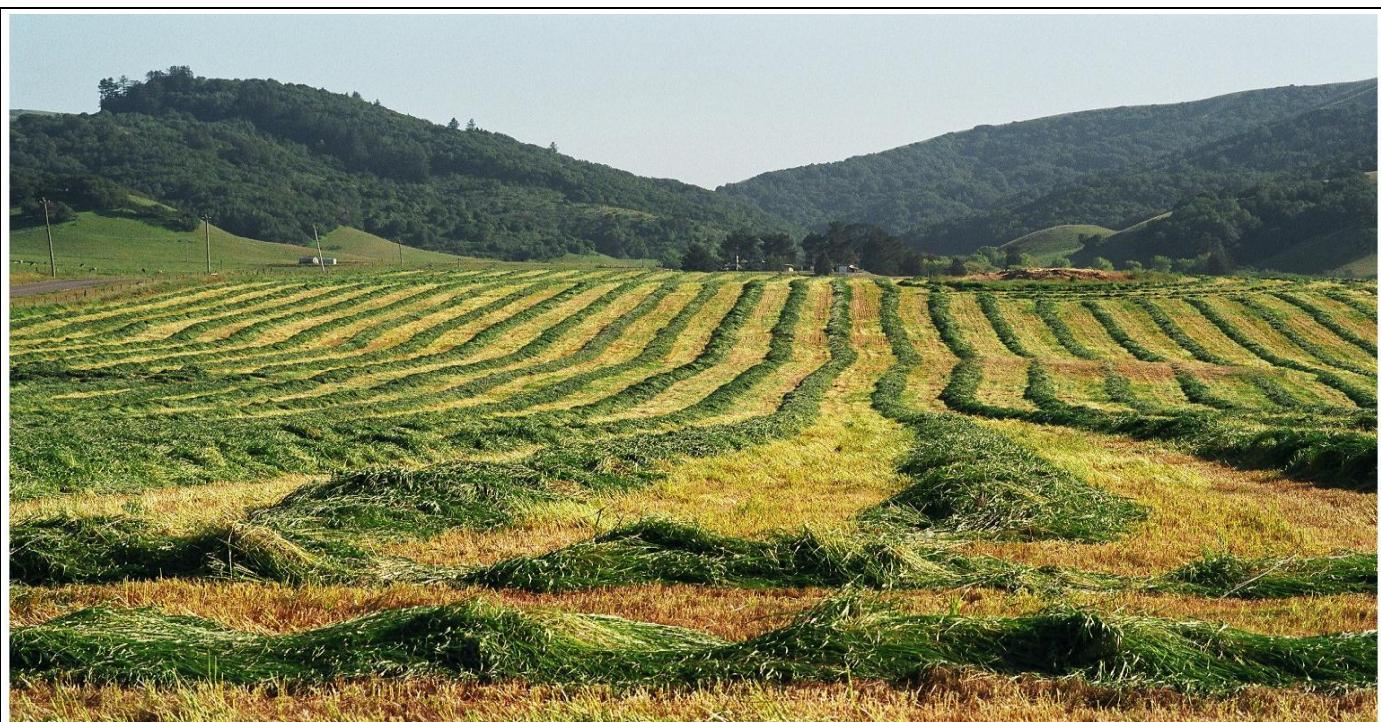
Field, Fruit and Vegetable Crops

Commodity	Year	Harvested Acreage	Ton / Acre	Total Tons	Unit	\$ / Unit	Dollar Value Total
Hay ^{†~}	2011	1,852	2.76	5,111	ton	\$90.21	\$461,063
	2010	2,215	2.27	5,024	ton	\$93.72	\$470,879
Silage [~]	2011	2,119	14.47	30,671	ton	\$51.22	\$1,570,968
	2010	2,123	13.40	28,448	ton	\$47.36	\$1,347,297
Pasture, Irrigated	2011	810				\$100.00	\$81,000
	2010	810				\$100.00	\$81,000
Pasture, Other [~]	2011	154,000				\$48.55	\$7,476,700
	2010	154,000				\$23.43	\$3,608,398
Fruits & Vegetables	2011	310					\$2,687,630
	2010	300					\$2,488,000
Grapes, Wine*	2011	186		191	ton		\$883,312
	2010	186		207.4	ton		\$1,061,337
Total	2011						\$13,160,403
	2010						\$9,056,911

[†] Values include Grass Hay, Oat Hay, Oat Seed, and Vetch Seed.

* Varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Shiraz, and Riesling. Acreage values include 16 acres of non-fruit bearing plantings.

[~] Due to unavoidable computational rounding, the Dollar Value Total is overestimated by less than 0.03%.



Silage Harvested Awaiting Collection

By: William Quirt Courtesy: Marin County UC Cooperative Extension, Farm Advisor

Nursery Products

Commodity	Year	Production Acreage	Dollar Value Total
Nursery Stock, All	2011	6.1	\$1,004,764
	2010	6.25	\$991,983
	2009	6.62	\$1,000,401

Phytosanitary Certificates were issued for Marin-grown nursery products shipped internationally to: Canada, Fiji, and Japan.



Exterior of the "Garden Beautiful Nursery" with a seated individual tending to a potted plant. The wall of San Quentin prison is visible in the background, circa 1919. Creator: Lothers & Young Studios, San Francisco. Anne T. Kent California Room Collection, Marin County Free Library.

Department of Agriculture Program Overview

Departmental Mission Statement

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

Following is a description of the Department's agricultural activities:

Pest Prevention

Pest prevention encompasses several activities aimed to prevent the introduction and spread of exotic pests in Marin County. Pest exclusion focuses on preventing the entry and establishment of exotic pests and limiting the intrastate movement of newly discovered pests. Marin County inspectors monitor all primary avenues of pest entry into the county including nurseries and point of entry like UPS and FedEx. Pest detection is the systematic search for exotic pests outside a known infested area. The goal is to find infestations of harmful exotic pests as early as possible and eradicate them before eradication becomes biologically or economically infeasible.

Protection of the Environment

The Department operates a Pesticide Use Enforcement program that includes a permitting process for restricted materials as well as education and assistance for pesticide users. While reviewing, collecting and analyzing data and records associated with pesticide sales and use, our Department also monitors pesticide use applications, investigates pesticide-related citizen complaints, and conducts pesticide illness investigations. The ultimate goal of this program is to ensure the safe and effective use of pest control methods in order to protect public health and the environment while strongly promoting the production of healthy and safe food and fiber.

Integrated Pest Management

Integrated pest management (IPM) is a common-sense approach to pest management that uses a variety of methods and tools to control pests. IPM programs focus on preventing pest problems through cultural and biological measures. Pesticides may be part of an IPM program. The goal is to eliminate or reduce pesticide applications wherever possible and take reasonable measures to ensure long-term prevention or suppression of pest problems has minimal negative impact on human health, non-target organisms, and the environment.

Product Quality

Marin County inspectors protect consumers by inspecting agricultural products for compliance with laws, regulations, and standards and ensure businesses are afforded a fair and equitable opportunity to market their products. Inspections are conducted at horticultural nurseries, farmers' markets, organic farms, and locations selling wholesale and retail eggs.

Summary of Our Sustainable Agricultural Activities

Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) and Registered Organic Farms

The Marin County Agricultural Commissioner's Office is accredited by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as an official organic certification agency. Marin Organic Certified Organic Agriculture (MOCA) serves the local agricultural community who are promoting sustainable farming practices. Organic production systems strive to achieve agro-ecosystems that are ecologically, socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable. Organic farming emphasizes a greater cooperation with nature without reliance on synthetic inputs. All California organic producers register in their principal county of operation.

Consumer demand for certified organic products is increasing with an expectation by consumers that organic products are verifiable. MOCA was developed to provide a professional service to local individual and business operations engaged in the production and distribution of organically grown commodities. The main duty of MOCA is to uphold the standards of the USDA National Organic Program, and document/verify operations' practices of sustainable agriculture. One of the most important benefits of the MOCA program is as a local service that promotes productions of organic value-added products by Marin's family farms. In 2011, the number of MOCA certified operations in Marin and Sonoma Counties was 73 operators, including 1 processor. There are 73 registered organic producers in Marin County, farming 21,960 acres, which includes 21,650 acres in pasture, producing a total gross value of \$22,197,538.

Biological Control

Biological pest control is the use of natural enemies to help suppress pest populations to economically and environmentally acceptable levels. Once the agent becomes established, control is self perpetuating, potentially eliminating or reducing the need to use pesticides. The following are pests found in Marin and some of the methods that have been used to control them.

Pest

Gorse
Bull Thistle
Yellow Star Thistle

Scotch Broom
Ash White Fly
Italian Thistle
Purple Star Thistle
Klamath Weed
Eucalyptus Red Gum Lerp Psyllid

Biological Agent/Mechanism

Gorse Mite, Seed Weevil
Bull Thistle Gall Fly
Seed Head Weevil, Gall Fly, Hairy Weevil, Peacock Fly,
Rust – Puccinia jaceae var. solstitialis
Seed Weevil, Stem Boring Moth
Parasitic Wasp
Seed Weevil
Seed Weevil
Beetle
Parasitic Wasp

Livestock Protection Program

The Marin County Board of Supervisors has continued to support and appropriate funds to the Livestock Protection Program. Recognized non-lethal control methods such as protection animals (llamas, guard dogs, etc.), electric fencing, scare devices, and herd shepherding are initiated through cost share funds to livestock ranchers. The Department administers verification inspections, cost share funding, and indemnification reimbursement for verified livestock losses for ranchers participating in this program. At this time, 19 livestock producers participate in the program, which includes a total of 10,302 acres.

Pest Prevention Programs

Pest Detection

Inspectors serviced 1,172 traps for exotic insect pests (including Mediterranean Fruit Fly and Oriental Fruit Fly, Mexican Fruit Fly, Olive Fruit Fly, Melon fly, Gypsy Moth, Japanese Beetle, Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter, Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) and European Grapevine Moth (EGVM)). Of the 1,172 traps, 273 traps were placed for the Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter in nurseries and vineyards, 250 Mediterranean Fruit Fly traps were placed in fruit trees, 227 Gypsy Moth traps were placed on hardwood trees, 11 LBAM traps were placed throughout the county, and 25 European Grapevine Moth traps were placed in vineyards.

Pest Exclusion

In 2011, inspectors conducted 1,623 incoming plant quarantine inspections. Plant shipments were monitored at Federal Express, UPS, nurseries, ethnic markets, aquatic supply stores, and post entry quarantine. The Department performed 77 gypsy moth inspections of household goods from infested states, as well as 1,276 Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter inspections on plant material from infested California counties. One rejection of plant material was made and the plants were inspected and released.

Marin/Sonoma Weed Management Area

The Marin Sonoma Weed Management Area (MSWMA) group is a cooperative effort of federal, state, county and city agencies, private industry, and private landowners. Formed in 1999, MSWMA's goals include improving the effectiveness of local weed management efforts, increasing public awareness of invasive weeds, and advancing responsible land stewardship practices. The MSWMA unites landowners and public agencies, provides an opportunity to share resources in mapping planning information, and helps control weeds across land ownership boundaries.

A Rapid Response Program is under development to address early infestations of invasive weeds before they spread to larger areas and require costly control methods, or become completely uncontrollable. Additionally, a website has been developed to allow Weed Management Area (WMA) partners, landowners, and the general public to: report early invaders, stay informed about WMA activities, and follow links about invasive weeds and control methods. Please visit www.marinsonomaweedmanagement.org for more information.

Some priority weed occurrences arise on private lands. The Rapid Response/Bay Area Early Detection Network (<http://baedn.org/>) ensures these habitats are not left out of the solution, and also connects the MSWMA with ranchers, farmers, and private landowners. For example, the Department has been working closely with the ranchers in the Chileno Valley to help coordinate efforts and provide resources to manage and eradicate woolly distaff thistle. Over the past several years distaff has rendered hundreds of acres of pasture and rangeland unusable. Many different methods are available to manage and eradicate distaff, including mowing, burning, hand pulling, over seeding, fertilizing, herbicide applications, etc.

Meetings on Distaff Thistle have been held with many different stakeholders, including ranchers, Marin County Farm Bureau, Marin Agricultural Land Trust (MALT), Marin Resource Conservation District (MRCD), Marin County Department of Agriculture, and others.

The Marin County Board of Supervisors has adopted a weed policy to discourage the import, sale or cultivation of non-native invasive plants. For a list of these plants, please visit our website at: www.marincounty.org/ag.

Pest Prevention Programs – continued

Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter

The Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter (GWSS), *Homalodisca vitripennis*, is a very serious pest to California agriculture. First observed in the state around 1990 and now found throughout Southern California and portions of the San Joaquin Valley, GWSS is a particular threat to vineyards due to its ability to spread *Xylella fastidiosa*, the bacterium that causes Pierce's disease in grapevines. Pierce's disease is lethal to grapevines and significant resources are committed annually to find effective treatments.

GWSS also spreads other diseases to a variety of agricultural and ornamental plants, having the potential to substantially impact California's agriculture and environment if left unchecked.

To prevent the introduction of this leafhopper into Marin County, staff inspects incoming nursery plant shipments containing GWSS hosts from infested California counties. In 2011, a total of 1,276 shipments were inspected for GWSS, with no finds. Detection traps are strategically placed throughout the county to monitor for this unwanted pest.

Sudden Oak Death

Marin County continues to be infested with Sudden Oak Death (SOD), the disease caused by the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*. Increased infestations have been detected in West Marin. Tree mortality in wildland and urban/wild land interface areas causes dramatic changes in the landscape, affecting ecosystems, increasing fire and safety hazards, and decreasing property values.

P. ramorum hosts include native woodland trees and understory plants, and ornamental nursery plants. Currently there are over 100 native and ornamental hosts; new hosts continue to be found and added to the state and federal quarantines.

On oaks, *P. ramorum* causes potentially lethal trunk cankers; on other hosts it causes a rarely lethal leaf or twig blight. Tanoaks may have both trunk cankers and leaf dieback. Unlike oaks, some hosts (i.e., California bay laurel) are not killed by this pathogen; instead these hosts are a vector, allowing inoculum to spread through natural or artificial means (i.e., rainwater, soil, infested nursery stock) under moist conditions.

The phosphonate product Agri-Fos® continues to be the only registered product for control of *P. ramorum* on oaks. It works best as a preventative by stimulating the tree's natural defense system to prevent the disease from infecting the tree.

The California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF) was established in 2000 to conduct research and understand SOD. More information, including diagnostic guides and management recommendations may be found at www.suddenoakdeath.org.

Pest Prevention Programs – continued

Light Brown Apple Moth

In early 2007, Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM), *Epiphyas postvittana*, was confirmed in Alameda County, California. This represented the first time LBAM had been detected in the contiguous 48 States. Currently the infestation occupies 17 counties, compared to 15 counties in 2010 and 18 counties in 2009.

A mature LBAM female can deposit 300 – 1,500 eggs in their lifetime. Each generation lives approximately 6 – 7 weeks. The larvae may be found inside furled leaves. LBAM constructs leaf rolls (nests) by webbing together leaves, a bud and one or more leaves, leaves and fruit, or by folding individual mature leaves.

This moth species is not native to the United States and therefore has few known predators or parasites here to naturally reduce populations. Evaluation of biological control of LBAM by parasites is making progress and having positive results.

Other countries and States want to keep this pest out. Some foreign countries have enacted quarantines and restrictions on crops and plants grown in the 17 counties infested with LBAM. LBAM is not established in the rest of the lower 48 states, many of these states have imposed restrictions on plant, fruit, and vegetable movement from California. Quarantines, and added restrictions, adversely impact the marketing and movement of California agricultural and horticultural products.

Marin County, working in cooperation with the CDFA/USDA LBAM Cooperative Program, continues to manage and control LBAM through detection traps, visual inspections of nurseries located in the quarantine boundary, and education of nursery owners and farmers. Production nurseries that ship plants out of the quarantine areas are required to follow “Best Management Practices”, including regular monitoring for LBAM.

More information on LBAM may be found at: www.cdfa.ca.gov/lbam



LBAM Egg Mass



LBAM Larva



LBAM Pupa



LBAM Adult

Farmers' Markets of Marin County

The purpose of farmers' markets is to allow local producers to sell their certified commodities directly to the public. There are 32 certified producers that have been issued Marin County certificates. The following 13 Farmers' Markets have been certified by the Agricultural Commissioner to market local and regional produce in Marin County.

Civic Center (San Rafael) Thursdays 8:00 am – 1:00 pm Sundays 8:00 am – 1:00 pm Open All Year	Corte Madera Corte Madera Town Center Wednesdays 12:00 – 5:00 pm Open All Year	Downtown San Rafael Fourth Street, San Rafael Thursdays 6:00 – 9:00 pm April – September
Fairfax Perry Park, Downtown Fairfax Wednesdays 4:00– 8:00 pm May – September	Marinwood Community Marinwood Plaza Saturdays 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Open All Year	Marin Country Mart Larkspur Landing Cir., Larkspur Saturdays 9:00 am – 2:00 PM Open All Year
Mill Valley E. Blithedale Ave. @ Ashford Dr. Fridays 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Open All Year	Old Town Novato Downtown, Novato Tuesdays 4:00 – 8:00 pm May – September	Point Reyes Toby's Feed Barn (11250 Hwy1) Point Reyes Station Saturdays 9:00 am – 1:00 pm June – November
Ross Valley Marin Art & Garden Center, Ross Thursdays 3:00 – 7:00 pm May – October	Sausalito Dunphy Park, Sausalito Sundays 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Open All Year	Tam Valley Tennessee Vly. Rd. @ Marin Ave. Tuesdays 3:00 – 7:00 pm May - October



Gentlemen trading goods in Sausalito, circa 1888. Photographer: George Reed.
Courtesy of The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

Weights and Measures Program Overview

The Weights and Measures programs ensure honesty and integrity in commercial transactions when products are sold by weight, measure, count or time. This is accomplished through the continuous and systematic inspection of all equipment used to weigh or measure commodities. Weights and Measures inspectors test: taximeters, stores scales, gasoline pumps, fabric and cordage meters, electric meters, livestock and animal scales, vehicle scales, packaged products for stated net contents and also conducts barcode scanner inspections to ensure accurate product pricing. Overall, every transaction involving the exchange of goods by volume, count, or weight is affected in a vital way by some form of weights and measures.

Point-of-Sale and Price Verification

The emergence and application of scanner/point-of-sale systems technology at retail check out stands has provided retailers substantial benefits concerning the tracking of sales and inventory; however, the remote location of the price database and its maintenance has increased price discrepancies between an item's advertised price on the store shelf and what the consumer is charged when checking out at the register. It is unlawful to charge at the time of sale a price that is more than the price that is advertised or posted. Pursuant to California Business and Professions Code sections 12103.5, 12024.2, and 12024.6, the purpose of this Chapter is to ensure that the advertised or posted price of a commodity is the price charged for that commodity. Business and Professions Code Section 13350 mandates that county weights and measures departments perform price verification inspections to regulate pricing and price representation. Beginning in January 2007, Marin County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures began routinely inspecting the approximately 419 different locations that use the estimated 1,910 scanner/point-of-sale devices in Marin County. Previously, these inspections were only done as a result of a complaint.

In 2011, Marin Weights and Measures worked with the Board of Supervisors on revising the Point-of-Sale Registration ordinance to allow our department to display these consumer protection stickers at any grocery or retail store that uses a barcode scanner or price lookup system to show a price at the checkout stand. Starting in 2012, department staff will start posting these stickers in stores.



Department Staff

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