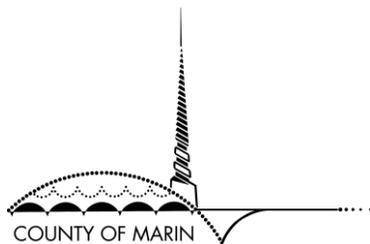


Marin County

Livestock & Agricultural
Crop Report 2012





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

June 2013

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food and Agriculture
and
Marin County Board of Supervisors
Judy Arnold, President, District 5

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

Kathrin Sears, District 3
Steve Kinsey, District 4

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 2012. This report is a summary of counts, acreage, yields, and gross value of agricultural production in Marin County. The 2012 gross value of all production was the highest value ever recorded \$80,365,289. This represents an increase of \$2,520,009, which is 3.2 percent higher than the 2011 total agricultural production value of \$77,845,280 (revised). 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 42.4 percent of the crop report's total value. The average Market Milk Price for 2012 was higher than 2011, contributing to a 9 percent increase in the overall milk value of \$2,819,204. 2012 was the fourth year since agricultural statics began being recorded that milk values did not constitute at least 50 percent of Marin County's total agricultural production value; the first year was 2009.

Livestock values greatly increased for 2011 and 2012 when compared to previous years. This increase was a result of a change in the method the USDA uses to value livestock production. Historically, cattle values have been measured using the unit "Hundredweight" (CWT), where one unit is equal to 100 pounds. The new unit used by the USDA to value cattle is "Head", where one unit is equal to an individual animal. An accurate value for each unit of livestock production is provided by the USDA to Marin County and is not collected at the local level.

Wine grape value increased 38.9 percent from 2011. Much of this increase is attributed to increased participation in the 2012 survey; just as the 2011 16.7 percent decrease was attributed to decreased participation. 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, especially Jeffrey Stiles.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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Cover photo:

Local Cheese Trio, By: Jeffrey Stiles

Marin Artisan Cheese: *Much of this information is from, Coming of Age: The Status of North Bay Artisan Cheesemaking, University of California Cooperative Extension, January 2011, Ellie Rilla.*

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

Marin Artisan Cheese

While artisan cheeses have been a part of European culture dating back to the first century, artisan cheesemaking is a relatively new tradition in the United States and California that is only 150 years old. In Marin County, Spanish priests made cheeses from their mission herds while European immigrants working on dairies brought cheesemaking skills with them from the "old" country. Swiss-Italians, Azoreans, Portuguese, Irish and Mexicans as well as other immigrants, craved their own foods, including traditional cheeses.

The California Gold Rush of 1848-1855 created a demand for local products including butter and cheese in the newly-established Bay Area. The Steele family, who arrived on the Point Reyes peninsula in 1857, built a dairy in what they called "cow heaven" and soon operated three ranches shipping butter and cheese by schooner to the City. In 1859 they produced 55,000 pounds of cheese. By 1870, the Shafters, who were the prominent landholder on the peninsula, ran a "butter rancho" acclaimed as the largest butter dairy estate in the world (Livingston 2009).

From the 1850s on, dairy ranches sprung up not only on the Point Reyes peninsula but everywhere in Marin making the county the top major dairy producer in California for several decades. The Marin French Cheese Company has produced an artisan cheese in the same location outside of Novato since 1865, and is the oldest continually operating cheese factory in the United States. The Thompson family began making and selling fresh cheese to the saloons, where it was served to primarily European dockworkers at Yerba Buena Cove as a substitute for pickled eggs in short supply at the time. The cheese was transported by horse and wagon to the Petaluma River and then taken by steamer across the bay to San Francisco. Thompson Bros. Cheese Company was able to supply more varieties of cheese to the fledgling San Francisco marketplace as the demand for fresh cheeses quickly grew. The 1860 Agricultural Census reports 161,350 pounds of cheese produced in five townships in Marin valued at \$39,576 (State Archives). Around 1915, the Western Cheese & Butter Company made cheese and butter with milk from Nicasio dairies until a fire destroyed the warehouse and cheese inside (Livingston 2008).

Cooperative creameries operated in Fallon (near Tomales), in Point Reyes, and in Petaluma from the 1920s to 1940s. With the advent of WWII and the need to further gear up the country's food supply, small-scale production of unique and diverse cheese virtually disappeared, especially in the West.

In the North Bay, several pioneers led the artisan cheese renaissance in the 1970s and early 1980s by making unique cheeses. An article in the Marin Independent Journal (Rogers 2009) describes how cheese made in Marin has its origins in Europe.

"Cowgirl Creamery uses Dutch techniques; the new Nicasio Valley Cheese Company draws on the Swiss-Italian heritage of the Lafranchi family; and the Barinaga Ranch specializes in Basque sheep cheeses. However, Marin's conditions and techniques have given those cheeses a distinctly American interpretation. That's particularly true at Point Reyes Station's Cowgirl Creamery, where local air and soil conditions helped create one of the company's best-known cheeses by accident. 'Our Red Hawk cheese initially has a fluffy white mold growing on it,' said, Michael Zilber of Cowgirl Creamery. 'In the process of washing our cheese with brine, we introduced some naturally occurring bacteria that's in the air here, and that bacteria gives the cheese its pungent, stinky quality. We can't produce Red Hawk in our new facility in Petaluma, because it exists in the air in that concentration only in Point Reyes' ".

While cows, goats and sheep have been raised in Marin for cheese production for around 150 years, 2012 welcomed a new species and type of cheese to Marin County. Water buffalo (*Bubalus bubalus*) are being raised in Tomales for the production of the cheese Mozzarella di Bufala, and other water buffalo cheeses.

Marin County artisan cheese producers continue to expand and fill a crucial niche, helping to continue Marin County's diverse agricultural heritage.

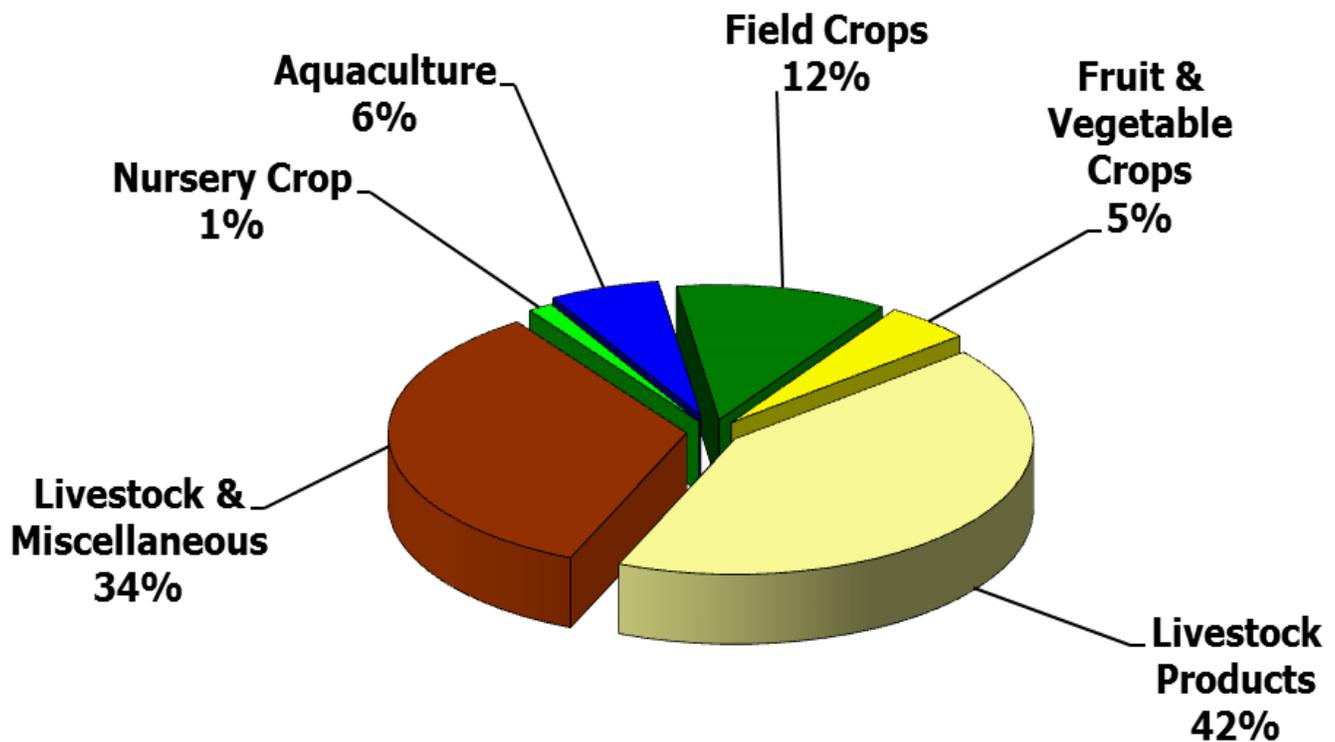
Agricultural Production Summary

Type of Agricultural Production	2012	2011
Livestock Products	\$34,114,074	\$31,369,320
Livestock & Miscellaneous	\$27,360,228	\$27,652,690~
Field Crops	\$9,240,375	\$9,589,461
Fruit, Grape, & Vegetable Crops	\$3,754,030	\$3,570,942
Aquaculture	\$4,800,137	\$4,658,103
Nursery Crops	\$1,096,445	\$1,004,764
AGRICULTURAL GROSS VALUE	\$80,365,289	\$77,845,280

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

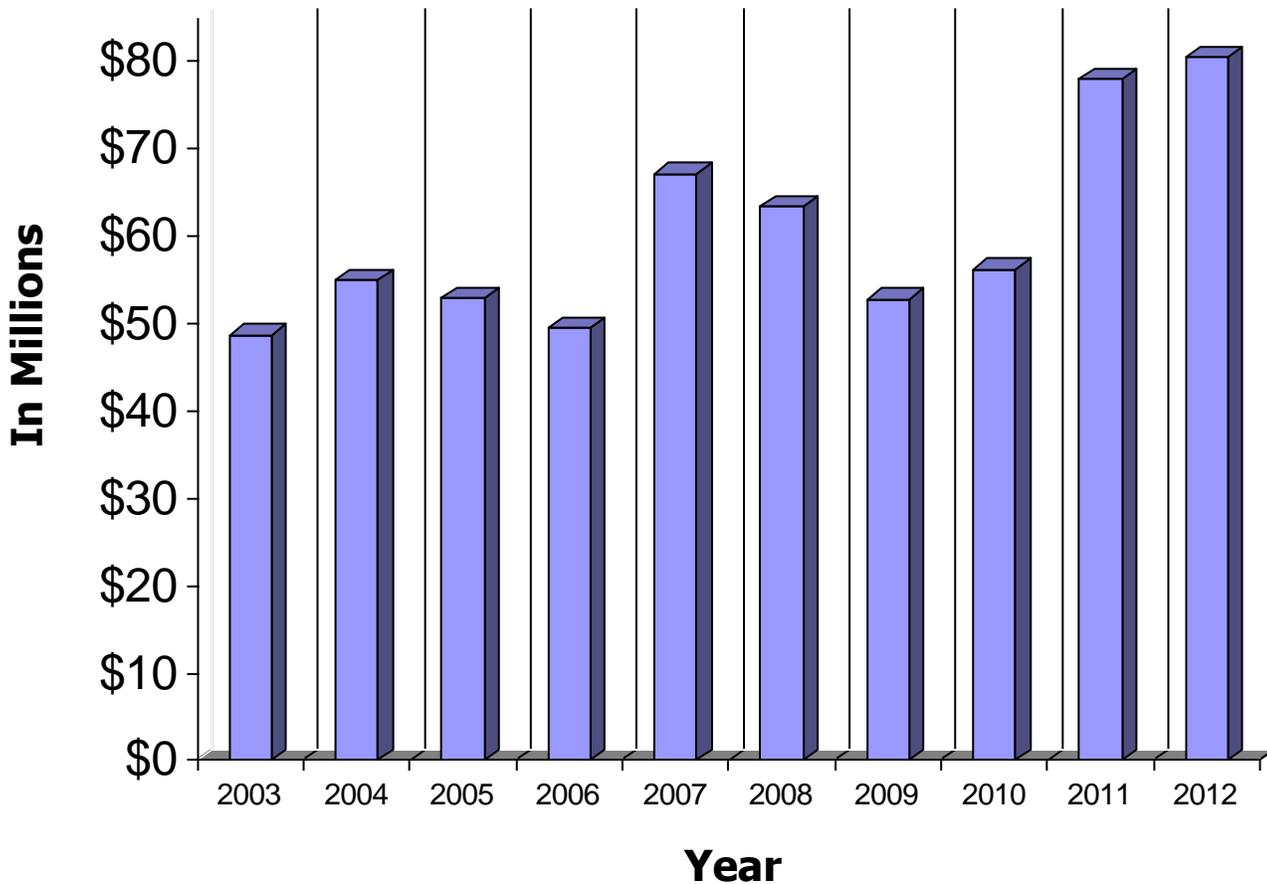
The 2012 gross value of all agricultural production was \$80,365,289. This represents an increase of approximately \$2,520,009 (3.2%) from the 2011 agricultural production gross value.

This graph illustrates how the 2012 agricultural gross value breaks down across the various types of agricultural production.



Agricultural Production Gross Value

Ten Year Summary



Comparison of 2011 Agricultural Production Values for Select North Coast Counties

	Marin	Napa	Sonoma*	Solano
Livestock, Livestock Products, & Misc	\$34,122,010	\$3,906,600	\$175,295,500	\$52,458,000
Field Crops	\$9,589,461	\$443,000	\$10,320,900	\$83,811,600
Fruit, Grape, and Vegetable Crops	\$3,570,942	\$423,625,500	\$355,637,200	\$131,758,500
Aquaculture	\$4,658,103	\$0	\$1,605,343	\$0
Nursery Crops	\$1,004,764	\$2,303,400	\$24,538,900	\$23,630,200

* Aquaculture figure is based on 2009 data.

Livestock and Aquaculture

Item	Year	Number of head	\$/Unit	Dollar Value Total
Cattle & Calves~	2012	15,144	\$1,253.07	\$18,976,492
	2011	15,894	\$984.89	\$18,994,283
Sheep & Lambs~	2012	9,121	\$176.00	\$1,605,320
	2011	10,912	\$231.00	\$2,520,775
Miscellaneous [†]	2012	8,350	-	\$282,000
	2011	6,604	-	\$207,640
Poultry*	2012	161,350	-	\$6,496,416
	2011	253,888	-	\$5,924,992
Aquaculture	2012	Oysters, Mussels, & Clams		\$4,800,387
	2011	Oysters, Mussels, & Clams		\$4,658,103
Total	2012		-	\$32,160,615
	2011		-	\$32,310,793

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

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

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



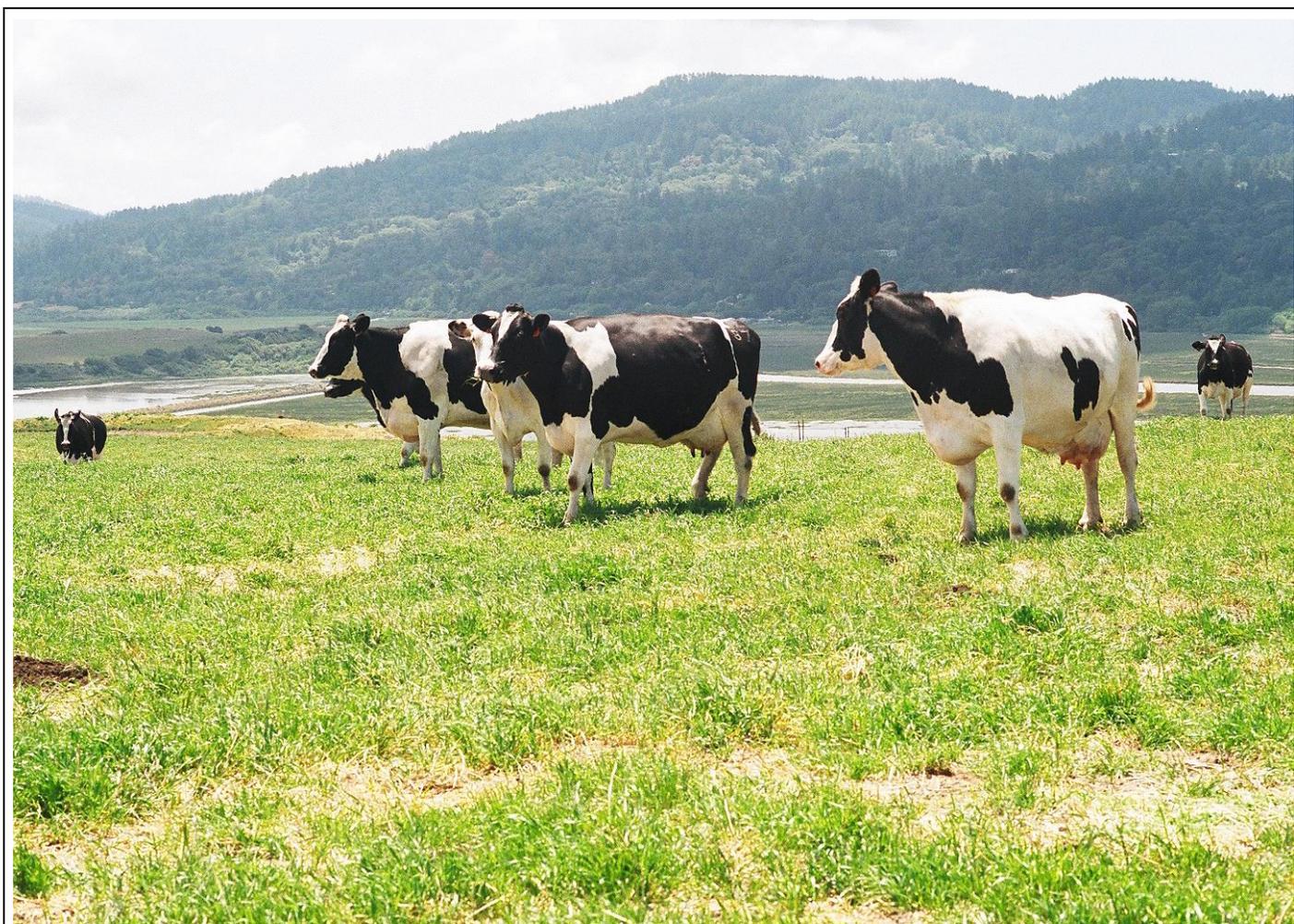
Tomales Bay Clams

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

Livestock Products

Item	Year	Production	Unit	\$ / Unit	Dollar Value Total
Milk~ (Market)	2012	1,522,529	cwt	\$22.38	\$34,074,204
	2011	1,622,137	cwt	\$19.31	\$31,325,000
Milk~ (Manufacturing)	2012	132	cwt	\$22.72	\$3,000
	2011	178	cwt	\$16.85	\$3,000
Wool~	2012	60,442		\$0.61	\$36,870
	2011	71,241		\$0.58	\$41,320
Total	2012				\$34,114,074
	2011				\$31,369,320

~ 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*	26,253	-
	Milk cows & heifers (2 years and over)	9,012	-
	Beef cows & heifers (2 years and over)	6,132	-
Sheep and Lambs, all [†]		9,121	-
Poultry		-	161,350
Miscellaneous**		-	8,350

[†] Number of Head as of January 1, 2012.

* Includes cows, heifers, calves, and bulls.

** Miscellaneous 2012 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 ^{†~}	2012	2,013	2.40	4,831	ton	\$114.40	\$552,670
	2011	1,852	2.76	5,111	ton	\$90.21	\$461,063
Silage [~]	2012	1,571	13.72	21,554	ton	\$43.71	\$942,125
	2011	2,119	14.47	30,671	ton	\$51.22	\$1,570,968
Pasture, Irrigated	2012	810				\$100.00	\$81,000
	2011	810				\$100.00	\$81,000
Pasture, Other	2012	154,000				\$49.77	\$7,664,580
	2011	154,000				\$48.55	\$7,476,700
Fruits & Vegetables	2012	330					\$2,527,166
	2011	310					\$2,687,630
Grapes, Wine [*]	2012	186		387	ton		\$1,226,864
	2011	186		191	ton		\$883,312
Total	2012						\$12,994,405
	2011						\$13,160,403

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

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

^{*} Varieties: Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Merlot, Pinot Noir, Shiraz, and Riesling.



Silage Sprouting By: Johanna Good

Nursery Products

Commodity	Year	Production Acreage	Dollar Value Total
Nursery Stock, All	2012	5.06	1,096,743
	2011	6.1	1,004,764
	2010	6.25	\$991,983

Phytosanitary Certificates were issued for Marin-grown nursery products shipped internationally to: Canada, China, 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 points of entry such as 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-related 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, safe food and fiber through sustainable practices.

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 that the long-term prevention or suppression of pests 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. They also ensure that 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 State Department of Agriculture (USDA) as an official organic certification agency. Marin Organic Certified Agriculture (MOCA) serves the local agricultural community growers who are employing organic 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.

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 primary responsibility 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 the production of organic value-added products by Marin's family farms. In 2012, the number of MOCA certified operations in Marin and Sonoma Counties was 84 operators, including 1 processor.

All organic producers in California must register in their principal county of operation. There are 71 registered organic producers in Marin County, farming 33,427 acres, which includes 33,097 acres in pasture, producing a total gross value of \$27,757,305.

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, livestock guardian dogs, etc.), electric fencing, scare devices, and herd shepherding are initiated through cost share funds to livestock ranchers. The Department administers verification inspections for cost share funding for ranchers participating in this program.

Pest Prevention Programs

Pest Detection

Inspectors serviced 1,335 traps for exotic insect pests. The targeted pests are: Mediterranean Fruit Fly, Oriental Fruit Fly, Mexican Fruit Fly, Olive Fruit Fly, Melon Fly, Gypsy Moth, Japanese Beetle, Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter, Light Brown Apple Moth, and European Grapevine Moth. Of the 1,335 traps, 276 traps were placed for the Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter in nurseries and vineyards; 251 Mediterranean Fruit Fly traps were placed in fruit trees; 220 Gypsy Moth traps were placed on hardwood trees; 13 Light Brown Apple Moth traps were placed throughout the county; and 10 European Grapevine Moth traps were placed in vineyards.

Pest Exclusion

In 2012, inspectors conducted 2,086 incoming plant quarantine inspections. Plant shipments were monitored at Federal Express, UPS, nurseries, ethnic markets, aquatic supply stores, and post entry quarantine sites. The Department performed 53 Gypsy Moth inspections of household goods from infested states, as well as 1,180 Glassy-Winged Sharpshooter inspections on plant material from infested California counties. Two rejections of plant material were made to protect Marin's agriculture and environment.

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 landowners. 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 helps control weeds across land ownership boundaries by uniting landowners and public agencies and providing an opportunity to share resources in mapping and planning. Weed Management Area (WMA) partners, landowners, and any interested party can report early invaders, stay informed about WMA activities, and link to resources about invasive weeds by visiting www.marinsonomaweedmanagement.org.

Some priority weed occurrences arise on private lands. The Rapid Response/Bay Area Early Detection Network (<http://baedn.org/>) works connecting the MSWMA with ranchers, farmers, and private landowners to address these infestations.

One example of coordination revolves around Woolly Distaff Thistle. Over the past several years Woolly Distaff Thistle has rendered hundreds of acres of pasture and rangeland unusable. 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 Department has been working closely with the ranchers in Chileno Valley to help coordinate efforts and provide resources to manage and eradicate woolly distaff thistle. Many different methods are available to manage and eradicate Distaff, including mowing, burning, hand pulling, over seeding, fertilizing, herbicide applications, etc.

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, Department staff inspect incoming nursery plant shipments containing GWSS hosts from infested California counties. In 2012, a total of 1,180 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.

Dominican University has established a research center to mitigate the disease which may allow nursery stock to be shipped without quarantine restrictions.

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.

Prevention is the only treatment to protect trees from *Phytophthora ramorum*. Best preventative practices are keeping trees healthy so they maintain their natural defenses, pruning overstory California bay laurels, and phosphonate treatment products.

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.

Ghost Oak
by
Jesse Harrington Au, 2011
jesselegend@gmail.com

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.

<p>Civic Center (San Rafael) Thursdays 8:00 am – 1:00 pm Sundays 8:00 am – 1:00 pm Open All Year</p>	<p>Corte Madera Corte Madera Town Center Wednesdays 12:00 – 5:00 pm Open All Year</p>	<p>Downtown San Rafael Fourth Street, San Rafael Thursdays 6:00 – 9:00 pm April – September</p>
<p>Fairfax Perry Park, Downtown Fairfax Wednesdays 4:00– 8:00 pm May – December</p>	<p>Marinwood Community Marinwood Plaza Saturdays 9:00 am - 1:00 pm Open All Year</p>	<p>Marin Country Mart Larkspur Landing Cir., Larkspur Saturdays 9:00 am – 2:00 PM Open All Year</p>
<p>Mill Valley E. Blithedale Ave. @ Ashford Dr. Fridays 9:30 am – 2:30 pm Open All Year</p>	<p>Old Town Novato Downtown, Novato Tuesdays 4:00 – 8:00 pm May – September</p>	<p>Point Reyes Toby's Feed Barn (11250 Hwy1) Point Reyes Station Saturdays 9:00 am – 1:00 pm June – November</p>
<p>Ross Valley Marin Art & Garden Center, Ross Thursdays 3:00 – 7:00 pm May – September</p>	<p>Sausalito Dunphy Park, Sausalito Sundays 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Open All Year</p>	<p>Tam Valley Tennessee Vly. Rd. @ Marin Ave. Tuesdays 3:00 – 7:00 pm May - November</p>



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 barcode scanners (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

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. 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 a price at the time of sale that is higher than the price that is advertised or posted. 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 421 different locations that use the estimated 1,932 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 have been posting these stickers in stores at each point of sale location and customer service counter.

ATTENTION CUSTOMERS	
BY LAW, YOU ARE ENTITLED TO THE LOWEST ADVERTISED OR POSTED PRICE FOR ANY ITEM(S) OFFERED FOR SALE BY THIS STORE.	
For information or to file a pricing complaint, contact Marin Weights & Measures: (415) 473-7888 www.marincounty.org/ag	
IT IS UNLAWFUL TO REMOVE OR OBSCURE THIS NOTICE COUNTY ORDINANCE §5.45.130	

Department Staff

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