

VENTURA COUNTY'S
2017
CROP & LIVESTOCK
REPORT

*Recovery, Regrowth,
Regeneration*



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The Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's extends their sincerest appreciation to the agricultural industry of Ventura County. Without your information, this report would not be possible.

OFFICE OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

ACTING AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER
Susan L. Johnson

CHIEF DEPUTY
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER
Korinne Bell

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John Regan Beall, Blanca Enriquez-Pratt (Acting), Ellen Kragh

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
Maribel Lemus, Carolina Martinez,
Anthony Ortiz, Leticia Ramirez,
Sara Venegas

SUPERVISING AGRICULTURAL
INSPECTOR/BIOLOGISTS
Tim Fritch, George Mendoza,
Michael Otani

AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR/BIOLOGISTS
Ameer Atrash, Lauren Balthazor,
John Calderwood, Rebecca Cano,
David Carrillo, Vanessa Cruz,
Shravan Dasaju, Bridget Daughters,
Jonathan Fausto, Adriana Flores,
Freddi Herrmann, Avneet Kakkar,
Flora Kwan, Jennifer Le, David Neville,
Loveleen Sandhu, Alec Thille,
Greta Varien, Carl Waite,
Reilly Walker, Scott Wilson,
David Wirta, Tom Yanagihara,
Cristina Zamora, Erika Zapien

INSECT DETECTION SPECIALISTS
Linda Bellamy, Robin Duffield,
Lance Hermann,
Francisco Hernandez,
Ruben Ortega, Connie Ratner,
Ingus Richters, Carlo Romero

SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATORS
Dexter McDonald, Monica Sanoja
Weijters, Israel Vasquez

STUDENT WORKER III
Alberto Lopez, Kira McDermott
Sarah Poland, Erika Reyes,
Matthew Sanders, Brenda Tello

GRAPHIC DESIGN & PRINTING
GSA Business Support/Graphics



Susan L. Johnson
*Acting Agricultural
Commissioner*

July 31, 2018

Karen Ross, Secretary
California Department of Food & Agriculture
and
The Honorable Board of Supervisors of Ventura County
Steve Bennett, 1st District
Linda Parks, 2nd District
Kelly Long, 3rd District
Peter C. Foy, 4th District, Chair
John C. Zaragoza, 5th District

Pursuant to Section 2279 of the California Food and Agricultural Code, I am pleased to submit the 2017 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. This report reflects gross values only and does not represent the net return to growers or the multiplier effect on the local economy. From these totals, growers pay their workers, water, fuel and electricity bills, bank loans or land leases, insurance, taxes, equipment, materials and all other farming costs.

The estimated gross value of Ventura County's agriculture for calendar year 2017 is \$2,099,889,000. This represents a 0.4 % decrease in comparison to 2016.

Strawberries were again the number one crop at \$654,312,000, decreasing 0.09% from 2016. Lemons remained in second place with a value of \$258,602,000, decreasing 3.1% from 2016. Celery moved up into third place with a value of \$210,408,000, increasing by 3.8%. Nursery Stock moved down into fourth place with a value of \$197,969,000, decreasing by 4.3%. Raspberries remained in fifth place with a value of \$166,725,000, decreasing by 2.6%. Avocados remained in sixth place with a value of \$118,680,000, decreasing by 8.3 %. Cut Flowers moved up into seventh place with a value of \$49,904,000, increasing by 3.8%. Tomatoes moved up into eighth place with a value of \$47,507,000, decreasing by 1.0%. Peppers moved down to ninth place with a value of \$45,809,000, decreasing by 28.5 %. Cabbage replaced Kale as the number ten crop at \$33,919,000, increasing by 13.0% from 2016.

Our thanks and gratitude to the agricultural industry for providing the information used to produce this report. Special recognition goes to Agricultural Commissioner's staff, Linda Bellamy, for her photography and interviews; Matthew Kreiger, Graphic Designer with the Ventura County General Services Agency, for the graphic design and layout; and Korinne Bell, Chief Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, for the overall production of this report.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan L. Johnson
Acting Agricultural Commissioner

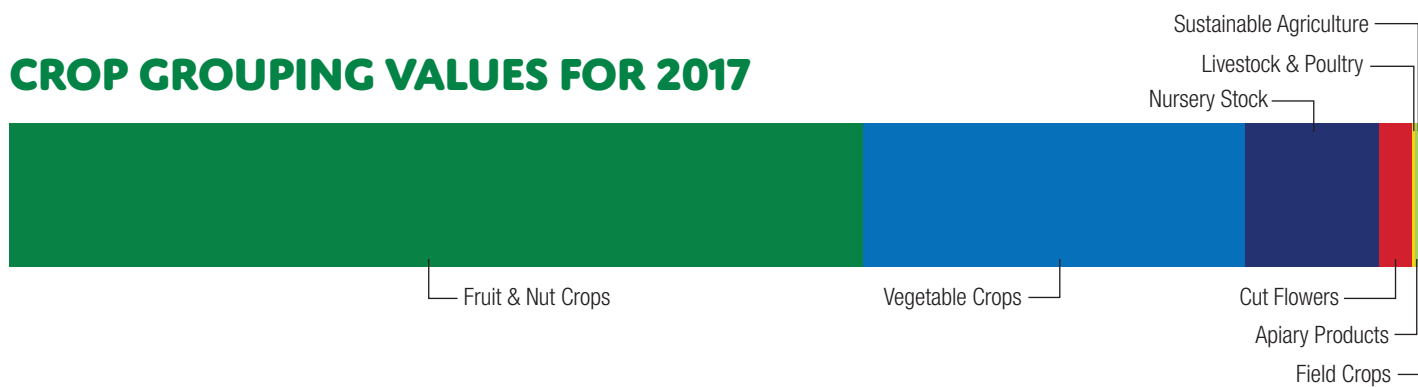
Recapitulation & Index 2016-2017

CROP GROUPING	YEAR	VALUE ¹
■ 1. Fruit & Nut Crops	2017	\$1,270,397,000
	2016	\$1,286,534,000
■ 2. Vegetable Crops	2017	\$569,471,000
	2016	\$556,675,000
■ 3. Nursery Stock	2017	\$197,969,000
	2016	\$206,840,000
■ 4. Cut Flowers	2017	\$49,904,000
	2016	\$48,042,000
■ 5. Livestock & Poultry	2017	\$4,578,000
	2016	\$5,707,000
■ 6. Apiary Products	2017	\$3,746,000
	2016	\$2,786,000
■ 7. Sustainable Agriculture	2017	\$2,272,000
	2016	\$2,018,000
■ 8. Field Crops	2017	\$1,552,000
	2016	\$1,585,000
GRAND TOTAL²	2017	\$2,099,889,000
	2016	\$2,110,187,000

¹ Figures are rounded off to nearest \$1,000

² Ventura County has approximately 95,850 acres of irrigated cropland. Our total farmed acreage is 293,549 (197,699 acres are Rangeland).

CROP GROUPING VALUES FOR 2017



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Fruit & Nut Crops	\$1,280,274,000	\$1,338,004,000	\$1,357,101,000	\$1,286,534,000	\$1,270,397,000
Vegetable Crops	\$568,722,000	\$557,614,000	\$583,281,000	\$556,675,000	\$569,471,000
Nursery Stock	\$190,889,000	\$180,499,000	\$195,817,000	\$206,840,000	\$197,969,000
Cut Flowers	\$43,079,000	\$47,615,000	\$48,522,000	\$48,042,000	\$49,904,000
Livestock & Poultry Products	\$6,517,000	\$7,887,000	\$6,878,000	\$5,707,000	\$4,578,000
Apiary Products	\$1,392,000	\$554,000	\$2,108,000	\$2,786,000	\$3,746,000
Sustainable Agriculture	\$3,557,000	\$3,443,000	\$3,838,000	\$2,018,000	\$2,272,000
Field Crops	\$474,000	\$1,417,000	\$1,010,000	\$1,585,000	\$1,552,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$2,094,915,000	\$2,137,033,000	\$2,198,555,000	\$2,110,187,000	\$2,099,889,000

Silver Linings

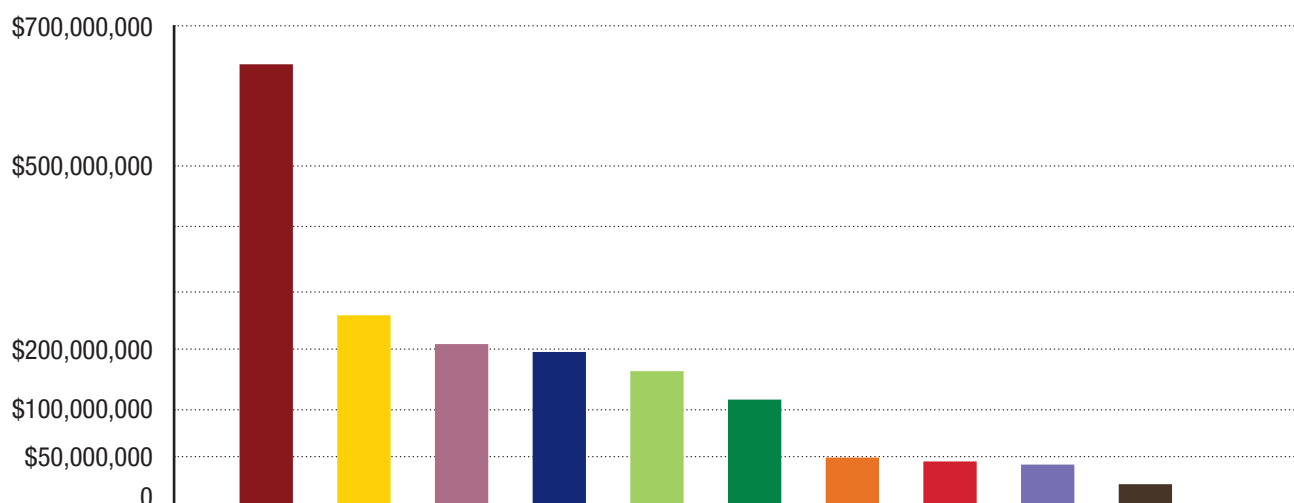
Yes, the Thomas Fire was a blow. We estimate that we lost 80% of our avocado crop for this year and next. In addition, many trees were burned beyond recovery, and many others may not make it. At this point, four months after the fire, we project that over 40% of our avocado trees are dead or unlikely to recover fully. That is over 60 acres. Avocados take several years to come into full production. Even if we could replant right away, we are looking at about 6 years to full recovery. There are no nursery trees available until 2021, and lots of demand. Realistically, if we replant everything to avocados, it will be many years before we can get back to 2016 production levels. The silver linings of the Thomas Fire are these: the fire reminded us of how much we owe to our workforce. If it hadn't been for the heroic efforts of farmworkers across the county, much more would have been lost. We are forced to consider other crops, other cultural practices, and new ways of doing things. Should we take this opportunity to diversify into other crops? Or other avocado varieties? Are there steps we can take now to prevent this from happening again? Most farmers are action-oriented optimists who don't give up. We are accustomed to risk. We like challenges. These strengths will help us recover from the Thomas Fire.

Deborah Brokaw Jackson
Brokaw Ranch Company



Ten Leading Crops for 2017

RANK	CROP	VALUE
1st	Strawberries	\$654,312,000
2nd	Lemons	\$258,602,000
3rd	Celery	\$210,408,000
4th	Nursery Stock	\$197,969,000
5th	Raspberries	\$166,725,000
6th	Avocados	\$118,680,000
7th	Cut Flowers	\$49,904,000
8th	Tomatoes	\$47,507,000
9th	Peppers	\$45,809,000
10th	Cabbage	\$33,919,000



Other Million Dollar Crops

CROP/PRODUCT	VALUE
Woody Ornamentals*	\$87,473,000
Bedding Plants, Ground Cover & Turf*	\$43,070,000
Kale	\$31,622,000
Lettuce (total)	\$29,905,000
Cilantro	\$25,099,000
Vegetable Transplants*	\$22,861,000
Lilies & Irises**	\$22,402,000
Blueberries	\$20,753,000
Asian Vegetables	\$20,718,000
Oranges (Valencia)	\$18,916,000

CROP/PRODUCT	VALUE
Fruit & Nut Trees*	\$18,866,000
Mandarins & Tangelos	\$14,744,000
Cucumbers	\$13,939,000
Spinach	\$13,761,000
Parsley	\$11,479,000
Radishes	\$10,378,000
Greens	\$9,380,000
Herbaceous Perennials*	\$9,309,000
Potted Plants*	\$9,160,000
Delphinium, Larkspur, Stock & Snapdragons**	\$8,370,000

* Included in Nursery Stock total above

** Included in Cut Flower total above



ACREAGE, PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016-2017

Fruit & Nut Crops

PRODUCTION						VALUE	
Crop	Year	Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Avocados	2017	17,387	3.12	54,250	tons	\$2,187.65	\$118,680,000
	2016	18,486	3.33	61,648	tons	\$2,092.53	\$129,000,000
Blueberries	2017	559	3.63	2,030	tons	\$10,223.15	\$20,753,000
	2016	486	3.54	1,720	tons	\$10,054.55	\$17,294,000
Grapefruit	2017	83	2.65	220	tons	\$2,818.18	\$620,000
	2016	89	2.97	265	tons	\$2,891.00	\$766,000
Lemons	2017	14,517	20.19	293,177	tons	\$882.07	\$258,602,000
	2016	14,801	18.30	270,802	tons	\$985.88	\$266,977,000
Mandarins & Tangelos	2017	1,663	4.82	8,015	tons	\$1,839.55	\$14,744,000
	2016	1,526	5.36	8,179	tons	\$1,624.04	\$13,283,000
Oranges (Navel)	2017	420	6.36	2,673	tons	\$426.49	\$1,140,000
	2016	424	7.78	3,300	tons	\$416.06	\$1,373,000
Oranges (Valencia)	2017	2,361	12.96	30,591	tons	\$618.35	\$18,916,000
	2016	2,399	16.24	38,969	tons	\$441.27	\$17,196,000
Raspberries	2017	4,132	15.51	64,095	tons	\$2,601.22	\$166,725,000
	2016	4,350	15.19	66,077	tons	\$2,590.36	\$171,163,000
Strawberries - Total	2017	10,216	34.58	353,269	tons	\$1,852.16	\$654,312,000
	2016	10,230	24.82	253,909	tons	\$2,579.28	\$654,902,000
Fresh	2017	---	---	237,646	tons	\$2,470.14	\$587,019,000
	2016	---	---	174,626	tons	\$3,408.90	\$595,282,000
Processed	2017	---	---	115,623	tons	\$582.00	\$67,293,000
	2016	---	---	79,283	tons	\$751.99	\$59,620,000
Misc. Fruits & Nuts ³	2017	1,021	---	---	tons	---	\$15,905,000
	2016	938	---	---	tons	---	\$14,580,000
TOTAL	2017	52,359					\$1,270,397,000
	2016	53,729					\$1,286,534,000

³ MISC. FRUITS AND NUTS include Apples, Apricots, Asian Pears, Bushberries, Cherimoya, Grapes, Guavas, Kiwi, Limes, Olives, Persimmons, Macadamias, Walnuts; and miscellaneous citrus, deciduous, and subtropical fruit.



Vegetable Crops

ACREAGE, PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016–2017

PRODUCTION						VALUE	
Crop	Year	Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Asian Vegetables	2017	763	21.46	16,377	tons	\$1,265.07	\$20,718,000
	2016	624	27.63	17,238	tons	\$1,070.72	\$18,457,000
Beans Green Limas, Green Snap	2017	2,068	1.85	3,826	tons	\$1,358.34	\$5,197,000
	2016	1,847	1.87	3,451	tons	\$1,254.99	\$4,331,000
Beets	2017	147	18.33	2,695	tons	\$1,007.05	\$2,714,000
	2016	109	20.14	2,195	tons	\$951.25	\$2,088,000
Broccoli Fresh & Processed	2017	100	12.30	1,230	tons	\$1,508.94	\$1,856,000
	2016	208	13.91	2,893	tons	\$1,359.49	\$3,933,000
Cabbage	2017	3,547	25.60	90,803	tons	\$373.54	\$33,919,000
	2016	3,284	24.49	80,425	tons	\$366.74	\$29,495,000
Carrots	2017	168	38.73	6,507	tons	\$173.20	\$1,127,000
	2016	257	41.05	10,549	tons	\$164.57	\$1,736,000
Celery	2017	13,208	33.48	442,192	tons	\$475.83	\$210,408,000
	2016	13,204	32.54	429,658	tons	\$470.99	\$202,363,000
Cilantro	2017	3,588	9.02	32,364	tons	\$775.52	\$25,099,000
	2016	3,120	9.17	28,606	tons	\$859.37	\$24,583,000
Cucumbers ⁴	2017	70	80.71	5,650	tons	\$2,467.08	\$13,939,000
	2016	64	80.25	5,136	tons	\$2,319.70	\$11,914,000
Greens ⁵	2017	985	9.17	9,034	tons	\$1,038.30	\$9,380,000
	2016	970	8.95	8,678	tons	\$1,039.29	\$9,019,000
Kale	2017	1,562	4.15	6,476	tons	\$4,882.95	\$31,622,000
	2016	1,202	5.18	6,227	tons	\$4,737.11	\$29,498,000
Lettuce - Total	2017	1,743	17.79	31,010	tons	\$964.37	\$ 29,905,000
	2016	1,984	18.43	36,561	tons	\$803.26	\$29,368,000
Head	2017	102	7.70	785	tons	\$955.41	\$ 750,000
	2016	109	7.83	853	tons	\$946.07	\$807,000
Leaf	2017	550	20.00	11,002	tons	\$2,103.34	\$23,141,000
	2016	552	21.90	12,090	tons	\$1,743.26	\$21,076,000
Romaine	2017	1,091	17.62	19,223	tons	\$312.85	\$6,014,000
	2016	1,323	17.85	23,618	tons	\$316.90	\$7,485,000

⁴ Includes hydroponics
⁵ Includes: chard, collard, mustard, turnip and watercress.

(CONTINUED)

Vegetable Crops

PRODUCTION						VALUE	
Crop	Year	Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Onions Green & Dry	2017	126	19.03	2,398	tons	\$451.63	\$1,083,000
	2016	152	20.22	3,073	tons	\$411.32	\$1,264,000
Parsley	2017	697	15.35	10,701	tons	\$1,072.70	\$11,479,000
	2016	606	13.80	8,360	tons	\$1,102.87	\$9,220,000
Peppers Bell & Chili	2017	2,976	43.88	130,602	tons	\$350.75	\$45,809,000
	2016	3,471	44.27	153,650	tons	\$397.51	\$61,078,000
Pumpkin	2017	245	14.74	3,611	tons	\$372.47	\$1,345,000
	2016	210	13.43	2,821	tons	\$350.58	\$989,000
Radishes	2017	846	17.12	14,484	tons	\$716.52	\$10,378,000
	2016	796	17.93	14,276	tons	\$616.07	\$8,795,000
Spinach	2017	1,309	9.08	11,886	tons	\$1,157.75	\$13,761,000
	2016	1,056	9.53	10,062	tons	\$1,081.99	\$10,887,000
Sweet Corn	2017	375	7.35	2,756	tons	\$616.11	\$1,698,000
	2016	214	7.53	1,612	tons	\$620.97	\$1,001,000
Tomatoes⁶	2017	401	70.11	28,113	tons	\$1,689.86	\$47,507,000
	2016	395	69.23	27,347	tons	\$1,754.74	\$47,987,000
Vegetables, Misc.⁷ Field, Indoor & Processed	2017	3,449	---	---	---	---	\$50,527,000
	2016	3,581	---	---	---	---	\$48,669,000
TOTAL	2017	38,373					\$569,471,000
	2016	37,354					\$556,675,000

⁶ Includes hydroponics

⁷ Includes: artichokes, arugula, asparagus, baby vegetables, cauliflower, eggplant, endive, garlic, gourds, herbs, kohlrabi, leeks, melons, mushrooms, peas, radicchio, sprouts, squash, tomatillos, and turnips.

Moving Ahead

The biggest challenge we are facing in the aftermath of the Thomas Fire is time. There doesn't seem to be enough of it. We lost about 25% of our planted acres. Our struggle is how do you continue to farm and manage what you still have left while rushing to fix everything damaged? Another hurdle has been deciding what to do. At the beginning I had a lot of paralysis by analysis, but once we just started working and started repairing it felt a lot better to be moving ahead. A lot our damage occurred on hillside plantings where reclamation has been very costly in both time and money. 25% or about 250 acres sustained damage, most of it very serious. We lost somewhere between 3 and 4 million pounds of fruit. All of our pasture land was burned. It will take 10 years before we are back in full production, more or less. When asking if there's anything we would do differently unfortunately the answer is no, we had fire breaks and we were prepared. We managed to save all 3 homes on the property and with the help of our employees and some friends we were able to save some orchards as well. I think we may get a water truck. It was the biggest fire in state history and was pushed through our property by 70mph winds, not a lot could be done. The whole experience was very humbling.

Jason Cole
Cole Ranch





The Thomas Fire Destruction...

On Monday, December 4, 2017 at approximately 6:30 p.m., what would later become known as the largest fire in California's history, erupted in the hills above Santa Paula. Driven by 70 mph winds and extremely dry conditions, the Thomas Fire moved at an unprecedented rate, threatening the City of Ventura within hours. Various county, state and federal officials were called into action. At its peak, over 8,500 emergency personnel were working to help save Ventura County. The Thomas Fire burned for 40 days, destroying homes, businesses and agricultural properties in the cities of Ventura, Ojai, Santa Paula and Fillmore, as well as parts of Santa Barbara County. Burning over 280,000 acres, the Thomas Fire destroyed over 1,000 homes, barns, sheds and outbuildings, and damaged countless others.

The Thomas Fire had a significant impact on Ventura County's agricultural industry. Early estimates amounted to over \$170 million in agricultural damages, with the Avocado, Citrus and Cattle industries being hit the hardest. The stories and testimonies included in this report are meant to serve as a tribute to the strength and resilience of Ventura County's agricultural industry, as together we travel down the path of *Recovery, Regrowth and Regeneration*.





and Recovery



The Thomas Fire impacted all 7000 acres of rangeland that RA Atmore & Sons and Rancho Ventura Conservation Trust steward. While we managed to save our home and office, the impacts of the Thomas Fire will be with us for years. Many of the oak woodlands were lost to the fire, as well as cattle, miles of fences, and other ranch infrastructure. The grasses and other vegetation are coming back. We will be battling invasive and noxious weeds now more than ever. We will need to adaptably manage woody species within the rangeland to achieve realistic goals that serve to improve forage, enhance wildlife habitat and protect our urban neighbors from the devastating effects of wildfire. One thing we learned from the Thomas Fire was “it’s not a matter of if the next Thomas Fire will come; but when.”



Richard Atmore
RA Atmore & Sons
Rancho Conservation Trust



Nursery Stock

Item	Year	Production	PRODUCTION AREA		Per Unit	Total
			Greenhouse Sq. Ft.	Field Acres		
Fruit & Nut Trees	2017	1,026,962 trees	---	243	\$18.37	\$18,866,000
	2016	1,141,068 trees	---	245	\$18.70	\$21,342,000
Potted Plants	2017	2,499,228 pots	2,020,645	30	\$3.67	\$9,160,000
	2016	2,628,000 pots	2,096,104	32	\$3.61	\$9,490,000
Propagative Material	2017	61,201,030 cuttings	725,344	1	\$0.12	\$7,230,000
	2016	55,890,293 cuttings	659,404	1	\$0.12	\$6,543,000
Herbaceous Perennials	2017	2,716,166 containers	72,601	95	\$3.43	\$9,309,000
	2016	3,045,029 containers	80,847	97	\$3.47	\$10,554,000
Woody Ornamentals	2017	5,867,159 trees/shrubs	97,063	1,740	\$14.91	\$87,473,000
	2016	6,577,533 tree/shrubs	110,048	1,894	\$14.98	\$98,513,000
Bedding Plants, Ground Cover & Turf	2017	13,175,040 flats	463,486	930	\$3.27	\$43,070,000
	2016	11,260,718 flats	403,031	864	\$3.50	\$39,376,000
Vegetable Transplants	2017	5,565,926 flats	1,972,728	120	\$4.11	\$22,861,000
	2016	5,163,197 flats	1,878,789	117	\$4.07	\$21,022,000
TOTAL	2017		5,351,867	3,159		\$197,969,000
	2016		5,228,223	3,250		\$206,840,000

Starting Over

After the fire came through, we had to replace all of the irrigation pipes and hoses to get water to the fruit trees and houses. All of our tools used for farming burned; spare piping, water valves, shovels, picks, and other equipment, and the materials we had on the ranch were not readily available. We had to get every item necessary to reassemble the entire irrigation system. It was like starting over. Every single tree on this ranch had burned to some degree. Even after four days the winds would pick up and start another smaller fire in these orchards. About 90% of our avocado orchards were a loss. We have no idea how long it will take to recover from our losses. We have tree trunks where the bark was burned off and others charred. Interplanting the orchards will be difficult. Small trees won't get as much sunlight as the older trees. Plus, there is a long waiting for replacement trees. We will just have to wait and see. This was not something that one could prepare for. The fire moved so quickly and started very close to our property. We barely had time to get out. Even the water tanks that were full of water melted. There is nothing we could have done differently. We have always thought about fire and have been concerned about it. I think moving forward, we would have more crop insurance and maybe not leave so many dried leaves under the trees to retain moisture.

Marty and Patricia Morehart
Morehart Ranch





PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016-2017

Cut Flowers

Crop	Year	Acres	Production	Unit	Per Unit	Total Value
Flower Blooms & Stems	2017	53	25,738,906	blooms	---	\$6,973,000
	2016	50	21,812,632	blooms	---	\$6,271,000
Cut Greens & Dried Flowers	2017	65	275,828	bunches	---	\$551,000
	2016	63	267,794	bunches	---	\$525,000
Flower Bunches - Total	2017	550	11,682,651	bunches	---	\$42,380,000
	2016	559	11,385,148	bunches	---	\$41,246,000
Statice, Lace, Aster & Gypsophila	2017	96	1,350,114	bunches	\$2.51	\$3,383,000
	2016	89	1,261,789	bunches	\$2.46	\$3,104,000
Chrysanthemums & Sunflowers	2017	52	2,084,265	bunches	\$1.92	\$4,012,000
	2016	51	2,080,105	bunches	\$1.91	\$3,973,000
Lilies & Irises	2017	138	3,893,261	bunches	\$5.75	\$22,402,000
	2016	130	3,571,799	bunches	\$5.78	\$20,645,000
Lisianthus	2017	25	541,807	bunches	\$3.89	\$2,110,000
	2016	30	483,756	bunches	\$3.94	\$1,906,000
Delphinium, Larkspur, Stock & Snapdragons	2017	173	2,638,902	bunches	\$3.17	\$8,370,000
	2016	197	2,948,494	bunches	\$3.32	\$9,789,000
Miscellaneous	2017	66	1,174,302	bunches	\$1.79	\$2,103,000
	2016	62	1,039,205	bunches	\$1.76	\$1,829,000
TOTAL	2017	668				\$49,904,000
	2016	672				\$48,042,000



Livestock & Poultry

PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016–2017

Item	Year	Production	Unit	Value	
				Per Unit	Total
Livestock	2017	18,499	cwt	---	\$2,147,000
Cattle, Hogs, Sheep & Goats	2016	20,554	cwt	---	\$2,025,000
Poultry	2017	---	---	---	\$2,304,000
Chickens & Eggs	2016	---	---	---	\$3,536,000
Other Livestock	2017	---	---	---	\$127,000
Alpaca & Squab	2016	---	---	---	\$146,000
TOTAL	2017				\$4,578,000
	2016				\$5,707,000

Field Crops

ACREAGE, PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016–2017

Crop	Year	Acreage	Total
Rangeland	2017	197,699	\$54,000
	2016	196,924	\$62,000
Pasture, Hay & Grain	2017	578	\$246,000
	2016	680	\$205,000
Seed & Dry Beans	2017	437	\$1,252,000
	2016	455	\$1,318,000
TOTAL	2017	198,714	\$1,552,000
	2016	198,059	\$1,585,000



PRODUCTION AND VALUES | 2016–2017

Apiary Products

Item	Year	Production	Unit	Value	
				Per Unit	Total
Honey	2017	339,742	lbs	\$4.96	\$1,686,000
	2016	257,380	lbs	\$4.75	\$1,222,000
Beeswax & Pollen	2017	19,391	lbs	\$3.61	\$70,000
	2016	17,160	lbs	\$3.96	\$68,000
Pollination Use	2017	---	---	---	\$1,990,000
	2016	---	---	---	\$1,496,000
TOTAL	2017				\$3,746,000
	2016				\$2,786,000

Sustainable Agriculture

Item	Agent	Target	Scope of Program
Biological Control Commercial Insectaries	Predatory Mites, Predatory Beetles, Predatory Wasps, Predatory Nematodes, Various Predatory Insects	Scale, Mealybug, Snails, Aphids, Mites, Whitefly, Psyllid, Thrip, Nematodes, Flies	665,658,925 beneficials, released on 13,080 acres Valued at \$2,272,000
Pest Mitigation	Mechanical/Digging	Dalmation Toadflax, Scotch Thistle, Euphorbia Terracina	1 site each
Pest Eradications	Mechanical/Digging	Spotted Knapweed	1 site
Pest Exclusion & Plant Quarantine*	<u>Incoming Shipments</u>		<u>Inspections</u>
	UPS/Fed Express (Shipments)	Various	2,078
	Truck/Air Freight	Various	935
	Household Goods (Inspections)	Gypsy Moth	38
	<u>Outgoing Shipments</u>		
	Federal Certificates	Various	14,070
	State Certificates	Various	673

* In 2017, Ventura County exported approximately 27 different commodities to 91 different countries



Organic Farming 2016–2017

Crops	Year	Acres	Total Value
Registered Growers	2017		169
	2016		155
Vegetables & Herbs	2017	2,500	\$30,227,000
	2016	2,290	\$40,708,000
Fruits & Nuts	2017	6,260	\$167,109,000
	2016	5,019	\$133,404,000
Field & Seed Crops	2017	81	\$23,000
	2016	81	\$2,846,000**
Cut Flowers & Nursery Stock	2017	9	\$26,000
	2016	7	\$56,000
Specialty Crops	2017	1	\$1,000
	2016	<1	<\$1,000
TOTAL*	2017	8,851	\$197,386,000
	2016	7,543	\$177,014,000

* Included in all other total values.
 ** The difference in values is the result of an error

Hard Decisions

The challenges we are facing due to the Thomas Fire are economic losses and financing the operation going forward. Not all of the costs scale down by the reduction in tree count. Then there's getting the replacement trees since the nurseries were sold out two years before the fire. We lost 60 percent of the orchard, 60 percent of the trees. It will take about ten years to fully recover from our losses. It will be two years before we can replant. We can't take out the whole ranch. Some blocks we can afford to take out all of the trees. Some blocks we'll just have to replace some of the damaged trees. Some blocks will be a harder decision. In the process of moving forward and what we would have done differently, we would have more water storage on the ranch and we would have generators. We lost power in the middle of the day on Monday, December 4th, six hours before the fire even started. We were refilling our water tank on Monday and the tank was only half full when the power went out. We ran out water by Wednesday, December 6th.

Gordon Kimball
 Kimball Ranch





Certified Farmers' Markets

City	Day/Time	Market	Type	Address	Contact
Camarillo	Sat 8 AM - 12 PM	Camarillo Hospice	y/r	2220 Ventura Blvd.	Ruff Smith 805-389-6870 info@camarillohospice.org
Ojai	Sun 9 AM - 1 PM	Ojai	y/r	300 E. Matilija St.	Cynthia Korman 805-698-5555 ojaifarmersmarket@cox.net
Oxnard	Sun 10 AM - 2 PM	Channel Islands Harbor	y/r	3350 S. Harbor Blvd. @ Cabezone Way, Harbor Side	Mariel Espinoza 818-591-8161 info@rawinspiration.org
Oxnard	Thu 9 AM - 2 PM	Downtown Oxnard	y/r	Downtown Plaza Park 500 S. C Street @ 5th and C St.	The Oxnard Heritage Foundation 805-247-0197 dofm_info@rock.com
Simi Valley	Fri 11 AM - 3:30 PM	Simi Valley @ Civic Center	y/r	Simi Civic Center Plaza Tapo Cyn @ Alamo St.	Mark Rochin 805-643-6458 pacific209@hotmail.com
Thousand Oaks	Thu 1:30 PM - 6 PM	Thousand Oaks	y/r	The Oaks Shopping Center 222 W. Hillcrest Dr. East End Parking Lot	Karen Wetzel Schott 805-529-6266 www.vccfarmersmarket.com
Ventura	Sat 8:30 AM - 12 PM	Downtown Ventura	y/r	Santa Clara and Palm St. City Parking Lot	Karen Wetzel Schott 805-529-6266 www.vccfarmersmarket.com
Ventura	Wed 9 AM - 1 PM	Midtown Ventura	y/r	Pacific View Mall Front West Parking Lot	Karen Wetzel Schott 805-529-6266 www.vccfarmersmarket.com
Ventura	Thu 3 PM - 7 PM	East Ventura	y/r	901 S Kimball Rd.	Patrice Powell 805-479-9699 openaireproduce@aol.com
Westlake Village	Sun 10 AM - 2 PM	Westlake Village	y/r	2797 Agoura Rd.	Fernando Oxa 818-591-8161 info@rawinspiration.org



Regrowth...

California avocado growers impacted by the Thomas Fire are in the process of rebuilding their damaged groves. Fire damage ranged from singed canopy on trees to the complete scorching of trees. Significant fruit loss also occurred within the fire damaged groves. Some growers have had to wait a few months to determine the full extent of the damage. Certain groves may have had fire spread throughout, but if the heat wasn't prolonged the trees might not have suffered internal damage. If the level of damage is not certain, growers have to wait and see how the tree responds with new growth and fruit set. Immediately after the fire, growers were in their groves replacing irrigation drip line to ensure any remaining 2018 avocado crop would continue to be irrigated and make it to market.

In working with the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner, the California Avocado Commission identified approximately 1,250 acres that were impacted by the Thomas Fire. Total fire damage estimate is around 20 million pounds, representing approximately five percent of the preseason forecasted 2018 statewide production total. Typically, within the California avocado industry, there is a one-year lead time on tree orders. In the aftermath of the Thomas Fire, tree orders were pushed out until 2020 and later. After planting it will take three to five years for the first production, and normal production levels won't occur until year seven or later.

The California Avocado Commission immediately began to coordinate with the United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service to provide federal assistance to impacted growers. This collaboration helped ensure growers that had experienced fire damage on their groves were quickly connected with the appropriate agencies. Also worth noting is the benefit avocado trees provided in serving as a hedge against the spread of the fire. In many instances the irrigated avocado groves stopped the fire's advancement, potentially saving many residential developments.

Ken Melban
California Avocado Commission



During the period of December 5th through February 28th, the Santa Maria Office staff and Templeton Office staff joined efforts in providing Federal emergency assistance to farmers and ranchers who lost part or all of their farming operations due to the Thomas Fire (Ventura County) and Mudslides (Santa Barbara County). During this time, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff



didn't hesitate to help with the emergencies. No one knew the fire would turn out to be the largest fire in California history. No one knew 22 individuals would lose their lives due to the mudslides. The following FSA employees worked long hours and many weekends attending outreach meetings, staffing Disaster and FEMA Centers, dealing with the media, talking to producers, and taking applications. Santa Barbara/Ventura Office: Daisy Banda, Brenda Marie, Tarry Hetzel and Alejandro Hernandez. San Luis Obispo Office: Denise Lopez, Emily Hutchings and Jody Lyon. Everyone continues to work diligently to make sure that the producers impacted by the fire and mudslides get FSA assistance.

Brenda Mann
USDA





and Regeneration

From an agricultural standpoint, the Thomas Fire was primarily an avocado and rangeland event. Because the fire stayed in the hills, it had relatively little impact on the berry and vegetable crops that grow on the valley floors and the coastal plain. But it inflicted severe damage on some of our hillside ranches, consuming forage needed for livestock, destroying barns, irrigation systems, equipment and machinery, and scorching or incinerating several thousand acres of avocado and citrus trees.

The rangeland is already recovering, as the vegetation naturally regenerates. Citrus within the fire perimeter suffered only marginal losses, as lemon, orange and mandarin orchards are generally quite fire-resistant. But for the hardest-hit avocado groves, recovery will take years. Thousands of trees were scorched enough to drop their fruit and leaves, and thousands more were exposed to such intense heat that it boiled the sap inside them. Those trees will have to be replaced, a process that will take several years because of the backlog of orders at nurseries. And once the new trees are in the ground, it will take several more years before they are producing commercial volumes of fruit. Even the survivors may never produce as well as they did before the fire. It's likely that we will still be tallying the losses from Thomas a decade from now.

John Krist

*Chief Executive Officer
Farm Bureau of
Ventura County*



One of the biggest challenges of the Thomas Fire is the fact that it's impossible to get any more trees to do replants for several years. We lost about 15% of our orchards on the edges. One orchard got slammed pretty hard because it had a brushy area below it. I would have replanted this summer had trees been available, but the other question mark is water, so it kind of worked out. We have to reduce our water consumption by about 20% and since I lost about 15% of our trees, nature has its ways of making things even. Although we lost about 15% of the actual trees in the fire, some of them have come back, but I don't think they will ever be the way they were. The wind scarring that happened on our Valencia oranges in particular is pretty extensive. Ugly fruit that didn't fall off the trees, but it is downgraded at the packing house. It's going to be a few years before we recover from our losses. I don't know how long it's going to take. We need to replant and regrow trees. That's a ten year gap of lost income. And again, water being a limiting factor in all of this as well. My dad and my grandfather had always said to clear the edges of the orchards when there's free time, but because I kind of like the shade of an oak tree I wasn't as diligent about clearing the edges. In hindsight, I should have listened to those older generations who know what happens when you don't clear your edges. So, moving forward, I think I will do a little more brush clearance year round and ideally have more controlled burns because this will happen again.

Emily T. Ayala & Tony Thacher
Friends Ranch





www.ventura.org/agricultural-commissioner
Office of Agricultural Commissioner • 555 Airport Way, Suite E • Camarillo, CA 93010
Telephone (805) 388-4343 • FAX (805) 388-4331