



Chapter 9 Agriculture

9 AGRICULTURE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of agriculture in Ventura County, including the conditions that provide a conducive growing environment, crop patterns and production characteristics, economic impacts and benefits, and policies and programs that affect agriculture. This chapter includes the following sections:

- Agricultural Resources (Section 9.1)
- Agricultural Production (Section 9.2)
- Agricultural Policies and Programs (Section 9.3)

SECTION 9.1 AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

This section describes resources in Ventura County that create a conducive environment for crop production including suitable soil types, access to water, and farmland classification.

Major Findings

- Approximately 65 percent of soil types within Ventura County are suitable for agricultural production.
- According to the 2013 Ventura County Water Supply and Demand Report, the total demand for water used solely for agricultural irrigation decreased by approximately 34,000 acre feet (AF) or 11.75 percent between 1992 and 2013.
- Between 2004 and 2016, land designated as Prime Farmland decreased by 6,216 acres or 13.17 percent, and land designated as Farmland of Statewide Importance decreased by 1,987 acres or 5.68 percent.
- Approximately 430,000 acres (77 percent) of land designated as part of the Important Farmland Land Program by the Department of Conservation is in the unincorporated county. The remaining 126,000 acres (23 percent) of land is within incorporated cities.
- As of 2016, the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program identified approximately 197,859 acres of Grazing Land in Ventura County.

Existing Conditions

Soils

The classification of soils and their distribution in Ventura County reflect the diversity of the geography and terrain. The attributes of soil types vary with respect to texture, drainage qualities, and composition. The National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) oversees the organization and classification of these soils. The soil classifications are combined into soil associations to create a more clear and concise overview. The soil associations are based on NRCS soil types as identified by the University of California Cooperative Extension. The University of California has identified 14 soil associations within the county, each composed of minor and major soil classifications. The soil associations are grouped based on slope and elevation since both factors dictate the types of commodities that can be grown in specific regions. Table 9-1 shows the 14 associations in the ascending order of slope and elevation, including the percent of the county comprising the association.

TABLE 9-1 SOIL ASSOCIATIONS Ventura County				
#	Soil Association	Slope Variation	Elevation Range	Percent of County
1	Pico-Metz-Anacapa	0% - 9%	25-1,000 feet	7%
2	Mocho – Sorrento - Garretson	0% - 9%	25-1,700 feet	14%
3	Camarillo – Hueneme - Pacheco	0% - 2%	25-250 feet	8%
4	Riverwash – Sandy Alluvial Land – Coastal Beaches	0% - 5%	Sea Level-800 feet	4%
5	Rincon – Huerhuero - Azule	0% - 30%	100-500 feet	5%
6	Ojai – Sorrento, Heavy Variant	0% - 30%	25-1,700 feet	2%
7	San Benito – Nacimiento - Linne	9% - 75%	100-2,000 feet	15%
8	Castaic – Balcom - Saugas	9% - 75%	500-2,500 feet	8%
9	Calleguas – Arnold	9% - 50%	100-2,200 feet	9%
10	Gazes – Saint Lucia	15% - 75%	100-2,500 feet	3%
11	Millsholm – Malibu - Los Osos	9% - 75%	100-2,500 feet	6%
12	Sespe-Lodo	15% - 75%	300-2,000 feet	4%
13	Sedimentary Rock Land – Gaviota Association	15% - 73%	100-2,500 feet	6%
14	Hambright- Igneous Rock Land - Gilroy	9% - 75%	100-3,000 feet	9%
Total	100%			

Source: University of California Cooperative Extension: Agriculture and Natural Resources Ventura County, 2016.

Approximately 65 percent of the soil associations in the county have the capacity to produce varying amounts and types of agricultural commodities. Typically, gentler slopes can produce the largest crop variety including strawberries, irrigated vegetables, row crops, and citrus. The steeper the elevation, the more rooted the crops must be, which tends to favor tree nuts, avocados, and citrus crops. The remaining 35 percent of soil associations in the county either cannot support agricultural production due to slope, soil composition, access to water, and elevation, or the capacity for production is minimal. Figure 9-1 depicts the general location of the soil associations in the county. The color scale provided illustrates the fertility of the soil with the lighter shades representing soils which are most likely to result in crop production, and the darker shades of the colors being less likely to sustain agricultural production.

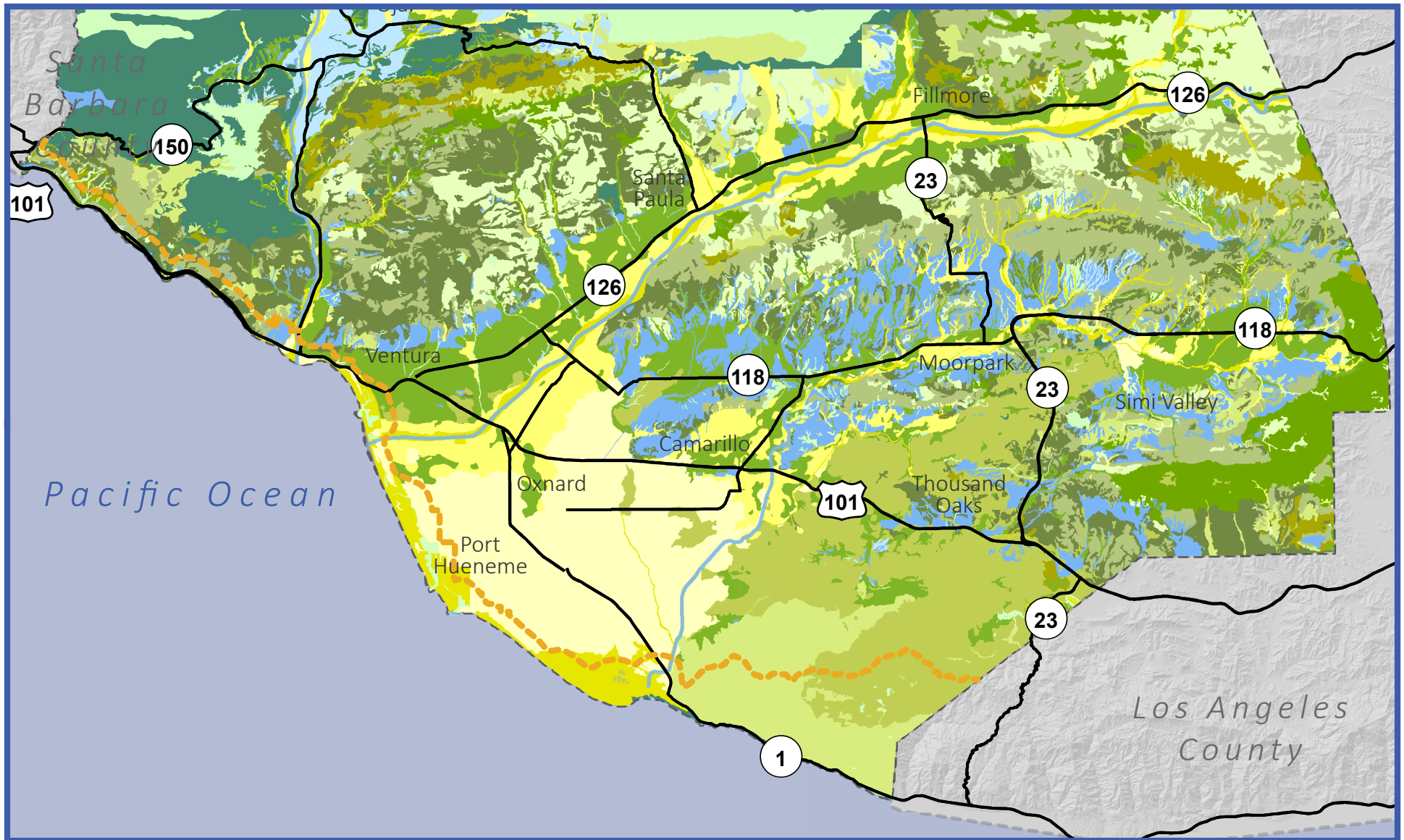
The most fertile soil association is Pico-Metz-Anacapa. This association accounts for seven percent of the soils in the county, and is generally located in temperate climates near the coast, with an average soil depth of 60 inches or more. The Pico-Metz-Anacapa Association has a shallow slope no greater than nine percent, allowing water to percolate into the ground easier, unlike areas with steep terrain, which can induce excessive runoff. Similar to Pico-Metz-Anacapa, the Mocho-Sorrento-Garretson Association yields a majority of agricultural products, spanning 14 percent of the county. Mocho-Sorrento-Garretson Association is a well-drained soil, with 60 inches or more in soil depth. This soils location is generally not far from the coastline, providing a temperate climate between 60–62 degrees Fahrenheit on average.

In contrast, the Riverwash-Sandy Alluvial Land-Coastal Beaches and Sedimentary Rock Land-Gaviota soil associations are the least productive, noted to have limited, to no capacity in sustaining agricultural production. The Riverwash Soil Association accounts for four percent of the soil in the county and is primarily located directly adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. The association is not suited for production due to the high concentration of salt water intrusion and sandy composition, lowering the necessary mineral, and chemicals to sustain crop production.

Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

The California Department of Conservation established the Important Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) in 1982 in response to the lack of data on agricultural land, grazing land, and developed areas. The intent of the program is to provide data and maps of the status of farmland in California, when planning for the state’s agricultural resources. In response to the need of this critical data, the State enacted Government Code 65570 which requires a biennial report to the State Legislature outlining the conversion rates of farmland. In addition to the report, the Department of Conservation prepared an automated database system to track, report, and record farmland conversions.

The most recent data (2016) from the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) inventoried over 555,000 acres of land in Ventura County, classifying over 118,000 acres of land as Important Farmland. Over 430,000 of the acres inventoried are in the unincorporated county, while the remaining 126,000 acres are part of incorporated cities. FMMP classifies land into five agricultural categories (Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance, and Grazing Land) and three non-agricultural categories (Urban and Built-up Land, Other Land, Water). Four of the five agricultural categories (excluding Grazing Land) are considered important farmland due to soil temperature range, permeability rate, acid-alkali balance, moisture regime, proximity to water sources, water capacity, and climate. The fifth category, grazing land, contains vegetation suitable for livestock grazing. Below are the categories and definitions used by both the FMMP and Ventura County.



**Figure 9-1:
Soil Associations**

Map Date: May 31, 2016

Source: Ventura County, 2016; California Department of Transportation, 2007; USGS, 2013; University of California Cooperative Extension, Agriculture and Natural Resources Ventura County, 2016.

0 4.5 9 Miles



Coastal Zone Boundary

Major Roadways

Major Waterways

Soil Associations

Pico-Metz-Anacapa Association

Mocho-Sorrento-Garretson Association

Camarillo-Hueneme-Pacheco Association

Riverwash-Sandy Alluvial Land-Coastal Beaches

Rincon-Huerhuero-Azule Association

Ojai Sorrento-Heavy Variant Association

San Benito-Nacimiento-Linne Association

Castaic-Balcom-Saugus Association

Calleguas-Arnold Association

Gazes-Santa Lucia Association

Millsholm-Malibu-Los Osos Association

Sespe-Lodo Association

Sedimentary Rock Land-Gaviota Association

Hamhright-Igneous Rock Land-Gilroy Association

- **Prime Farmland:** Has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Prime Farmland must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Statewide Importance:** Similar to Prime Farmland but with minor shortcomings, such as greater slopes and less ability to store soil moisture. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Unique Farmland:** Consists of lesser quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.
- **Farmland of Local Importance:** Consists of local soils that are listed as Prime or Statewide Importance that are not irrigated, and soils growing dryland crops (i.e. beans, grain, dryland walnuts, or dryland apricots).
- **Grazing Land:** Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.
- **Urban and Built-up Land:** Land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit per 1.5 acres, or approximately 6 structures to a 10-acre parcel. Common examples include residential, industrial, commercial, institutional facilities, cemeteries, airports, golf courses, sanitary landfills, sewage treatment, and water control structures.
- **Other Land:** Is not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural residential developments, brush, timber, wetland, and riparian area not suitable for livestock grazing, confined livestock, poultry, or aquaculture facilities, strip mines borrow pits, and water bodies smaller than 40 acres. Vacant and non-agricultural land surrounded by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as other land.
- **Water:** Consists of perennial water bodies at least 40 acres in size.

The distribution of Important Farmland in Ventura County is shown in Figure 9-2. Prime Farmland is primarily located on the valley floor, stretching from the Pacific Ocean to Piru. The highest concentration is along the Highway 126 corridor from Ventura to Santa Paula and from Santa Paula to the Los Angeles County line. Farmland of Statewide Importance is distributed throughout the county in large swaths around Ventura, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, Fillmore, and Ojai. Lesser value farmland categories are located on the fringe of the valley, while grazing land covers much of the foothills from Lake Casitas and Lake Piru south to the communities of Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley along the Los Angeles County line.

The FMMP classifies 118,508 acres of land in Ventura County as Prime, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique, or Farmland of Local Importance. Of that total, 35 percent or 40,976 acres, is designated Prime Farmland, as shown in Table 9-2.¹

¹ Small data discrepancies exist between the Department of Conservation GIS shapefiles and excel summary document, but the discrepancies are insignificant.

TABLE 9-2
IMPORTANT FARMLAND, 2016
Ventura County

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage of Total Land	Percentage of Ag Land	Percentage of Important Farmland
Prime Farmland	40,976	7%	13%	35%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	32,992	6%	10%	28%
Unique Farmland	28,950	5%	9%	24%
Farmland of Local Importance	15,590	3%	5%	13%
Important Farmland Total*	118,508	21%	37%	100%
Grazing Land	197,859	36%	63%	N/A
Agricultural Land Subtotal	316,367	57%	N/A	N/A
Urban and Built-Up Land	105,966	19%	N/A	N/A
Other Land	129,688	23%	N/A	N/A
Water	3,938	1%	N/A	N/A
Total	555,959	100%	N/A	N/A

Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2016

Note*: Important Farmland recognized by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program includes Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance

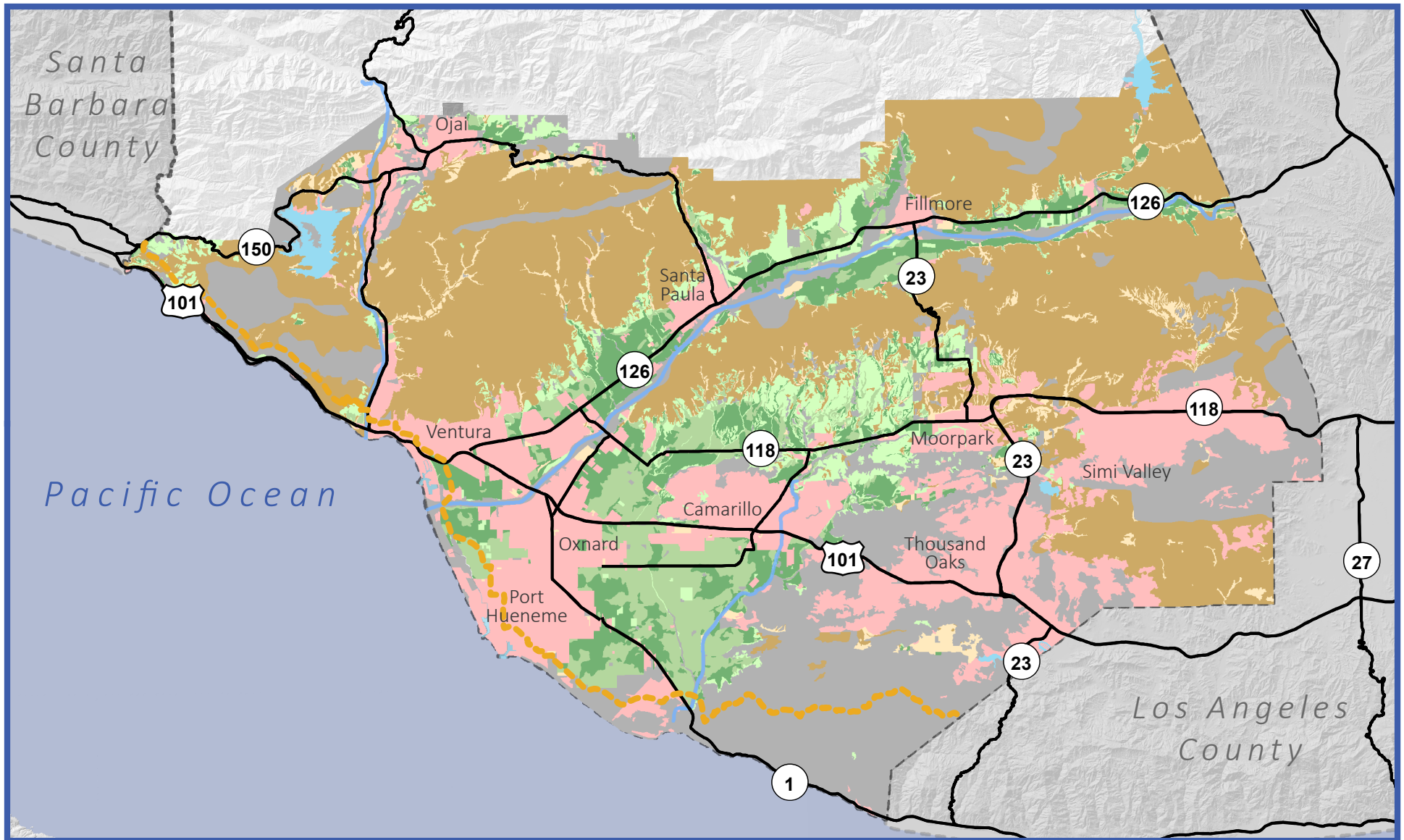


Figure 9-2:
Important Farmland Mapping

Map Date: October 03, 2017

Source: Ventura County, 2016; California Department of Conservation, 2016, California Department of Transportation, 2007; USGS, 2013.

0 5 10 Miles



--- Coastal Zone Boundary

— Major Roadways

— Major Waterways

Prime Farmland

Farmland of Statewide Importance

Unique Farmland

Farmland of Local Importance

Grazing Land

Urban and Built Up Land

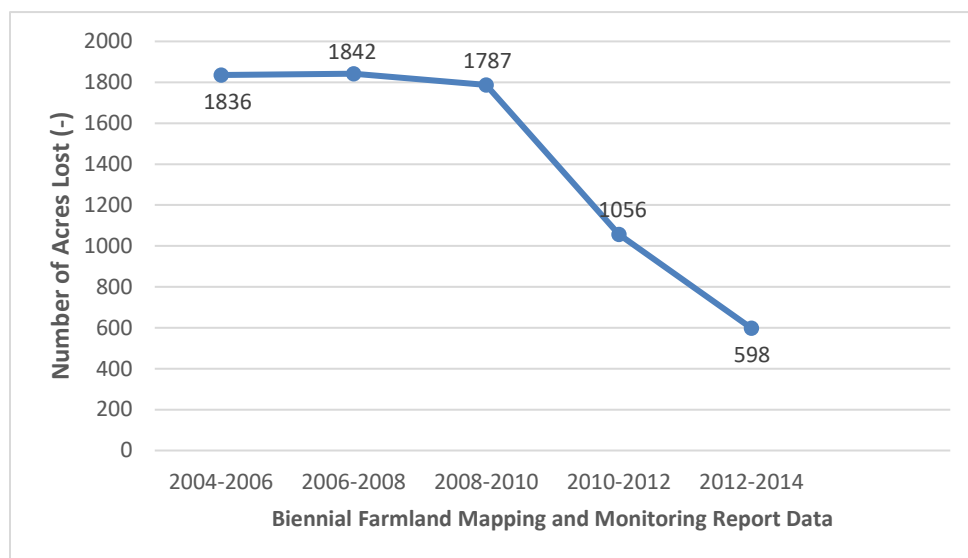
Water

Other Land

Between 2004 and 2012 over 6,000 acres of Prime Farmland were converted to numerous categories, both agricultural and non-agricultural. Prime Farmland conversion rates reached record lows in the 2014-2016 cycle, with 167 acres converted (see Figure 9-3). The Department of Conservation provided the following explanations for the conversions:

- **Irrigated Farmland to Urban Land (2 changes):** Rancho Campana High School (~30 acres) in Camarillo and addition of 15 acres of housing to the southwest of Santa Paula at the intersection of Foothill and Pine Roads.
- **Non-Irrigated Farmland and Other Land to Urban Land (18 changes):** These conversions were primarily due to new home construction. Leading the way was Moorpark with six additions of new homes, totaling 70 acres. Next was Oxnard which saw the addition of approximately 50 acres of new homes in the Riverpark development. Similarly, Camarillo added approximately 50 acres of new homes. Smaller-scale additions of new homes occurred in Ventura (~20 acres), Simi Valley (~15 acres), Fillmore (~15 acres), and Thousand Oaks (~10 acres).
- **Irrigated Farmland to Non-Irrigated Land Uses (28 changes):** This is land previously indicated as irrigated farmland or irrigated or non-irrigated fields that was left fallow for three or more cycles. The areas that showed the most conversion from irrigated farmland were Moorpark (6 changes) and Santa Paula (6 changes). The majority of the conversions were for 20 acres or less. The largest conversion to non-irrigated land uses was for 60 acres and occurred nearby Moorpark. These formerly irrigated lands will be converted to Farmland of Local Importance if they are on high quality soils, as determined by the USDA, or to Grazing Land if on lesser quality soils.
- **Irrigated Farmland to Other Land (6 changes):** These conversions were primarily due to the delineation of rural commercial uses, ranchettes, and farmsteads. One conversion was due to an area of former irrigated farmland that had been fallow for three updates and had been graded for development. These changes were generally between 10-20 acres in size.
- **Non-Irrigated Land Uses and Other Land to Irrigated Farmland (30 changes):** Additions of irrigated farmland were primarily due to new irrigated orchards such as citrus and avocados along with a few additions of row crops and nurseries. The most numerous additions of irrigated farmland were seen in Moorpark (11 changes) and Piru (7 changes). The majority of the additions of irrigated farmland made this update were for less than 20 acres. However, there were three notable additions that were for 50 acres or more. First, an addition of orchards (~90 acres), likely citrus or avocado, was made to the northeast of Santa Paula. Next, approximately 70 acres of citrus orchards were an addition in the Upper Ojai Valley. Finally, new orchards (~50 acres), likely citrus or avocado, were in evidence to the east of Fillmore near Sulphur Mountain.

**FIGURE 9-3
PRIME FARMLAND LAND USE CONVERSION
2004-2016
Ventura County, California**



Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, Division of Land Resource Protection, Farmland Conversion Reports 2004-2016

Grazing Land conversion rates have been relatively steady from 2004 to 2016, with a 228-acre loss over this period. The 2014-2016 Department of Conservation Farmland Conversion Report noted 832 acres of Grazing Land being converted, with approximately 658 acres being converted to Important Farmland. This trend can be attributed to previously fallow fields having the necessary irrigation infrastructure to sustain agriculture. As of 2016, the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program identified approximately 197,859 acres of Grazing Land in Ventura County. Table 9-3 summarizes the changes in land usage for the 2004-2016 period based on the biennial Farmland Conversion Reports. The amount of Important Farmland declined by approximately 7.5 percent between 2004 and 2016. The only categories that increased in acreage were Urban and Built-up (approximately 4.0 percent) and Other Land (4.6 percent), as shown in Figure 9-3. Tables from each of the 2004-2016 reporting periods can be found in Appendix 9.A (Table 9.A-1 through Table 9.A-6).

TABLE 9-3
IMPORTANT FARMLAND CHANGES, 2004-2014
Ventura County

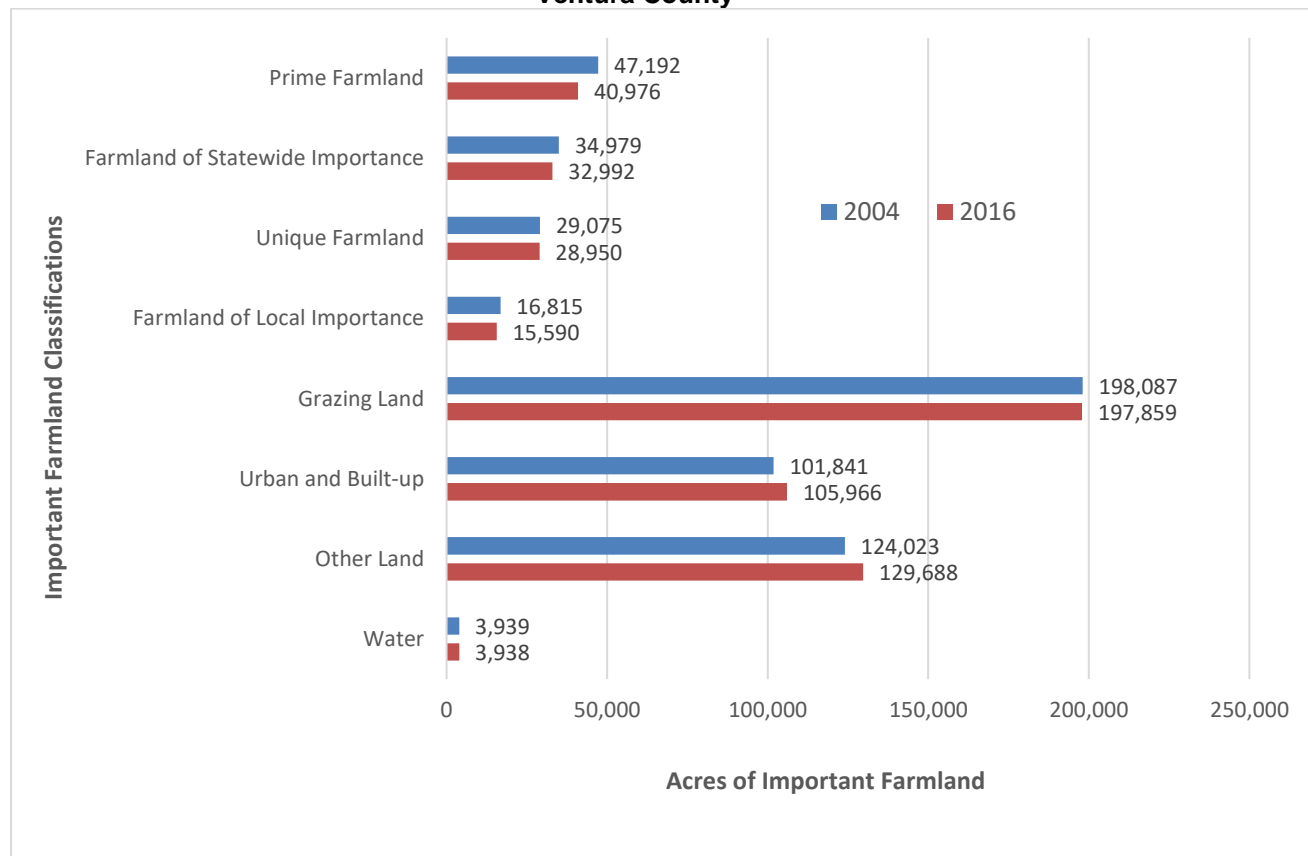
Land Use Category	2004 Acres	2016 Acres	2004-2016 Change (Acres)	Percent Change
Prime Farmland	47,192	40,976	-6,216	-13.17%
Farmland of Statewide Importance	34,979	32,992	-1,987	-5.68%
Unique Farmland	29,075	28,950	-125	-0.43%
Farmland of Local Importance	16,815	15,590	-1,225	-7.29%
Important Farmland Total*	128,061	118,508	-9,553	-7.46%
Grazing Land	198,087	197,859	-228	-0.12%
Urban and Built-Up Land	101,841	105,966	4,125	4.05%
Other Land	124,023	129,688	5,665	4.57%
Water	3,939	3,938	-1	--
Total	555,951	555,959		

Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2004-2016

Note*: Important Farmland recognized by the Farmland Mapping Program includes: Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, Farmland of Local Importance

Note**: Important Farmland acreages provided include both incorporated and unincorporated land, excluding all land in the Los Padres National Forest

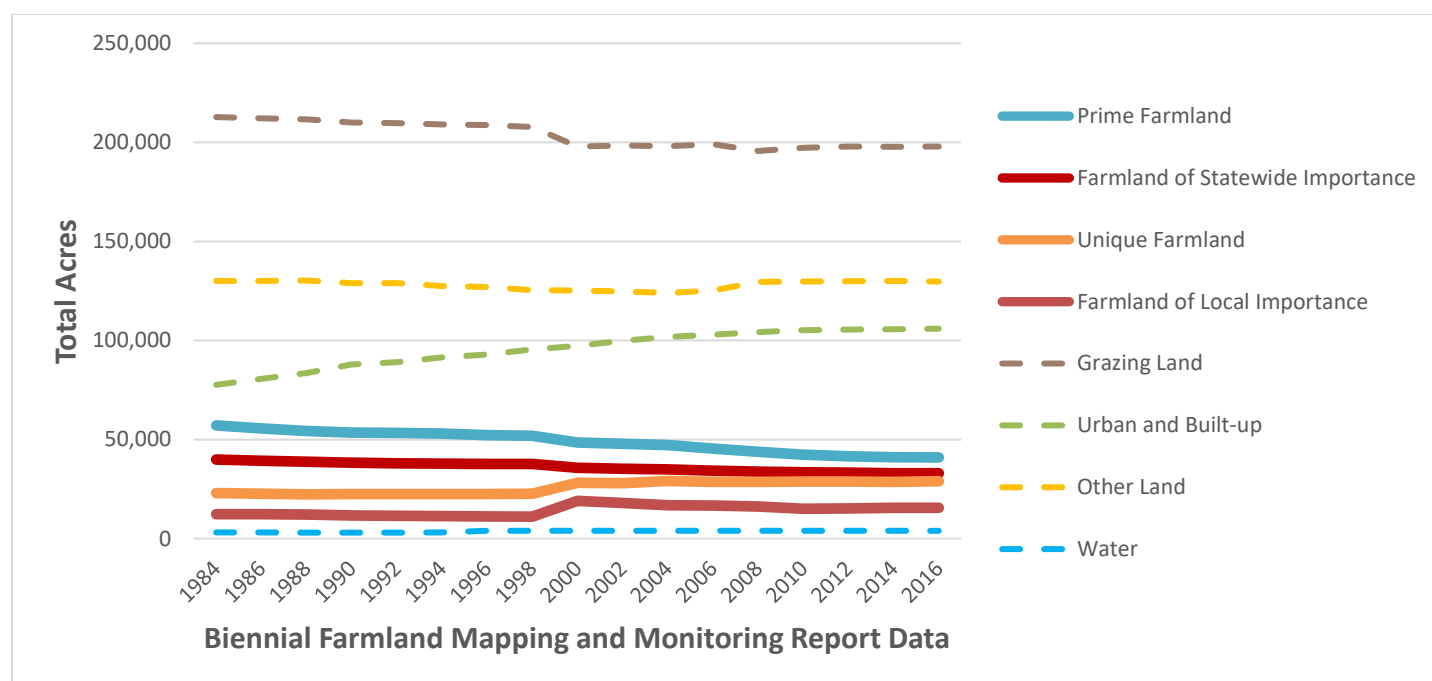
FIGURE 9-4
FMMP ACREAGE TOTALS, 2004-2016
Ventura County



Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2004-2016

Figure 9-5 summarizes the changes in Important Farmland from 1984 to 2016. As shown, almost all Important Farmland categories have been on the decline over the 30-year period. Unique Farmland was the only Important Farmland category that has continued to increase, with 22,900 acres in 1984 and 28,700 acres in 2016. Prime Farmland decreased approximately 16,000 acres. The reduction of farmland can be attributed to the increase in urbanization in the mid to late 1980s, and again in the mid-1990s. Urban and Built-up Land increased over 28,000 acres during this period. Important Farmland Conversion Data from 1984-2012 can be found in Appendix 9.A (see Table 9.A-7).

FIGURE 9-5
FMMP ACREAGE CONVERSION DATA, 1984-2016
Ventura County



Source: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 1984-2016

Water

Water is crucial to agricultural production, and its availability and source of supply vary depending on location. According to the Ventura County 2013 Water Supply and Demand Report, agricultural water demand accounts for approximately 57.3 percent or 255,300 AF of total water use in the county, compared to 42.7 percent for municipal and industrial uses. This was a 10.7 percent decrease (34,000 AF) in water demand for agriculture since 1992, when 68 percent (289,300 AF) was used for agricultural irrigation. In contrast, the total water demand for municipal and industrial uses increased by 10.7 percent from 1992 to 2013 in part due to increased urbanization and population in the county. Figure 9-6 shows the types (e.g., groundwater, surface water, recycled water, imported water) and distribution of water sources used for agricultural irrigation in 2013.

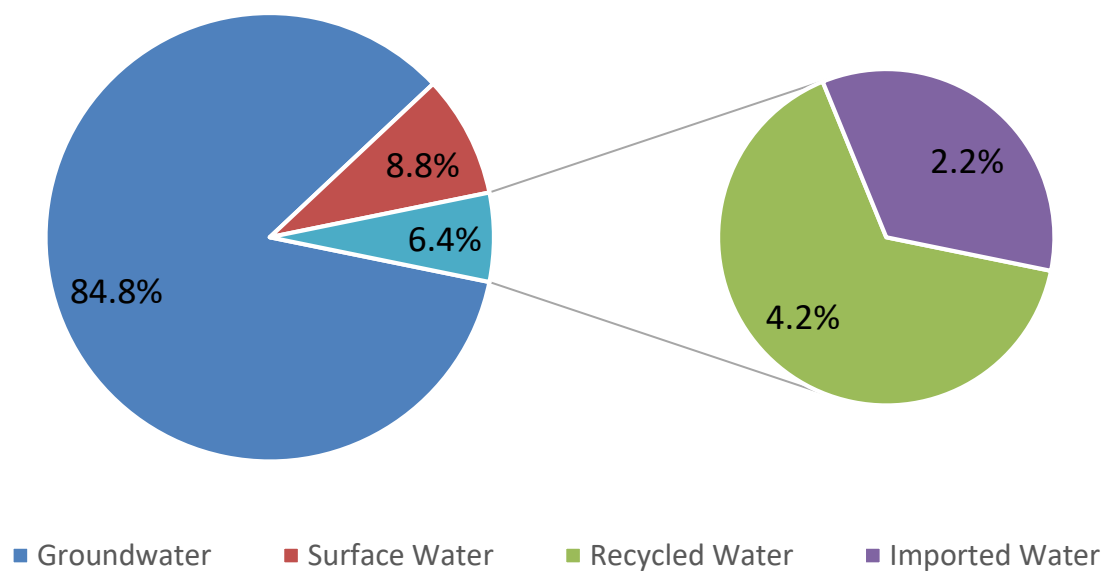
The high demand for water can be attributed to crop types in the county that are considered water intensive to sustain production. [Table 9-4](#) outlines the amount of water needed for a select group of crops

in Ventura County. Most water used for agriculture in Ventura County is extracted from three watersheds: Ventura River, Calleguas Creek, and Santa Clara River (see Figure 9-7).

TABLE 9-4 WATER USE BY CROP TYPE, 2014 Ventura County							
<u>Most Water Intensive Foods</u>	<u>Gallons of H₂O per lb. of food</u>	<u>Medium Water Intensive Foods</u>	<u>Gallons of H₂O per lb. of food</u>	<u>Acre Feet of H₂O per lb. of food</u>	<u>Less Water Intensive Foods</u>	<u>Gallons of H₂O per lb. of food</u>	<u>Acre Feet of H₂O per lb. of food</u>
<u>Avocados</u>	<u>262</u>	<u>Apricots*</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>0.0005</u>	<u>Cucumbers</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>0.0001</u>
<u>Walnuts (shelled)*</u>	<u>1,226</u>	<u>Apples*</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>0.0003</u>	<u>Strawberries</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>0.0001</u>
		<u>Lemons</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>0.0002</u>	<u>Broccoli</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>0.0001</u>
		<u>Green Beans</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>0.0002</u>	<u>Lettuce</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>0.00009</u>
		<u>Oranges</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>0.0002</u>	<u>Tomatoes</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>0.00008</u>
<i>*Specified crops grown in limited quantities in Ventura County.</i>							
<i>Source: Ecoloav.com. How Water Intensive Food Choices Impact California's Drought, 2014</i>							

TABLE 9-4 WATER USE BY CROP TYPE, 2014 Ventura County					
Most Water Intensive Foods	Gallons of H ₂ O per lb. of food	Medium Water Intensive Foods	Gallons of H ₂ O per lb. of food	Less Water Intensive Foods	Gallons of H ₂ O per lb. of food
Avocados	262	Apricots*	170	Cucumbers	47
Walnuts (shelled)*	1,226	Apples*	117	Strawberries	46
		Lemons	85	Broccoli	38
		Green Beans	74	Lettuce	31
		Oranges	74	Tomatoes	28
*Specified crops grown in limited quantities in Ventura County.					
Source: Ecology.com, How Water Intensive Food Choices Impact California's Drought, 2014					

FIGURE 9-6
AGRICULTURAL WATER SOURCES, 2013
Ventura County



Source: 2013 Water Supply and Demand Report: Ventura County

**FIGURE 9-7
WATERSHEDS AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS
Ventura County, California**



Source: Ventura County Watershed Protection District 2013 Water Supply and Demand, January 2015.

The Integrated Water Flow Model (IWFM) Demand Calculator (IDC) divides the county into nine subregions to calculate and analyze moisture zones, evapotranspiration, precipitation, soil characteristics and water demand (Figure 9-7). IDC calculations are based on the estimates for specific crop irrigation, climate trends, prior water usage, and population projections. In 2013, the IDC projected water demand by subregion (Table 9-5). The Santa Clara River Subregion was projected to have the highest total agricultural demand (at approximately 114,919 AF). The Calleguas Creek and Ventura River Subregions round out the top three, with projected demand of 112,701 AF and 11,745 AF, respectively. The Hall Canyon/Arundell and South Coast Subregions registered the lowest agricultural water demand of 815 AF and 86 AF, respectively. This result can be attributed to the fact that these areas have very limited amounts of agricultural land.

Ventura County actively continues to use surface water for in-stream and environmental uses. The intent is to minimize surface flow rates to protect and maintain habitats for local wildlife, fish, riparian habitats, and reptiles. According to the Ventura County 2013 Water Supply Demand Report, the following are existing in-stream and environmental uses of surface water:

- United Water Conservation District Freeman Diversion on the Santa Clara River provides bypass flows for migration of steelhead trout.
- City of Thousand Oaks surface water diversion on Conejo Creek in the Calleguas Creek watershed provides bypass flows for the protection of fish, wildlife, southwestern pond turtles, and riparian habitat and vegetation.
- Casitas Municipal Water District Robles Diversion on the Ventura River provides bypass flows for migration of steelhead trout.
- Additionally, the City of Ventura Foster Park well extracts shallow groundwater that is connected to the Ventura River. A draft biological opinion recommends restricting pumping in the Foster Park well field to prevent Ventura River flows from falling below 11-12 cubic feet per second.

TABLE 9-5 PROJECTED WATER DEMAND BY SUBREGION Ventura County 2013			
Sub region	Total Agricultural Demand (Acre-Feet)	Total Municipal/Domestic Demand (Acre-Feet)	Total Demand (Acre-Feet)
Hall Canyon/Arundell	815	9,924	10,739
Calleguas Creek	112,701	89,335	202,037
Rincon	5,727	1,848	7,575
Ormond Beach	2,797	22,913	25,710
Santa Clara River	114,919	31,284	146,203
Cuyama	5,452	0	5,452
Malibu Creek	1,083	19,291	20,374
South Coast	86	2,035	2,121
Ventura River	11,745	13,351	25,096
Total	255,326	189,982	445,308

Source: Ventura County Watershed Protection District 2013 Water Supply and Demand, January 2015.

In 2013, the actual water demand for agriculture was lower than the IDC demand projections. For example, the Santa Clara River Watershed, which contains the most agricultural land requiring groundwater for irrigation, accounted for a demand of 90,000 AF. This was lower than the anticipated 114,000 AF projection, due to increased urbanization in the watershed area. In the Santa Clara River Watershed, surface water is also used, but with a relatively small demand of 8,000 AF.

Over the past decade encroachment from urban development has begun to reduce the amount of water extraction for agricultural irrigation. The Calleguas Creek Watershed, like the Santa Clara River Watershed, supplies most of groundwater to agricultural operations with a demand of 88,000 AF. Users within the Calleguas Creek Watershed also use recycled water (10,700 AF), surface water (5,800 AF), and imported water (5,500 AF) for irrigation. Imported water is provided by the State Water Project through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, which distributes water throughout Ventura County.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)

The Farmland Protection and Policy Act (FPPA), 7 U.S.C. 4201, was enacted in 1981 to minimize the loss of prime and unique farmlands as a result of Federal actions by converting these lands to nonagricultural uses. It assures that federal programs are compatible with state and local governments, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Federal agencies that authorize actions that result in the conversion of prime or unique farmland not already committed to urban development or water storage are responsible for compliance with the FPPA. Compliance is to be coordinated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

State

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Section 65570(b) of the California Government Code

This statute requires the Department of Conservation to collect or acquire information on the amount of land converted to or from agricultural use for every mapped county in California and to report this information to the Legislature. This report is due biennially (every two years) on or before June 30 of every even-numbered year and includes the Important Farmland Inventory data. This statute requires the Department of Conservation to update and send copies to the counties throughout the state of current farmland maps by August 1 of each even-numbered year. Counties have the option to review the maps and notify the Department of any changes in agricultural land and request correction of any discrepancies or errors in the classification of agricultural lands on the maps. The statute also provides that the Department of Conservation may acquire supplemental information from new soil surveys and establish comparable baseline data for counties not included in the original 1984 mapping.

Local

2005 Ventura County General Plan

The General Plan covers agricultural resources in Chapter 1, Resources. Sections 1.6 and 3.2 include goals, policies, and programs related to agricultural resources. The following Area Plans also contain applicable goals and policies related to agricultural resources:

- Coastal Area Plan;
- El Rio/Del Norte Area Plan;
- North Ventura Avenue Area Plan;
- Ojai Valley Area Plan;
- Piru Area Plan;
- Saticoy Area Plan; and
- Lake Sherwood/Hidden Valley Area Plan.

2011 Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

The Initial Study Assessment Guidelines include criteria for evaluating environmental impacts for agricultural resources. These can be found in Section 5a. Agricultural Resources-Soils and Section 5b. Agricultural Resources-Land Use Incompatibility.

2015 Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural resources through Section 8104-1 Open Space/Agricultural Zones.

2016 Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural resources through Section 8173-2 Coastal Agricultural (CA) Zone.

Key Terms

AF. Acre-feet

Alluvial. Sediment deposited by flowing water, such as in a riverbed.

IDC. Integrated Water Flow Model Demand Calculator

Groundwater. Water that occurs beneath the land surface and completely fills all pore spaces of the alluvium or rock formation in which it is located.

Hydrological. The distribution and cycle of surface and underground water.

Soil Association. A group of soils associated with one or more classifications and which occur in a predictable pattern.

Surface Water. Water that collects on the surface of the ground.

Watershed. A land area that drains to a common waterway, such as a stream, lake, or other water body.

SECTION 9.2 AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Introduction

This section summarizes agricultural production in Ventura County, including commodities produced, market value, the farm characteristics, including the number of farms, the size of farming operations, and the types of farm operators. This section also addresses organic farming, commodity values and trends, and the potential for an expanded food processing sector.

Major Findings

- Ventura County is the eighth largest agricultural producing county in the State, with over 95 varieties of crops and 2,150 farms totaling over 281,000 acres.
- The average farm size in 2012 was 131 acres, which represents a 21 percent increase from 2007, when the average farm size was 106 acres.

Existing Conditions

Ventura County ranked eighth among California counties in total crop value in 2015, according to the compilation by the California Department of Food and Agriculture of the California County Agricultural Commissioner's annual crop and livestock reports. The most recent national data ranked Ventura County eleventh among all crop producing counties in the United States. Ventura County has a temperate climate with warm wet winters and calm, hot dry summers that support fertile soils and a wide diversity in commodity production, including strawberries, celery, lemons, raspberries, avocados, nursery stock, tomatoes, peppers, cut flowers and kale. The areas that sustain growth of agricultural commodities have a broad range of characteristics. For example, berry production requires a temperate moist climate, so most strawberry production is found close to the coast, surrounding the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Port Hueneme. The climate tends to be dryer and warmer further from the coast, favoring citrus crops. Specifically, the Highway 126 and 150 corridors are prime areas for citrus growth. The fertile soil combined with ideal temperate seasonal temperatures allow lemons, oranges, and mandarins to thrive. Some commodity types such as avocados and nursery stock can sustain growth in a variety of climate regions, allowing them to flourish countywide primarily on well-drained hillsides.

Commodities and Values

Ventura County's agricultural sector serves as one of its leading economic drivers. The Office of the Agricultural Commissioner for Ventura County provides annual reports detailing the leading crops in production for the given year, including the gross value of commodities produced. The most recent Crop and Livestock Report for Ventura County is for 2015 and was published in 2016. The report highlights eight sectors of the agricultural economy, grouped into crop types:

- Fruit and Nut Crops
- Vegetable Crops
- Livestock and Poultry
- Apiary Products
- Nursery Stock
- Cut Flowers
- Field Crops
- Sustainable Agriculture

Farms in Ventura County generated over \$2.1 billion in agricultural products in 2015 (Table 9-6), although farmers may or may not earn a profit in any year. Fruit and nut crops had the highest gross value in 2015, at approximately \$1.3 billion. Horticultural products, which include the nursery and cut flower industry, increased in value but continue to fall short of values prior to the 2004-2008 recession which exceeded \$300 million annually. In 2015, field and vegetable crops experienced an increase of 4.5 percent over the past year. The decrease in crop values from 2013 to 2014 can be attributed to the drought in California. Ventura County only recorded 5.42 inches of rain in 2014, the county's second lowest recorded total rainfall since 1930.

TABLE 9-6 AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT SALES TRENDS, 2010-2014 Ventura County				
Year	Total Aggregate Value*	Field Crops and Vegetables	Fruits and Tree Nuts	Horticulture
2010	\$1,859,151,000	\$535,936,000	\$1,085,677,000	\$227,405,000
2011	\$1,844,260,000	\$491,917,000	\$1,124,860,000	\$216,010,000
2012	\$1,963,798,000	\$462,771,000	\$1,254,592,000	\$233,180,000
2013	\$2,094,915,000	\$569,196,000	\$1,280,274,000	\$233,968,000
2014	\$2,137,003,000	\$559,031,000	\$1,338,004,000	\$228,114,000
2015	\$2,198,555,000	\$584,291,000	\$1,357,101,000	\$244,339,000
2010-2014 CAGR ¹	2.83%	0.85%	4.27%	0.06%
2010-2015 Change	\$339,404,000	\$48,355,000	\$271,424,000	\$16,934,000

Source: 2015 Ventura County Food Processing Analysis. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner. ADE, Inc., based on California Agricultural Commissioner Reports (2010-2014).

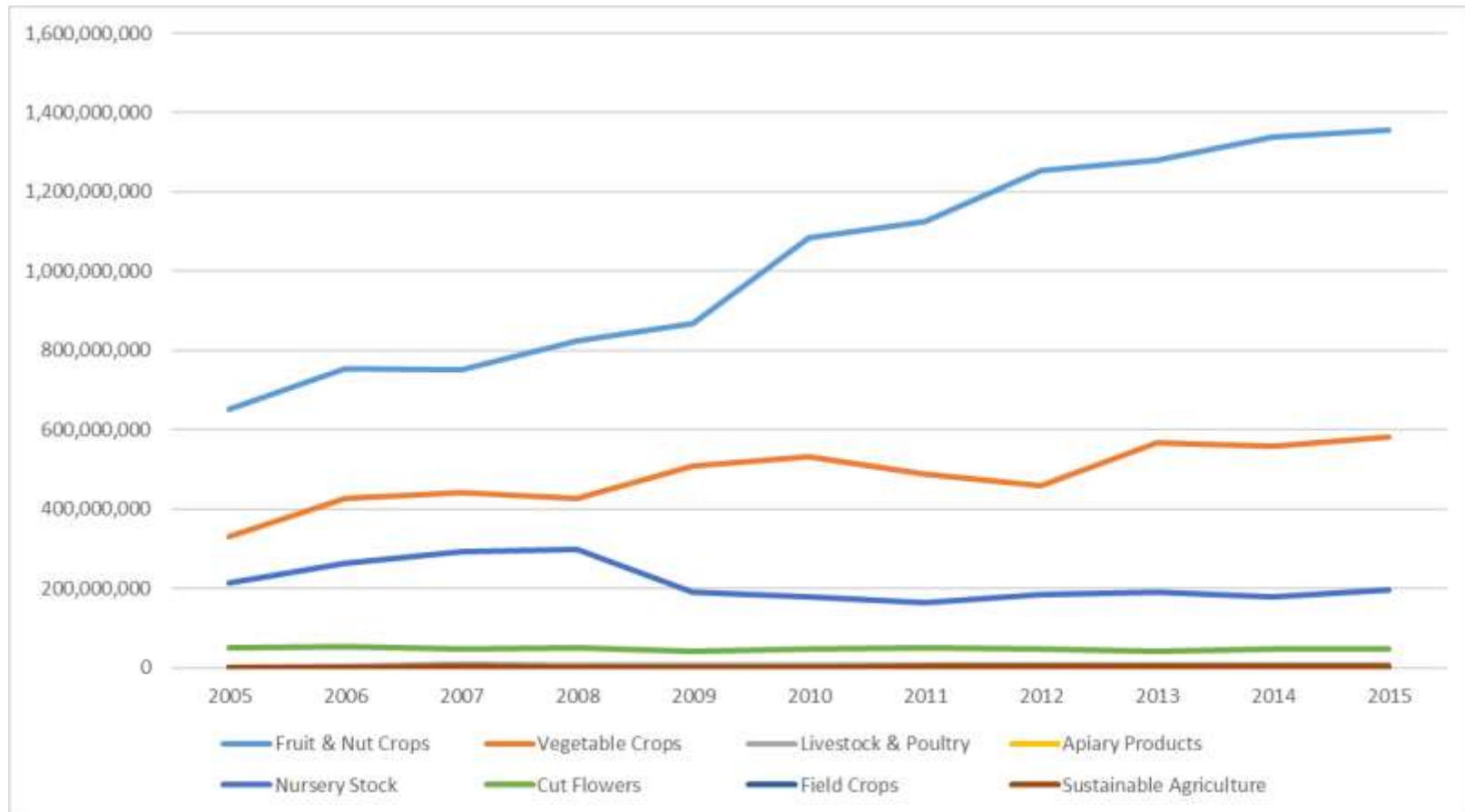
¹ CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate

Note: Previous reports used 2013 crop report from county itself - this table uses crop data in 2013 California Commissioner's Report, which is the same. 2014 and 2015 are based on the Ventura County Crop and Livestock Agricultural Commissioner's Report for each year respectively.

*Note: Aggregate Value includes livestock and other animal specialties, along with field crops, vegetables, tree nuts, fruits, and horticultural specialties.

Figure 9-8 and Table 9-7 show the market value of agricultural products sold in Ventura County between 2005 and 2015, based on information collected by the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner.

**FIGURE 9-8
MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD, 2005-2015**



Source: Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office

TABLE 9-7
MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD, 2005-2015
 Ventura County

Crop Type	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Fruit & Nut Crops	652,777,000	755,700,000	752,138,000	823,464,000	867,759,000	1,085,677,000	1,124,860,000	1,254,592,000	1,280,274,000	1,338,004,000	1,357,101,000
Vegetable Crops	330,269,000	426,659,000	442,220,000	427,742,000	509,248,000	533,473,000	490,233,000	460,280,000	568,722,000	557,614,000	583,281,000
Livestock & Poultry	2,150,000	4,775,000	9,006,000	6,853,000	7,494,000	6,161,000	6,075,000	6,872,000	6,517,000	7,887,000	6,878,000
Apiary Products	509,000	431,000	640,000	463,000	698,000	1,505,000	2,385,000	3,326,000	1,392,000	554,000	2,108,000
Nursery Stock	213,661,000	263,890,000	292,989,000	298,690,000	191,300,000	180,057,000	163,793,000	186,351,000	190,889,000	180,499,000	195,817,000
Cut Flowers	51,751,000	52,456,000	48,646,000	51,297,000	42,763,000	47,348,000	52,217,000	46,829,000	43,079,000	47,615,000	48,522,000
Field Crops	1,193,000	1,677,000	1,624,000	2,580,000	2,313,000	2,463,000	1,684,000	2,491,000	474,000	1,417,000	1,010,000
Sustainable Agriculture	1,999,000	2,570,000	2,718,000	2,148,000	2,273,000	2,453,000	3,000,000	3,045,000	3,557,000	3,443,000	3,838,000

Source: Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office

As part of the Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report, the Agricultural Commissioner's Office identifies the 10 highest grossing commodities (Table 9-8) in the county.

The estimated gross value for Ventura County agriculture for 2015 was \$2,198,555,000. This represented a 2.7% increase over 2014, or \$61,522,000.

TABLE 9-8 TOP TEN COMMODITY SALES, 2015 Ventura County, California	
Year	Production
Strawberries	\$617,832,000
Lemons	\$259,539,000
Raspberries	\$228,217,000
Nursery Stock	\$195,817,000
Celery	\$194,756,000
Avocados	\$188,818,000
Peppers	\$54,163,000
Tomatoes	\$50,474,000
Cut Flowers	\$48,088,000
Kale	\$38,088,000
Total for Top Ten Commodity Sales	\$1,875,792,000

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

The top ten highest grossing commodities Ventura County has not remained static over time, but experienced changes as indicated in Table 9-9 which shows the top ten agricultural commodities in Ventura County between 1922 and 2012 by ranking.

TABLE 9-9
RANKING OF TOP TEN AGRICULTURAL CROPS, 1922-2012
 Ventura County

Rank	2012	2002	1992	1982	1972	1962	1952	1942	1932	1922
1	Strawberries	Strawberries	Lemons	Lemons	Lemons	Lemons	Lemons	Lemons	Lemons	Beans
2	Lemons	Lemons	Strawberries	Celery	Livestock, Poultry & Dairy	Valencia Oranges	Valencia Oranges	Valencia Oranges	Valencia Oranges	Lemons
3	Raspberries	Nursery Stock	Celery	Poultry and Dairy	Celery	Livestock & Poultry	Beans	Beans	Walnuts	Walnuts
4	Nursery Stock	Celery	Nursery Stock	Strawberries	Tomatoes	Tomatoes	Misc. Vegetables	Walnuts	Beans	Apricots
5	Celery	Avocados	Valencia Oranges	Valencia Oranges	Strawberries	Celery	Walnuts	Misc. Vegetables	Sugar Beets	Valencia Oranges
6	Avocados	Cut Flowers	Avocados	Seed	Valencia Oranges	Lettuce	Livestock	Livestock	Misc. Vegetables	Sugar Beets
7	Tomatoes	Tomatoes	Lettuce	Nursery Stock	Lettuce	Green Beans	Poultry Products	Dairy Products	Navel Oranges	Navel Oranges
8	Peppers	Peppers	Cut Flowers	Lettuce	Avocados	Dairy Products	Dairy Products	Hay	Hay	Hay
9	Cut Flowers	Valencia Oranges	Broccoli	Avocados	Misc. Vegetables	Lima Beans	Navel Oranges	Navel Oranges	Apricots	Grain
10	Cilantro	Raspberries	Cabbage	Broccoli	Lima Beans	Navel Oranges	Grain	Poultry Products	Citrus Nursery Stock	Misc. Citrus

Source: Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

The following series of tables summarizes the market value, production, production area, and trends associated with eight groupings of agricultural commodities grown in Ventura County between 2014-2015.

TABLE 9-10 FRUIT AND NUT CROP ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015 Ventura County							
Crop	Year	Production				Value	
		Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Avocados	2015	19,459	2.90	56,512	tons	\$3,341.20	\$188,818,000
	2014	19,709	2.46	48,439	tons	\$2,642.07	\$127,978,000
Blueberries	2015	515	3.28	1,691	tons	\$11,810.76	\$19,972,000
	2014	528	3.91	2,066	tons	\$11,549.08	\$23,855,000
Grapefruit	2015	123	3.17	390	tons	\$2,256.41	\$880,000
	2014	100	2.93	293	tons	\$1,965.69	\$576,000
Lemons	2015	14,725	17.47	257,265	tons	\$1,008.84	\$259,539,000
	2014	14,926	18.7	279,115	tons	\$965.29	\$269,428,000
Mandarins & Tangelos	2015	2,310	5.32	12,286	tons	\$799.69	\$9,825,000
	2014	1,980	4.25	8,418	tons	\$1,369.88	\$11,532,000
Oranges (Navel)	2015	444	11.81	5,243	tons	\$437.92	\$2,296,000
	2014	457	11.93	5,448	tons	\$621.15	\$3,384,000
Oranges (Valencia)	2015	2,210	10.89	24,076	tons	\$518.86	\$12,492,000
	2014	2,414	14.21	34,307	tons	\$495.82	\$17,010,000
Raspberries	2015	4,834	13.53	65,389	tons	\$3,489.61	\$228,217,000
	2014	4,629	9.28	42,943	tons	\$5,604.16	\$240,662,000
Strawberries (Total)	2015	11,262	25.20	283,802	tons	\$2,176.98	\$617,832,000
	2014	11,630	26.27	305,520	tons	\$2,055.39	\$627,964,000
Fresh	2015	-	-	237,485	tons	\$2,390.18	\$567,633,000
	2014	-	-	222,677	tons	\$2,516.25	\$560,310,000
Processed	2015	-	-	46,317	tons	\$1,083.81	\$50,199,000
	2014	-	-	82,843	tons	\$816.64	\$67,653,000
Misc. Fruits & Nuts ¹	2015	1,104	-	-	tons	-	\$17,230,000
	2014	848	-	-	tons	-	\$15,615,000
Total	2015	56,986					\$1,357,101,000
	2014	56,821					\$1,338,004,000

¹Misc. Fruits & Nuts include Apples, Apricots, Asian Pears, Bushberries, Cherimoya, Grapes, Guavas, Kiwi, Limes, Olives, Persimmons, Macadamias, Walnuts; and miscellaneous citrus, deciduous, and subtropical fruit.

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

TABLE 9-11
VEGETABLE CROPS' ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015
Ventura County

Crop	Year	Production				Value	
		Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Asian Vegetables	2015	755	20.63	15,579	tons	\$963.22	\$15,006,000
	2014	810	13.23	10,714	tons	\$1,375.16	\$14,734,000
Beans <i>Green Limas, Green Snap</i>	2015	1,622	1.84	2,987	tons	\$1,386.34	\$4,141,000
	2014	3,568	1.76	6,272	tons	\$1,254.39	\$7,868,000
Beets	2015	107	24.50	2,621	tons	\$1,056.09	\$2,768,000
	2014	164	14.00	2,292	tons	\$1,056.61	\$2,422,000
Broccoli <i>Fresh & Processed</i>	2015	166	12.20	2,026	tons	\$1,317.37	\$2,669,000
	2014	359	8.46	3,038	tons	\$1,387.03	\$4,214,000
Cabbage	2015	3,732	26.25	97,961	tons	\$304.15	\$29,795,000
	2014	3,922	31.62	124,001	tons	\$281.16	\$34,864,000
Carrots	2015	228	35.12	8,008	tons	\$181.57	\$1,454,000
	2014	665	33.48	22,264	tons	\$171.98	\$3,829,000
Celery	2015	11,737	35.24	413,640	tons	\$470.83	\$194,756,000
	2014	11,003	35.38	389,308	tons	\$390.83	\$152,153,000
Cilantro	2015	2,977	8.44	25,125	tons	\$1,099.30	\$27,620,000
	2014	3,303	7.39	24,393	tons	\$956.12	\$23,323,000
Cucumbers ¹	2015	62	93.03	5,768	tons	\$1,988.73	\$11,471,000
	2014	59	63.49	3,760	tons	\$2,291.51	\$8,615,000
Greens ²	2015	973	10.70	10,408	tons	\$1,715.41	\$17,854,000
	2014	1,480	14.58	21,576	tons	\$813.40	\$17,550,000
Kale	2015	1,402	5.49	7,694	tons	\$4,950.35	\$38,088,000
	2014	1,898	11.08	21,028	tons	\$1,708.73	\$35,932,000
Lettuce (Total)	2015	2,067	19.53	40,362	tons	\$839.85	\$33,898,000
	2014	2,456	15.44	37,919	tons	\$574.80	\$21,796,000
Head	2015	128	7.57	969	tons	\$946.34	\$917,000
	2014	160	11.65	1,863	tons	\$1,133.77	\$2,112,000
Leaf	2015	789	24.56	19,378	tons	\$1,282.59	\$24,854,000
	2014	911	15.63	14,232	tons	\$948.39	\$13,497,000
Romaine	2015	1,150	17.40	20,015	tons	\$406.05	\$8,127,000
	2014	1,385	15.76	21,825	tons	\$283.48	\$6,187,000
Onions <i>Green & Dry</i>	2015	338	17.83	6,025	tons	\$446.31	\$2,689,000
	2014	328	17.39	5,703	tons	\$519.71	\$2,964,000
Parsley	2015	527	18.37	9,683	tons	\$1,636.16	\$15,843,000
	2014	549	20.20	11,094	tons	\$1,437.68	\$15,949,000
Peppers <i>Bell & Chili</i>	2015	3,256	43.49	141,613	tons	\$382.47	\$54,163,000
	2014	4,352	39.78	173,115	tons	\$388.58	\$67,268,000

TABLE 9-11 VEGETABLE CROPS' ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015 Ventura County							
Crop	Year	Production				Value	
		Acreage	Per Acre	Total	Unit	Per Unit	Total
Pumpkin	2015	150	12.29	1,844	tons	\$369.85	\$682,000
	2014	155	15.06	2,334	tons	\$339.72	\$793,000
Radishes	2015	1,006	16.30	16,399	tons	\$643.33	\$10,550,000
	2014	999	16.28	16,271	tons	\$579.87	\$9,435,000
Spinach	2015	1,513	8.63	13,053	tons	\$1,137.36	\$14,846,000
	2014	1,261	8.21	10,353	tons	\$1,095.45	\$11,341,000
Sweet Corn	2015	535	7.17	3,837	tons	\$555.12	\$2,130,000
	2014	444	7.41	3,289	tons	\$516.88	\$1,700,000
Tomatoes ³	2015	416	67.22	27,966	tons	\$1,804.83	\$50,474,000
	2014	466	89.66	41,740	tons	\$1,729.93	\$72,207,000
Vegetables, Misc. ⁴ <i>Field, Indoor & Processed</i>	2015	3,892	-	-	-	-	\$52,384,000
	2014	1,532	-	-	-	-	\$48,657,000
TOTAL	2015	39,528					\$583,281,000
	2014	39,671					\$557,614,000

¹ Includes hydroponics.

² Includes: chard, collard, mustard, turnip and watercress.

³ Includes hydroponics.

⁴ Includes: artichokes, arugula, asparagus, baby vegetables, cauliflower, eggplant, endive, garlic, gourds, herbs, kohlrabi, leeks, melons, mushrooms, peas, radicchio, sprouts, squash, tomatillos, and turnips.

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

TABLE 9-12
NURSERY STOCK ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015
Ventura County

Item	Year	Production		Production Area		Value	
		Total	Units	Greenhouse (Sq. Ft.)	Field (Acres)	Per Unit	Total
Fruit & Nut Trees	2015	1,285,601	trees	-	262	\$20.07	\$25,806,000
	2014	1,080,209	trees	-	231	\$18.71	\$20,213,000
Potted Plants	2015	2,856,802	pots	2,206,425	35	\$3.71	\$10,603,000
	2014	2,865,639	pots	2,266,058	36	\$3.71	\$10,644,000
Propagative Material	2015	58,523,867	cuttings	694,109	1	\$0.11	\$7,005,000
	2014	59,718,231	cuttings	679,109	1	\$0.12	\$7,222,000
Herbaceous Perennials	2015	2,591,514	containers	72,185	95	\$3.23	\$8,369,000
	2014	2,816,863	containers	54,139	90	\$3.06	\$8,628,000
Woody Ornamentals	2015	6,711,768	tree/shrubs	125,054	1,739	\$13.29	\$89,217,000
	2014	5,887,516	tree/shrubs	128,161	1,605	\$12.52	\$73,739,000
Bedding Plants, Ground Cover & Turf	2015	13,389,677	flats	427,846	817	\$2.80	\$37,501,000
	2014	19,128,110	flats	594,230	1,220	\$2.17	\$41,533,000
Vegetable Transplants	2015	4,204,558	flats	1,642,825	136	\$4.12	\$17,316,000
	2014	4,453,981	flats	1,642,825	136	\$4.16	\$18,520,000
TOTAL	2015			5,168,444	3,085		\$195,817,000
	2014			5,364,522	3,326		\$180,499,000

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

TABLE 9-13 CUT FLOWERS ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015 VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA						
Crop	Year	Acres	Production	Unit	Per Unit	Total Value
Flower Blooms & Stems	2015	52	22,960,665	blooms	-	\$6,465,000
	2014	49	19,636,178	blooms	-	\$5,740,000
Cut Greens & Dried Flowers	2015	62	262,543	bunches	-	\$515,000
	2014	61	257,395	bunches	-	\$506,000
Flower Bunches (Total)	2015	631	12,759,864	bunches	-	\$41,542,000
	2014	626	12,596,809	bunches	-	\$41,369,000
Statice, Lace, Aster & Gypsophila	2015	143	2,046,440	bunches	\$2.45	\$5,006,000
	2014	100	1,509,032	bunches	\$2.45	\$3,693,000
Chrysanthemums & Sunflowers	2015	47	1,901,419	bunches	\$2.04	\$3,872,000
	2014	56	2,263,594	bunches	\$1.81	\$4,104,000
Lilies & Irises	2015	142	4,211,067	bunches	\$4.46	\$18,768,000
	2014	135	3,861,067	bunches	\$4.86	\$18,766,000
Lisianthus	2015	32	508,052	bunches	\$2.84	\$1,444,000
	2014	35	522,324	bunches	\$3.36	\$1,757,000
Delphinium, Larkspur, Stock & Snapdragons	2015	204	3,058,181	bunches	\$3.47	\$10,621,000
	2014	191	2,935,548	bunches	\$3.17	\$9,319,000
Miscellaneous	2015	63	1,034,705	bunches	\$1.77	\$1,831,000
	2014	108	1,505,244	bunches	\$2.48	\$3,730,000
TOTAL	2015	745				\$48,522,000
	2014	736				\$47,615,000

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

TABLE 9-14 LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY PRODUCTION AND VALUES, 2014-2015 Ventura County, California					
Item	Year	Production	Unit	Value	
				Per Unit	Total
Livestock <i>Cattle, Hogs, Sheep & Goats</i>	2015	16,576	cwt	-	\$1,985,000
	2014	21,030	cwt	-	\$3,014,000
Poultry <i>Chickens & Eggs</i>	2015	-	-	-	\$4,735,000
	2014	-	-	-	\$4,697,000
Other Livestock <i>Alpaca & Squab</i>	2015	-	-	-	\$158,000
	2014	-	-	-	\$176,000
TOTAL	2015				\$6,878,000
	2014				\$7,887,000

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

TABLE 9-15
FIELD CROPS ACREAGE, PRODUCTION, AND VALUES, 2014-2015
Ventura County

Crop	Year	Acreage	Total
Rangeland*	2015	197,747	\$41,000
	2014	97,058	\$33,000
Pasture, Hay & Grain	2015	565	\$168,000
	2014	739	\$199,000
Seed & Dry Beans	2015	273	\$801,000
	2014	404	\$1,185,000
TOTAL	2015	198,585	\$1,010,000
	2014	98,201	\$1,417,000

* The increase in Rangeland acreage was the result of an error made many years ago.

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

In 2014, the total value for apiary products experienced its lowest value since 2009, a decline of almost half its 2013 total (see Table 9-16). This decline is likely attributed to the decline in local wild sources of flowers due to drought conditions. In 2015, the value of apiary products increased to market value levels just below those observed in 2011.

TABLE 9-16
APIARY PRODUCTS AND VALUES, 2013-2015
Ventura County

Product	Year	Production (lbs.)	Per Unit	Total
Honey	2015	183,843	\$4.75	\$873,000
	2014	65,550	\$2.09	\$137,000
	2013	80,763	\$3.74	\$302,000
Beeswax and Pollen	2015	14,300	\$3.99	\$57,000
	2014	4,695	\$6.73	\$19,000
	2013	11,391	\$6.73	\$77,000
Pollination Use	2015	n/a	n/a	\$1,178,000
	2014	n/a	n/a	\$398,000
	2013	n/a	n/a	\$1,013,000
Total	2015			\$2,108,000
	2014			\$554,000
	2013			\$1,392,000

Source: 2015 and 2014 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

**TABLE 9-17
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, 2014-2015
Ventura County**

Item	Agent	Target	Scope of Program
Biological Control <i>Commercial Insectaries</i>	Predatory Mites, Predatory Beetles, Predatory Wasps, Predatory Nematodes, Various Predatory Insects	Scale, Mealybug, Snails, Aphids, Mites, Whitefly, Psyllid, Thrip, Nematodes, Flies	262,604,496,055 beneficials released on 15,228 acres Valued at \$3,838,000
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> UPS/Fed Express (Shipments) Truck/Air Freight Household Goods (Inspections) <u>Outgoing Shipments</u> Federal Certificates State Certificates	Various Various Gypsy Moth Various Various	<u>Inspections</u> 1,518 1.094 64 9,840 843

* In 2015, Ventura County exported approximately 27 different commodities to 89 different countries.

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

**TABLE 9-18
TRENDS IN FIELD CROPS, VEGETABLES, FRUITS AND TREE NUTS:
PRODUCTION VALUE PER ACRE
Ventura County, California
2010-2014**

Year	Value per Acre Total	Field Crops and Vegetables	Fruits and Tree Nuts	Rangeland
2010	\$18,225	\$14,111	\$20,916	\$13.11
2011	\$19,042	\$14,315	\$22,248	\$12.11
2012	\$18,886	\$12,539	\$23,206	\$13.70
2013	\$18,664	\$14,130	\$21,638	\$0.37
2014	\$19,330	\$13,662	\$23,383	\$0.34
2010-2014 Change	\$1,105	-\$449	\$2,467	-\$12.77
2010-2014 CAGR ¹	1.18%	-0.64%	2.25%	-51.83%

Source: 2015 Ventura County Food Processing Analysis. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner. ADE, Inc., based on California Agricultural Commissioner Reports (2010-2014).

¹ CAGR = Compound Annual Growth Rate.

Commodities on Farms

Ventura County farms produce a wide range of agricultural commodities. The 2015 Ventura Crop & Livestock Report indicated that much of the county's agricultural production occurred on 95,802 acres of irrigated cropland out of a total farmed acreage of approximately 300,000 acres. Of the total farmed acreage, approximately 198,000 acres are considered rangeland. The following tables show the types of

commodities produced per product category including the total acreage devoted to certain types of commodities.

TABLE 9-19 COMMODITY PRODUCTION BY CROP GROUPING Ventura County, California 2014-2015			
Crop Grouping	Year	Acreage	Greenhouse (Square Feet)
Fruit and Nut Crops	2015	56,986	
	2014	56,821	
Vegetable Crops	2015	39,528	
	2014	39,671	
Nursery Stock	2015	3,085	5,168,444
	2014	3,326	5,364,522
Cut Flowers	2015	745	
	2014	736	
Field Crops	2015	198,585	
	2014	*97,058	

**The change in Field Crops is the result of an error made many years ago within Rangeland acreage data.*

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner.

Organic Farming

The 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report identified Organic Farming as one of eight groupings and observed an increase in the number of registered growers, market value, and acres in production between 2014 and 2015.

As with other agricultural regions in California, organic farming is recognized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) as farming practices that rely on natural fertilizers such as compost, manure, green manure, and bone meal in lieu of chemical pesticides. Organic farming also emphasizes more sustainable practices, including mixed-cropping patterns, the avoidance of most synthetic pesticides, and crop rotation to lessen the impact of water usage and maintain the soil structure. The federal Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 and the California Organic Products Act of 2003 established guidelines and standards for growers, handlers, processors, wholesalers, or retailers who market their product and services as “Organic.” Producers and handlers interested in working with organic commodities must register with the California State Organic Program, and if gross sales exceed \$5,000, certification from a third party is required. Registration is initiated with the County Agricultural Commissioner. The Agricultural Commissioner performs routine inspections of organic produce at Certified Farmer’s Markets, audits of records for organic producers, processors and handlers, as well as inspections of organic production sites, and investigation of reports of violations.

In 2015, Ventura County had 135 certified organic growers covering over 8,200 acres in organic production. This was an increase over the 85 certified organic growers in 2014. Ventura County organic farms specialize in vegetables and herbs, fruits and nuts, field and seed crops, and nursery production. In 2015, the Ventura County organic fruit and nut industry exceeded a commodity value of \$121 million, which was more than double the value of all other organic crops farmed. The total value for of all organic crops was approximately \$161 million in 2015. Much of the organic commodities grown in Ventura

County are sold to local consumers through a network of Certified Farmers Markets located in several communities, including Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, Ojai, Newbury Park, Thousand Oaks, and Simi Valley.

**TABLE 9-20
ORGANIC FARMING
VENTURA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
2014-2015**

Crops	Year	Acres	Total Value
Registered Growers	2015		137
	2014		85
Vegetables & Herbs	2015	3,077	\$39,377,055
	2014	3,148	\$38,438,000
Fruits & Nuts	2015	4,823	\$121,255,734
	2014	3,944	\$83,006,000
Field & Seed Crops	2015	189	\$638,305
	2014	134	\$1,020,000
Cut Flowers & Nursery Stock	2015	8	\$63,751
	2014	4	\$127,000
Specialty Crops	2015	<1	\$1,313
	2014	<1	\$1,000
TOTAL*	2015	8,281	\$161,336,158
	2014	7,232	\$122,592,000

* Included in all other total values for 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report.

Source: 2015 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

Commodity Processing

Ventura County currently permits limited processing operations on parcels with a zoning designation of OS, AE, RA, RE, and TP. The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (Section 8105-4), permits preliminary processing that includes basic activities and operations instrumental to the preparation of agricultural goods for shipment to market without the use of structures. Preliminary processing excludes intensive operations, including canning and bottling, which are considered an industrial use. A zoning clearance or development permit is required if structures related to the processing are proposed. Industrial zoning designations (i.e., M1, M2, and M3) require a zoning clearance for preliminary processing operations with no structures.

The current trend in food production and processing is focusing on “locally” grown products. The concept of buying local commodities, rather than relying on imports is not new, but has gained traction in recent years due to climate change concerns and its potential effects on crop production. The trend for locally produced products and the existing limited opportunities for agricultural processing of commodities has spurred an ongoing discussion into expanding the allowed types of processing operations. Additional processing operations could include processing of crops for oil extraction, concentration of juice, frozen or flash freezing, and preparation of products (e.g., bottling, canning).

Commodity Packing, Shipping, and Distribution

Ventura County is home to more than 2,150 farms. Approximately 15 percent of Ventura County’s agricultural products are produced for local consumption, with the remaining 85 percent shipped out of the county. Over 60 percent of the county’s agricultural products are exported to foreign countries through the Port of Hueneme. The Port of Hueneme is California’s fifth largest port and is known as the

“Port that Farmer’s Built”. Since 1993 the Port has been the primary exporter of agricultural commodities from Ventura County, replacing the Port of Long Beach. In 2013 Ventura County exported over 27 different commodities to 81 countries. Approximately 10,000 total shipments were exported, with the top destinations being Japan, Canada, South Korea, Mexico, and China. The top agricultural export in 2013 was lemons, accounting for 27 percent of total agricultural exports. Fruit and vegetable seeds were next at 23 percent, followed by blueberries, at 11 percent, and strawberries at eight percent.

Exporting agricultural products locally and regionally is a small niche in the agricultural economy in Ventura County. Local production and shipping requires the use of commercial coolers, packers and shippers. These are an integral part of the produce industry supply chain. Coolers, packers, and shippers are designed to handle each commodity’s different postharvest requirements. Coolers are large scale facilities which temporarily receive and cool product directly from the field. These facilities help not only large commercial growers, but also small farming operations by allowing access to distributors and continuing the movement of agricultural products through the supply chain. Packers sort, clean, and package the commodities for resale.

Shippers transport commodities to various wholesale and retail outlets throughout the county including locally owned grocery chains, farmer’s markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operations. Community Supported Agriculture is a partnership between growers and their consumers. CSAs allow members of the community to purchase a “share” of produce from a local participating farmer. Farmers and consumers share the risks and benefits of producing the crop. Members pay a subscription at the beginning of the growing season for a share of the anticipated harvest. The increase of CSAs has mirrored its growing popularity in the county providing a direct link between the farmers, locally grown produce, and county residents. As of 2016, there are nine registered CSAs in the county, which provide a boxed selection of seasonal locally grown produce. Members typically pick up CSA boxes at designated pick-up locations.

To ensure that the processing, packing, and shipping processes are up to local and state, and federal standards, the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office performs routine inspections of such facilities. The inspection process includes the coolers, packers and shippers, to check for proper container labeling, proper use of containers and proof of ownership of produce. Inspectors also certify local commodities for export shipments, both foreign and domestic.

Farming Operations

Agricultural Operations Permitting

Currently, Ventura County has 1,075 agricultural permits issued by the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office. Permits are required for the commercial production of crops and the use of pesticides. The majority of the permits (627) are referred to as Operator Identification Numbers which allow farm operators to apply Non Restricted Use and some federally Restricted Use pesticides. More than 400 of these permits (448) are Restricted Materials Permits, which allow the use of California Restricted Use pesticides. In order to qualify for a Restricted Materials Permit, or to apply federally Restricted Use pesticides, farm operators must be licensed through the Department of Pesticide Regulation (Qualified Applicator’s License) or through the County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office (Private Applicator’s Certificate).

Ventura County has 120 Certified Producers. In order to sell produce at a Certified Farmer’s Market, farm operators must be certified by the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office.

In 2015, Ventura County had 135 registered Organic growers. In order to sell products as “Organic” in California, growers must be registered with the State Organic Program.

Invasive Pests and Diseases

Agriculture in Ventura County is made exceptionally complex by a number of factors. The Mediterranean-type climate allows for tremendous diversity of production with over 60 different crops that each generate over \$1 million in gross receipts annually. The mild climate allows for significant crop production year-round allowing farmers to grow three and four crops annually in the same field. With that diversity, County farmers primarily grow specialty crops such as fruits and vegetables due to the favorable climate, high land values, and consumer preference. Fruits and vegetables require greater care and protection from insect pests and diseases. Ventura County is very different from the geographically larger agricultural counties in the Central Valley and the types of crops they produce. Central Valley counties generally have relatively large swaths of acreage with single crops such as grapes, almonds, and corn for silage, which have significantly fewer pests and less disease.

In addition to the preferable climate and crop selection, the proximity to neighboring Los Angeles County creates an additional pest and disease challenge. The County of Los Angeles is a substantial source of plant pests and diseases. The air and sea ports not only bring millions of visitors and commercial products from around the world into Los Angeles County, they also bring exotic invasive plant pests and diseases. At any given moment the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner is regulating between 12 and 26 quarantines. Los Angeles County provides a significant pathway for pests that can migrate to Ventura County. Although to a lesser degree, the Port of Hueneme is another source of plant pests and diseases entering on shipments from abroad.

Currently, Ventura County is dealing with newly-introduced or identified invasive species such as the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), light brown apple moth (LBAM), and the polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB). Each of these pests present either a county, state or federal quarantine situation or another significant plant pest or disease issue. In the recent past the gypsy moth and the Mediterranean fruit fly have infested portions of the county. New plant pests and diseases subsequently result in more pesticide use as farmers, land managers and regulatory officials attempt to eradicate or manage the various pest populations. As an example, currently the California Department of Food and Agriculture is conducting ACP residential treatments, while citrus farmers are engaged in an area-wide management program to control the ACP.

The glassy winged sharpshooter (GWSS) is widespread in Southern California and has reduced the ability of growers in Southern California counties to produce wine grapes. The Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office participates in the Pierce’s Disease Control Program (PDCP) which is solely focused on preventing the spread of the GWSS from Ventura County to the grape growing areas of California that are not already infested. The GWSS is an insect that feeds on the stems and leaves of many kinds of nursery stock and citrus trees as well as on grapevines. In the process of feeding it transmits a bacterial disease, Pierce’s Disease, that can seriously damage grapevines. Nursery stock from Ventura County destined for non-infested areas of the state is inspected and certified prior to shipment. Detection traps are placed in nurseries planning to send plant material north to monitor for the presence of the GWSS. Citrus growers who plan to send their fruit to packing houses north of Ventura County are required to meet cleanliness standards in order to ship.

U. S. Census of Agriculture - Farm Characteristics

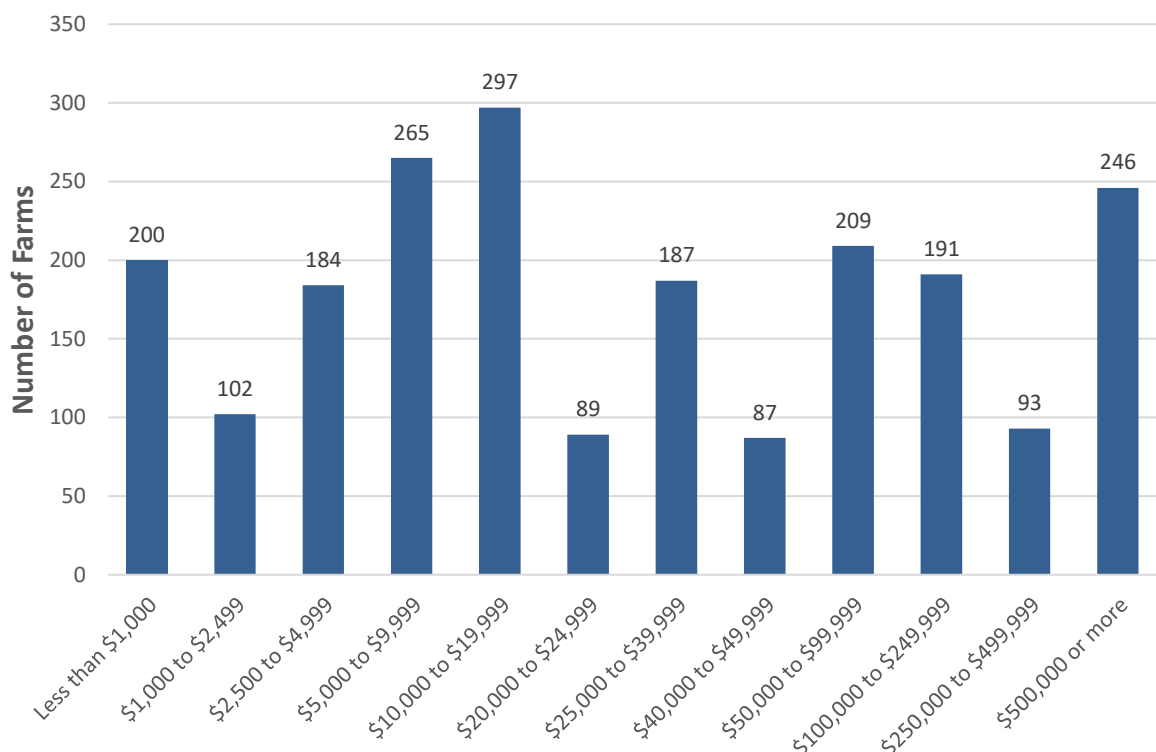
There are over 2,000 farms in Ventura County and they vary based on size, agricultural products produced, type of operator, and ownership as well as the total amount of sales. According to the federal Census of Agriculture (USDA 2012), total product sales in Ventura County equate to an average of \$700,00 sales per farm annually. The total sales calculation from the 2012 Census of Agriculture differs from the total sales noted in the 2012 Ventura County Crop and Livestock Report produced by the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner's Office due to different methodologies.

The Census defines characteristics of a farm, "as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year." In the case of Ventura County, approximately 7.5 percent or 200 farms reported less than \$1,000 in product sales.

According to the Census of Agriculture, the average size of farms in Ventura County was 131 acres while the median was 12 acres, indicating that there are many more small farms than large ones. In fact, almost 80 percent of all farms in Ventura County are 49 acres or less. Eleven percent are between 50 and 179 acres, and 11 percent are 180 acres or larger.

Figure 9-9 shows the number of farms in Ventura County by market value of the agricultural products sold.

FIGURE 9-9
NUMBER OF FARMS BY MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD, 2012
Ventura County



Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture, 2012

The Census of Agriculture indicates that 34.9 percent or 751 farms had a total market value sales of commodities of less than \$10,000. The number of farms that produced sales ranging from \$10,000 to \$99,999 totaled 869 or 40.4 percent. Farms with product sales surpassing \$1,000,000 accounted for approximately 25 percent of farms in Ventura County, at 530.

Regulatory Setting

Federal

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Supports the American agricultural economy to strengthen rural communities; to protect and conserve our natural resources; and to provide a safe, sufficient, and nutritious food supply for the American people. The Department's wide range of policies, programs and responsibilities include food security, exporting and importing goods, wildfire prevention, rural community assistance, and regulation of commodities.

State

California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)

Is responsible for protecting and promoting agriculture in the state of California, while ensuring that safety standards are maintained at the consumer level. CDFA is divided into six divisions which focus on animal health and food and safety; fairs and expositions; inspections; marketing; measurements and standards, and plant health. Through these divisions, the CDFA provides oversight and regulation pertaining to pesticide and disease control, livestock health and trade, food safety, natural resources, and organic farming to name a few. In particular, the CFDA is responsible for the enforcement of the federal Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, and the California Organic Products Act of 2003. These statutes protect consumers, producers, handlers, processors and retailers by establishment of standards under which fresh agricultural products/foods may be labeled and/or sold as "organic." The California Department of Public Health enforces laws pertaining to processed products marketed as "organic."

California Food and Agricultural Code, Section 2001

There is in each County government the County department of agriculture.

California Food and Agricultural Code, Section 2002

The county department of agriculture is under the control of the county agricultural commissioner.

Local

2005 Ventura County General Plan

The General Plan covers agricultural resources in Chapter 1, Resources. Sections 1.6 and 3.2 include goals, policies, and programs related to agricultural production. The following Area Plans also contain applicable goals and policies related to agricultural production:

- Coastal Area Plan;

- El Rio/Del Norte Area Plan;
- North Ventura Avenue Area Plan;
- Ojai Valley Area Plan;
- Piru Area Plan;
- Saticoy Area Plan; and
- Lake Sherwood/Hidden Valley Area Plan.

2011 Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

The Initial Study Assessment Guidelines include criteria for evaluating environmental impacts for agricultural resources. These can be found in Section 5a. Agricultural Resources-Soils and Section 5b. Agricultural Resources-Land Use Incompatibility.

2015 Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural resources through Section 8104-1 Open Space/Agricultural Zones.

2016 Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural resources through Section 8173-2 Coastal Agricultural (CA) Zone.

County Agricultural Commissioner

The County Agricultural Commissioner serves as the primary local enforcement agent of laws and regulations of the state, and local agricultural ordinances. The Agricultural Commissioner protects and promotes the local agricultural industry, while ensuring the welfare of the public, and the environment. The major programs administered by the agricultural commissioner include:

- **Pest Exclusion.** The Pest Exclusion Program is California's first line of defense against the introduction of exotic pests which, if they were to become established, would be detrimental to agriculture and/or the environment of the state. The state-licensed staff inspects incoming plant shipments for compliance with the state's plant quarantine laws and for the presence of insect, weed, vertebrate and disease pests.
- **Pest Detection.** The Pest Detection Program represents California's second line of defense against the introduction and establishment of pests that are known to be economically detrimental to agriculture and the environment. The Department strategically deploys and monitors insect traps throughout the county for the presence of such exotic pests as the Light Brown Apple Moth, Glassy-Winged Sharp Shooter, Asian Citrus Psyllid, Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer and others. Biologists are constantly on the lookout for new pest introductions.
- **Pest Eradication.** The Pest Eradication Program is the third line of defense in the overall Pest Prevention Program. The purpose of this program is to eradicate pest infestations that penetrate the first two lines of defense before eradication becomes economically impractical.

- **Pest Management.** The Pest Management Program utilizes specially trained staff in the control of the glassy-winged sharp shooter (GWSS). The GWSS can transmit Pierce's Disease which is deadly to grape vines. Shipments of potted plants destined for northern counties are inspected for the GWSS and issued a certificate of quarantine compliance if found free from the GWSS.
- **Pesticide Use Enforcement.** The Pesticide Use Enforcement Program includes annual registration of Agricultural and Structural Pest Control Businesses, Pest Control Advisors, and Farm Labor Contractors that work in the county. The Program includes issuance of Restricted Materials Permits, Operator Identification Numbers (for non-restricted agricultural pesticides), and monitoring of pesticides applied in the county through a mandatory use reporting system. The Agricultural Commissioner's staff verifies compliance with pesticide laws by periodic inspections of pesticide applications, mixing and loading operations, employee headquarters inspections and inspection of pesticide storage facilities. Staff also investigates all reports of pesticide related illnesses, pesticide drift and wildlife losses, as well as complaints of other alleged misuse of pesticides in the county that may be detrimental to human health and safety or the environment.
- **Seed Inspection.** Under the Seed Inspection Program, the Agricultural Commissioner's staff periodically inspects seed for agricultural planting for compliance with State labeling requirements for purity and germination percentages.
- **Nursery.** The Department's staff routinely inspects nurseries within the county to ensure that nursery stock is properly labeled, commercially clean with respect to weeds, insect pests, diseases, and that only vigorous healthy plants are offered for sale to the consumer.
- **Standardization.** The Standardization Program involves periodic inspection of fruits, nuts, vegetables and honey offered for sale at local retail outlets to ensure they meet minimum quality standards as established by the State.
- **Citrus Maturity.** This program involves testing oranges at packing houses to ensure that maturity requirements are met.
- **Certified Farmer's Markets.** This program provides oversight of direct marketing activities. This involves issuance of Certified Producer Certificates, Farmer's Market Certificates, and periodic inspections of such producers and markets to ensure consumers that all produce offered for sale was grown by the seller.
- **Organic Program.** Agricultural Commission staff register local growers that desire to market their agricultural commodities as "Organically Grown", to provide assurance to consumers that such products are grown in accordance with California's strict standards for organically grown food products.
- **Apiary.** This program emphasizes registration of honeybee colonies located in the county so that notification of nearby applications of pesticides, toxic to bees, can be issued. The program also involves enforcement of the County Bee Ordinance with respect to complaints of improperly placed apiaries which adversely impact local residents.
- **Statistics.** The County Agricultural Commissioner is required to compile an annual report of agriculture. These reports are used by a variety of businesses and institutions such as banks and other lending institutions, schools, government agencies and research facilities. Additionally, the Department is also called upon to conduct surveys relating to the impacts of natural disasters such as drought, flood and wildland fire on the local agricultural economy. Such statistical data is often

instrumental in securing state and federal disaster relief for the affected segment of local agricultural industry.

- **Land Use.** The Agricultural Commissioner also provides review of land use development projects that may impact or be impacted by agriculture. When appropriate, the Agricultural Commissioner will make recommendations to mitigate such impacts.

Key Terms

Forage. Harvested dry hay, haylage, grass silage, or greenchop which is primarily used as feed for livestock.

SECTION 9.3 AGRICULTURAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Introduction

This section describes local, state, and federal policies and programs that impact agriculture.

Major Findings

- Together, the Guidelines for Orderly Development, Land Conservation Act, and Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) initiatives have created one of the most effective agricultural land preservation programs in the state.
- As of 2016, over 204,000 acres in the county were designated as Agricultural Preserve (AE-40 ac).

Existing Conditions

The following is a description of the Ventura County agricultural land protection policies and programs.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act)

The California Land Conservation Act (also known as the Williamson Act) was adopted by the California State Legislature in 1965. In 1969, the County Board of Supervisors adopted “Guidelines for Implementation of the Land Conservation Act of 1965/the Williamson Act” (the LCA Guidelines). These Guidelines and subsequent revisions established criteria for eligibility for Agricultural Preserves (AGPs) and Land Conservation Act (LCA) Contracts in the unincorporated areas of the county. All land with a land use designation of Agricultural within the County of Ventura General Plan is considered an AGP.

The California Land Conservation Act is regulated through three contract types, Land Conservation Contract (LCA), the Farmland Security Zone Area Contract (FSZA/LCA), and the Open Space Contract (OS/LCA) shown in Figure 9-10. In Ventura County, the Open Space Contracts became available in 2009. These contracts intend to preserve agricultural land, and discourage its premature conversion to non-agricultural uses. In exchange for the preservation of agricultural land, participating property owners receive a reduction of property taxes that are limited to the agricultural value of the property. This reduction of property taxes remains until the property owner or the County files for a Non-Renewal or terminates the contract. Properties eligible for either of the contract types are designated Agriculture or Open Space under the County General Plan. The properties must be zoned AE-40 ac, or CA if the property is in the Coastal Zone. If the properties under consideration for a LCA or FSZA/LCA Contract are in neither of those zones, then a zone change must occur in conjunction with the Contract. If the property is currently zoned OS with a designated minimum parcel size of 80-acres, it must be rezoned to AE-40 ac with a minimum parcel size consistent with the average density of surrounding parcels. If the subject property under consideration for contract is in irrigated crop production, it may be rezoned to AE-40 ac, regardless of the average surrounding parcel size.

The LCA Contract is a 10-year agreement that permits either irrigated or non-irrigated crop production or animal husbandry/grazing. If irrigated crop production on the subject property(s) is to be eligible for the contract program, it must have produced plants for commercial purposes for three years of the previous five years, or be planted with non-bearing fruit or nut trees, vines, bushes, or crops which has a non-

bearing period of less than five years. The property must be irrigated, and shall have grossed no less than \$500 per acre for at least three of the previous five years. If the bearing period has not yet begun, the property shall reasonably be expected to gross no less than \$500 per acre for three out of five years. If non-irrigated crop production on the subject property(s) is to be eligible for the contract program, it must have cultivated and produced plants for commercial purposes for three years of the previous five years, or be planted with non-bearing fruit or nut trees, vines, bushes, or crops which has a non-bearing period of less than five years. The land shall have gross no less than \$50 per acre for at least three of the previous five years. If the bearing period has not yet begun, the property shall reasonably be expected to gross no less than \$50 per acre for three out of five years.

As of 2017, Ventura County had 1,074 LCA contracts totaling 127,820 acres. This total includes three Wildlife Habitat Area contracts totaling approximately 340 acres. Under the 10-year LCA Contract, animal husbandry and grazing must support 20 animal units per year as determined by personal property taxes paid on the animals by the owner or operator, or other evidence such as rent receipts, as may be required for the previous five (5) years and be reasonably expected to continue to support such animals on a bona fide commercial basis. The selling of animals or their food or fiber products annually shall constitute raising animals on a commercial basis. The land shall also be fenced to contain the animals, and proper livestock facilities such as corrals should be provided. Subject properties must also maintain a minimum of 80 acres to support grazing and animal husbandry.

The 20-year FSZA/LCA Contract is subject to the same standards of the 10-year LCA Contract, which includes requirements relating to irrigated crops, non-irrigated crops, and grazing land. The FSZA/LCA Contract does require additional standards to be eligible to enter into the new contract. As of 2015, Ventura County had 77 FSZA/LCA contracts totaling over 3,900 acres. Land within the FSZA/LCA must be within a designated AGP, and shall be one of the registered Important Farmland Categories of Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance. Any land located within a city sphere of influence shall not be included in an FSZA, unless the creation of the FSZA has been approved by resolution by the city with jurisdiction within the sphere. If more than one owner of contiguous properties requests the creation of an FSZA, the County shall place those properties in the same FSZA. Upon termination of a FSZA/LCA contract, the FSZA shall simultaneously be terminated.

The LCA and FSZA/LCA contracts must meet a minimum agricultural utilization for crop production or animal husbandry, as shown in Table 9-21.

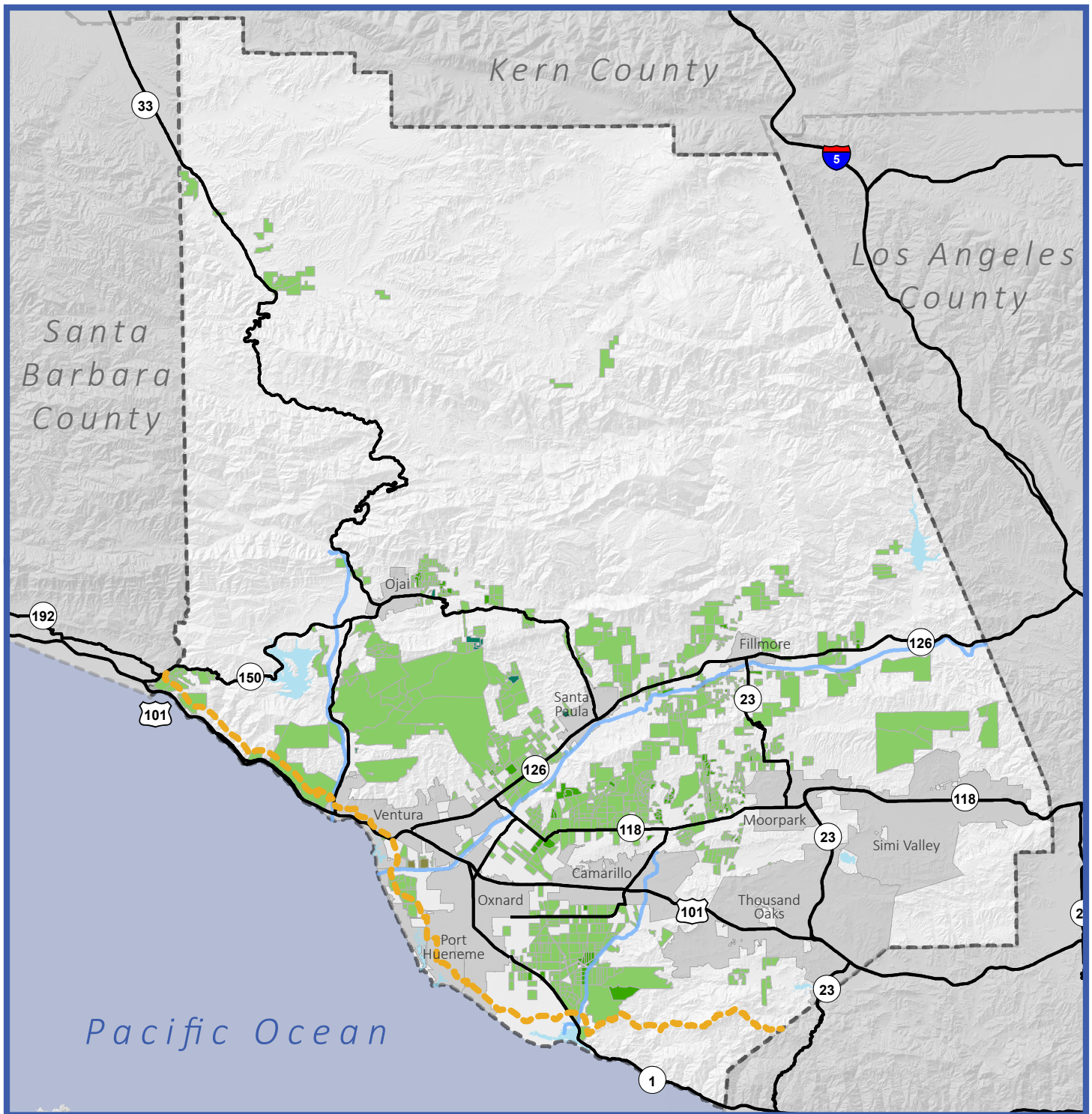


Figure 9-12:
Land Subject to Land
Conservation Contracts

Map Date: October 26, 2016

Source: Ventura County, 2016; California Department of Transportation, 2007; USGS, 2013.

0 7.5 15 Miles



- Coastal Zone Boundary
- Major Roadways
- Major Waterways
- Water Bodies

LCA Contracts

- 10-year LCA Contract
- 20-year Farmland Security LCA Contract
- OS 20-year
- Notice of Non-Renewal

TABLE 9-21
MINIMUM UTILIZATION OF LAND FOR LCA AND FSZA/LCA CONTRACTS
 Ventura County, California

Legal Lot/Contract Size	Utilization Percentage* for LCA (10-year) Contracts	Utilization Percentage* for FSZA/LCA (20-year) Contracts
9** To 15 Acres	90%	90%
15.1 To 25 Acres	75%	80%
25.1 To 40 Acres	65%	75%
Over 40 Acres	50%	70%
Animal Husbandry/Grazing -80 Acre Minimum	75%	No Animal Husbandry/Grazing Contracts

Source: 2015 Ventura County Food Processing Analysis. Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner. ADE, Inc., based on Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner Reports (2010-2014).

Note*: Onsite water recycling ponds and other facilities required by a permitting authority shall be included in the calculation of utilization percentage for nurseries (open fields or in greenhouses).

Note**: The Board of Supervisors has determined that prime agricultural lands in Ventura County are highly productive due to the combination of soils, climate, and water availability; are suitable for a variety of orchard, row, and horticultural crops; and can support commercially viable agricultural operations on minimum nine-acre parcels. Therefore, these parcels are contract eligible.

Open Space contracts are designated as OS/LCA and are primarily used for the preservation of natural habitats and systems such as wetlands, native grass lands, native woodlands, individual species, and wildlife corridors under either a 10-year or 20-year timeframe. As of 2015, Ventura County had three Open Space contracts totaling over 360 acres. Unlike LCA Contracts where the Contract Area is coterminous with parcel boundaries, the Contract Area of an OS/LCA contract may be a portion of one parcel. For these reasons, the minimum Contract Area for OS/LCA Contracts shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. For an area to be considered eligible, the subject property must either have, or be capable of being restored to have, significant biological resources which include, but are not limited to the following:

- Habitats of endangered, threatened or rare species
- Sensitive Plant Communities
- Waters and Wetlands
- Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA)
- Wildlife Movement Corridor

Special Area contracts are designated under new LCA and FSZA/LCA contracts, when a certain criterion is met. These contracts are for specific circumstances when the agricultural contract requirements do not comply (i.e., minimum lot size and utilization requirements) and may lead to an inconsistency with the provisions and guidelines set forth by the Land Conservation Act. Per the Ventura County LCA Guidelines, the Board of Supervisors may approve special contracts if all the following criteria is satisfied:

- The proposed Contract Area must be used for crop production (land used for animal husbandry/grazing is not eligible for Special Area Contracts);

- The proposed Contract Area must be located adjacent to parcels primarily in crop production on a minimum of two sides. Land isolated from existing agricultural production is not eligible for a Special Area Contract. Although not required, a Special Area Contract will be more favorably considered if it located either adjacent to or in proximity to existing LCA Contracts or FSZA/LCA Contracts, or if it establishes a buffer between existing urban uses and land in agricultural production;
- The proposed Contract Area is no less than 80 percent of the size of the legal lot;
- The agricultural utilization is a minimum 85 percent of propose Contract Area (e.g., if the Contract Area is eight acres, the agricultural utilization must be at least 6.8 acres);
- The proposed contract furthers the primary goal of the Land Conservation Act and these guidelines-to preserve commercially viable agricultural land.

In 2015, pursuant to Government Code §§ 51190, 51191 et seq., and 51255.1, Revenue and Taxation Code § 402.1, Fish and Game Code §§ 2805, 2835, 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515, and Title 14, California Code of Regulations, §§ 3100 through 3117 (Senate Bill (SB) 618 and Assembly Bill (AB) 2241), the County of Ventura amended the LCA Guidelines to allow for solar-use easement contracts. Therefore, a landowner who wishes to enter into a solar-use easement contract with the County may rescind a LCA Contract (or a portion thereof) and simultaneously enter into a solar-use easement contract, provided that the property meets the criteria established by the California Department of Conservation. The California Department of Conservation's "Solar Use Easements Advice for Applicants, Cities, and Counties" sets forth the minimum eligibility criteria, required application materials, and approval process to enter into a solar-use easement contract. Furthermore, the easement must require that the land be used for solar photovoltaic facilities for a term of 20 years or, if the landowner requests, for a term of not less than 10 years.

If a property owner decides that they no longer wish to participate in the either of three contracts, they must file for one of three termination types; either a Notice of Non-Renewal of the Entire Contract (ENNR), a Notice of Non-Renewal of a Portion of the Contract (PNNR), or termination of contract. A Non-Renewal results in a nine-year phase out of the LCA Contracts and OS/LCA (10-year) Contracts, and a 19-year phase out of the FSZA/LCA Contracts and OS/LCA Contract (20-year). Upon completion of the phase out periods, property owners are no longer eligible for a property tax reduction. A PNNR occurs when a portion of the property is to remain under contract, while the remaining portion will be phased out and will no longer be eligible for property tax reduction. The remaining portion of the property used for agriculture must be found to be consistent with the state law and the Ventura County LCA Guidelines prior to Board approval.

As of 2015, Ventura County had 12 contracts undergoing the ENNR process that have been recorded with the County since 2008. The total acreage under these 12 contracts that will come out of the Program by 2024 totals 861 acres. Five of the 12 contracts totaling 226.61 acres, will expire in 2020, while the remaining seven contracts totaling 634.32 acres will expire in 2024.

The other form of contract termination is Contract Cancellation, which requires a majority vote by the Board of Supervisors, as well as state imposed fees for the past reduction in property taxes. Cancellation of a Contract also requires the property owner to pay a "cancellation fee." (Government Code Sections 51283 and 51297.) The required cancellation fee for a 10-year LCA Contract is 12½ percent of the current fair market value of the property, determined as if the property were free of the Contract restriction. The cancellation fee for a 20-year FSZA/LCA Contract is 25 percent of the current fair market value of the property.

Ventura County Agricultural Preserves

All land designated “Agricultural” by the County General Plan is considered an Agricultural Preserve (AGP). As of 2016, over 204,000 acres are designated as AGP (see Figure 9-11). Land designated “Open Space” by the County General Plan, while potentially eligible for a Contract, may or may not be located within an AGP. If a property owner wishes to enter into a Contract, and the property is not within the boundaries of a previously established AGP, the owner must request the Board to expand the AGP or establish a new AGP simultaneously with the approval of the Contract. Prior to 1988, Government Code Section 51230 required that an AGP consist of no less than 100 acres, unless the Board determined that the unique characteristics of the agricultural operations in the area call for smaller preserves, and that the establishment of the preserve is consistent with the General Plan. AGPs may be made up of land in one or more ownerships. Property owners with less than 100 acres may combine two or more contiguous parcels to form standard-size preserves. All properties that are designated AE-40 (40-acre minimum) after 1988 were noted to be considered part of an agricultural preserve. In order for a property owner to be part of an agricultural preserve, the property must meet the parcel size requirements and receive approval from the Board through a General Plan amendment.

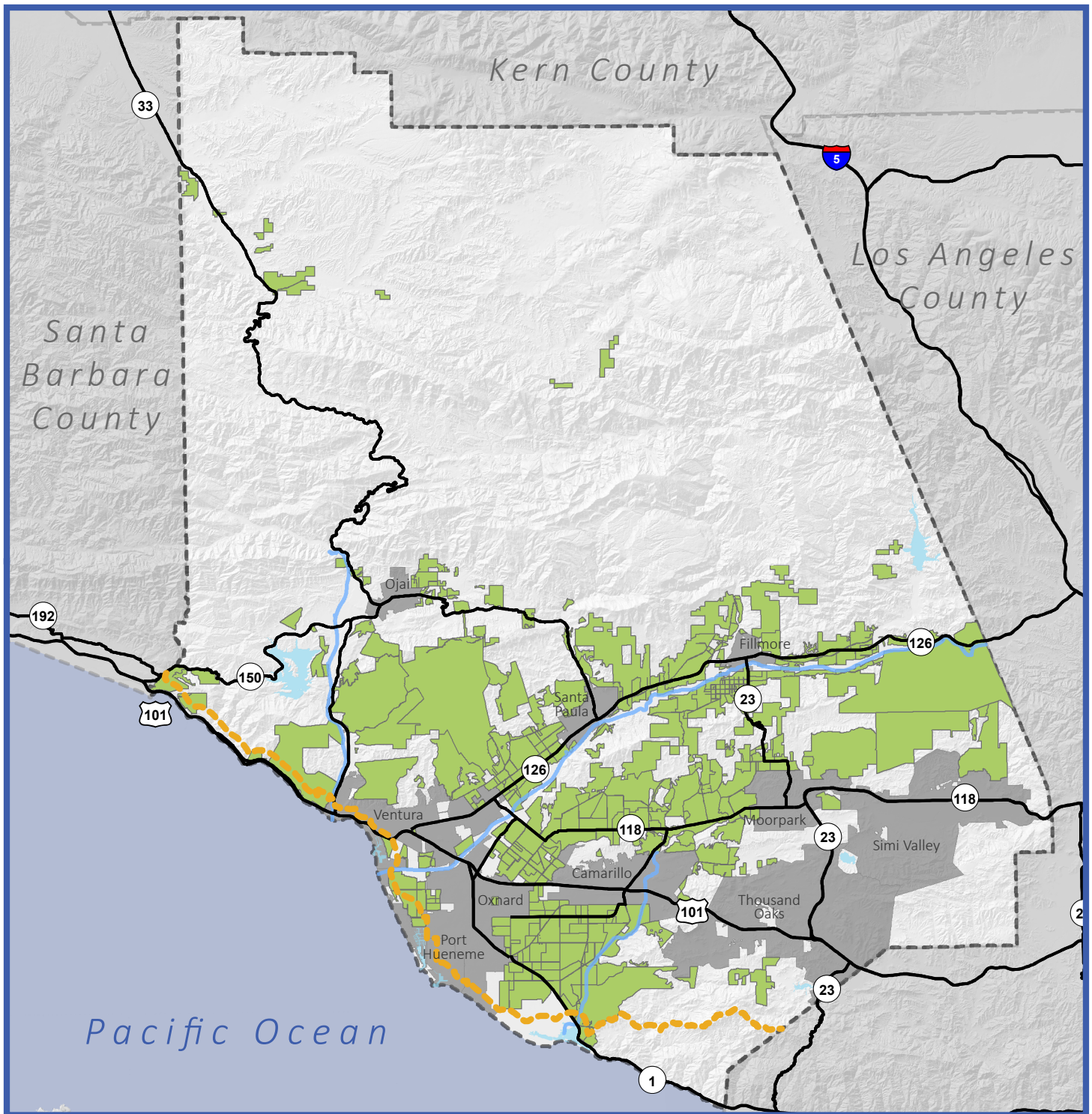


Figure 9-11:
Designated
Agricultural Preserves

Map Date: October 26, 2016

Source: Ventura County, 2016; California Department of Transportation, 2007; USGS, 2013.

0 7.5 15 Miles



- Coastal Zone Boundary
- Major Roadways
- Major Waterways
- Water Bodies
- Agricultural Preserves
- Cities

Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

Ventura County adopted the Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAGs) in 1992 consistent with State CEQA Guidelines and comprehensively revised them in April 2011. The ISAGs are intended to inform the public, project applicants, consultants, and County staff of the threshold criteria and standard methodology used in determining whether a project could have significant effects on the environment. The ISAGs present a range of quantitative, qualitative, and performance levels for specific environmental effects on a broad range of topics, including air, water, transportation infrastructure, scenic resources, and agricultural resources.

Regarding impacts to agricultural soils, the ISAGs state that any project that would result in the direct and/or indirect loss of soils designated Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique, or Local Importance will have an impact. Furthermore, any project that would result in the direct or indirect loss of agricultural soils exceeding certain acreage-loss thresholds identified in the ISAGs will be considered to have a significant project impact as shown in Table 9-22. For example, projects in areas designated as Agricultural Land Use in the General Plan that are located on Prime and Statewide Farmland will be considered to have a significant impact if the project would result in the loss of five acres or more of agricultural soil.

TABLE 9-22 THRESHOLD OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL SOILS Ventura County, California		
General Plan Land Use Designation	Important Farmland Inventory Classification	Acres Lost
Agricultural	Prime/Statewide	5
	Unique	10
	Local	15
Open Space/Rural	Prime/Statewide	10
	Unique	15
	Local	20
All Others	Prime/Statewide	20
	Unique	30
	Local	40

Source: Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, April 2011

The ISAGs also address cumulative agricultural resource impacts. The ISAGs state that any project that would result in the direct or indirect loss of agricultural soils is considered to also contribute to the cumulative impact associated with such a loss. However, the cumulative loss of agricultural soils was discussed in the Final EIR for the Comprehensive Amendment to the County General Plan in 1988. The conclusions of that EIR stated that there will be significant loss of agricultural soils and although the General Plan contains policies and programs that serve to partially mitigate the cumulative impact, the impact cannot be reduced to a less-than-significant level. Therefore, in accordance with Section 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines, additional cumulative environmental analysis is not required for any project that is consistent with the General Plan. Furthermore, any project that entails a General Plan Amendment and would result in the loss of agricultural soils less than that indicated in the significance thresholds is considered as having a minimal contribution to a significant cumulative impact and would not require an EIR. Conversely, any project that entails a General Plan amendment that would result in the loss of

agricultural soils equal to or greater than the threshold is considered a substantial contributor to a significant cumulative impact and thus would require preparation of an EIR.

To reduce incompatibility between classified farmland and adjacent land uses, the ISAGs set forth a threshold of significance for the evaluation of all projects involving non-agricultural uses or non-agricultural operations. This threshold is based on the distance from new non-agricultural uses or structures to common lot boundary lines of parcels that are deemed classified farmland. Projects that are closer than the set thresholds shown in Table 9-23 will then be considered to potentially have a significant environmental effect on the farmland property and agricultural resources. For a non-agricultural project to be deemed as not having a potentially significant environmental impact, the project proponent must obtain a waiver or deviation. For a project or use to receive a waiver or deviation, it must satisfy the criteria requirements set forth in the ISAGs. The project impacts can be determined to be less than significant if the project is consistent with the General Plan and does not increase project specific effects.

TABLE 9-23 EVALUATION FOR ALL NON-AGRICULTURAL OR NON-AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS PROJECTS Ventura County, California	
Land Use or Project	Distance from Non-Agricultural Structure or Use Common Boundary Line Adjacent to Classified Farm
Without Vegetative Screening	300 feet
With Vegetative Screening	150 feet
New K-12 School	1,320 feet

Source: Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines, April 2011

Guidelines for Orderly Development

Ventura County's "Guidelines for Orderly Development" were originally adopted by the Board of Supervisors, all city councils within Ventura County, and the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) in 1969. They are a unique collaborative commitment to encourage urban development to occur within cities whenever and wherever practical, enhance the regional responsibility of county government, and facilitate orderly planning and development in Ventura County. The Guidelines were revised and adopted in December 1996, culminating an effort to improve the clarity of relationships between local agencies with respect to urban development projects. The intent of the Guidelines is threefold: (1) clarify the relationship between the cities and the county with respect to urban planning; (2) facilitate a better understanding regarding development standards and fees; and (3) identify the appropriate governmental agency responsible for making determinations on land use requests.

The policies in the Guidelines for Orderly Development outline different approaches for land located within the different policy boundaries established in the county. Within city spheres of influence, the Guidelines call for applicants for land use permits or entitlements for urban uses to apply to the city rather than the county and to annex to the city prior to development occurring. In cases where the county approves development within spheres of influence, the standards for such development should be equal to or more restrictive than land uses allowed by the city.

Within established areas of interest associated with cities, but outside their spheres of influence, the Guidelines call for cities and the county to collaborate in considering applications for discretionary land

use permits or entitlements. While the county is primarily responsible for local land use planning in these areas, decisions should account for the general land use goals and objectives of the city. Within established areas of interest that are not associated with cities, the county is solely responsible for land use planning and for providing municipal services. Urban development in these areas should be allowed only in Unincorporated Urban Centers or Existing Communities as designated in the county's General Plan. In Unincorporated Urban Centers, urban development should only be allowed when an Area Plan has been adopted by the County.

The County's existing General Plan integrates the Guidelines for Orderly Development through Land Use Goal 3.1.1-5, and Policies 3.1.2-1 (Land Use Maps) and 3.1.2-11 (Discretionary Permit Consistency with the Guidelines).

Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR)

Save Open Space & Agricultural Resources (SOAR) refers to a series of voter initiatives that individual jurisdictions adopted to protect open space and agricultural land. Ventura County adopted the countywide SOAR ordinance in 1998. As described further below, voters renewed the ordinance through 2050. The County SOAR ordinance requires countywide voter approval of any change to the General Plan involving the Agricultural, Open Space, or Rural land use designations, or any changes to a General Plan goal or policy related to those land use designations.

In addition to the County SOAR ordinance, eight of the 10 cities in the county enacted SOAR ordinances/initiatives: Ventura (1995 and 2001), Camarillo (1998), Oxnard (1998), Simi Valley (1998), Thousand Oaks (1998), Moorpark (1999), Santa Paula (2000), and Fillmore (2002). The cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks adopted SOAR ordinances to establish voter-controlled urban growth boundaries, known as City Urban Restriction Boundaries (CURBs). CURBs are lines around each city that require voter approval to allow city annexation and development of land outside of the CURB boundary. The county SOAR ordinance requires voter approval to amend the Open Space, Agriculture and Rural general plan land designations and the goals and policies as they specifically apply to those land use designations unless such amendment is approved by a vote of the people.

The City of Ventura has two measures to protect open space and agricultural land: the original SOAR ordinance and the Hillside Voter Participation Act (HVPA). The City of Ventura SOAR ordinance requires voter approval of any change to the General Plan involving the Agriculture land use designation. The HVPA requires voter approval of any urban development within the HVPA boundary line.

Each of the SOAR ordinances/initiatives contains a limited number of exceptions to the general requirement for voter approval. Most of the original SOAR ordinances/initiatives were structured to stay in effect until December 31, 2020; the exceptions were the cities of Ventura and Thousand Oaks, which were scheduled to stay in effect until December 31, 2030. In November 2016, the voters of Ventura County and 8 of the county's 10 cities renewed the SOAR ordinances and extended their controls through 2050. Ojai and Port Hueneme were not part of this voter initiative, (sometimes referred to as Measure C.) Ojai will continue to rely on locally adopted planning measures, while Port Hueneme is landlocked, with no room to expand beyond its current boundaries. Measure C included amendments to the goals, policies, and programs located within Sections 1.6 Farmland Resources and 3.2 Land Use Designations of the Ventura County General Plan – Goals, Policies & Programs.

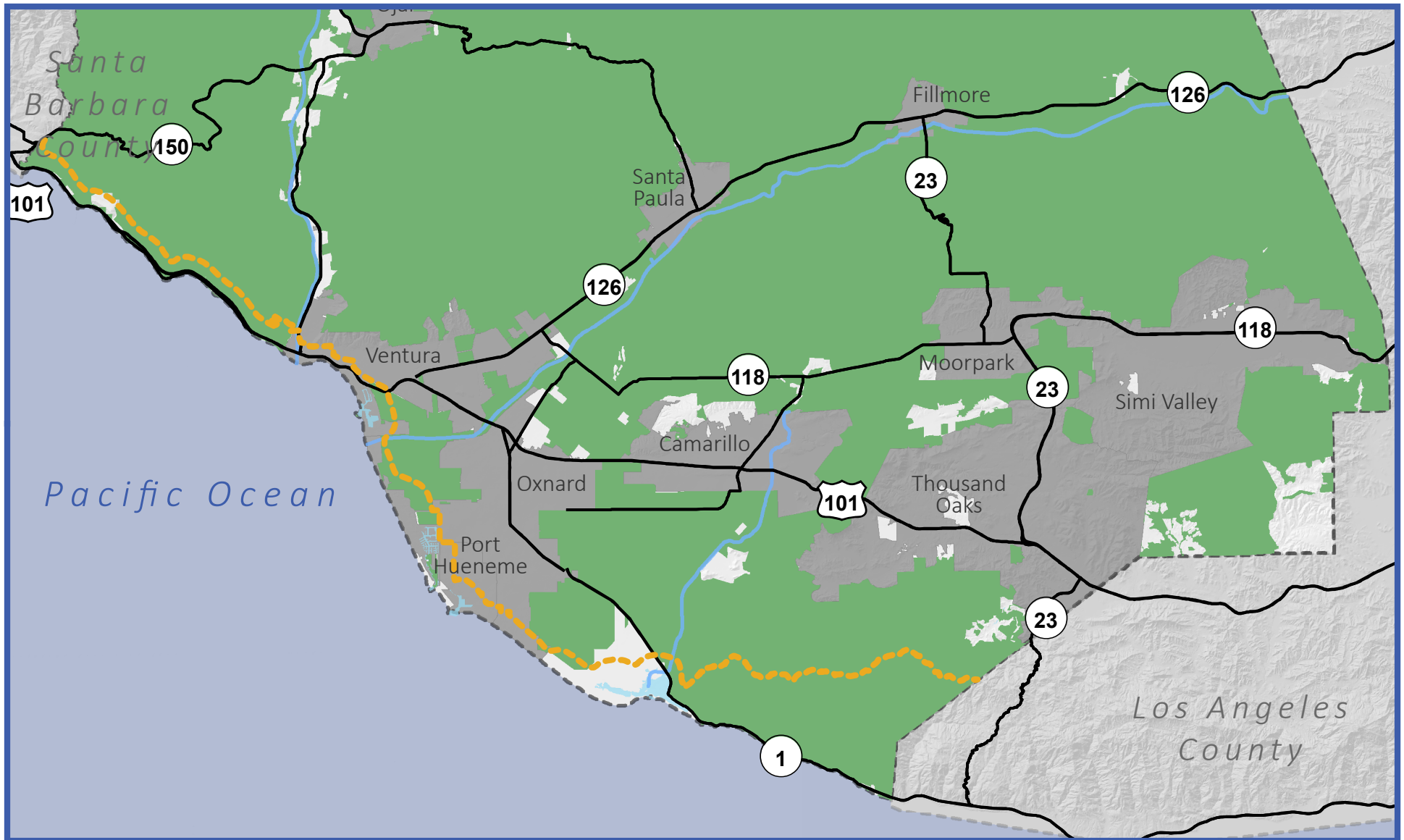


Figure 9-12:
Land Subject to SOAR

Map Date: July 08, 2016

Source: Ventura County, 2016; California Department of Transportation, 2007; USGS, 2013.

0 4.5 9 Miles



- Coastal Zone Boundary
- Major Roadways
- Major Waterways
- Water Bodies
- Cities
- Land Subject to SOAR

Greenbelt Agreements

Greenbelt agreements are voluntary agreements between the Board of Supervisors and one or more city councils regarding development of agricultural and/or open space areas beyond city limits. They protect open space and agricultural lands and reassure property owners located within these areas that lands will not be prematurely converted to agriculturally incompatible uses. Cities commit not to annex any property within a greenbelt while the Board agrees to restrict development to uses consistent with existing zoning. Ventura County has a total of seven greenbelt agreements that together total approximately 164,000 acres. The seven greenbelts are listed below:

- Ventura-Santa Paula Greenbelt
- Santa Paula-Fillmore Greenbelt
- Camarillo-Oxnard Greenbelt
- Santa Rosa Valley Greenbelt
- Tierra Rejada Greenbelt
- Ventura-Oxnard Greenbelt
- Fillmore-Piru Greenbelt

For an expanded discussion on each of the seven greenbelts within Ventura County, reference Chapter 3: Land Use, Section 3.3 Annexation and Development Trends

Ventura County Agricultural/Urban Buffer Policy

This policy provides guidelines to prevent and/or mitigate conflicts that may arise at the agricultural/urban interface. This policy is intended to protect the economic viability and long-term sustainability of the Ventura County agricultural industry. It applies where urban structures or ongoing non-farming activities are permitted adjacent to land: 1) in crop or orchard production; or 2) classified by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Inventory as Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique or Local Importance farmland. These guidelines apply to projects requiring discretionary approval by the County or a city where the proposed non-farming activity is abutting or on land zoned “Agriculture Exclusive”, “Open Space” or “Rural Agriculture”, and the farming activity is located outside a Sphere of Influence. Where applicable, urban developments or non-agricultural uses are conditioned to provide and maintain a 300-foot setback and chain-link fence on the non-agricultural property between the urban use and the agriculture, or a 150-foot buffer/setback if a vegetative screen as is used.

Right-to-Farm Ordinance

The Ventura County Right-to-Farm Ordinance was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in the late 1970s. It is administered by both the Planning Division through the Zoning Ordinance and by the Agricultural Commissioner’s Office. The Right-to-Farm Ordinance is intended to support and provide a safeguard for existing agricultural and farming operations that could be threatened by encroaching residential development. This is achieved through mandatory disclosure notifications provided to property owners who will be developing residential uses adjacent or near existing agricultural operations. The disclosure

informs people seeking to develop or purchase homes of the Right-to-Farm ordinance and the potential impacts that may be generated by nearby farming operations. The Ordinance also protects farms from nuisance complaints associated with proper farming practices.

1988 Ventura County General Plan

State law (Government Code 65300, et. seq.) mandates that each county and city in California adopt and update a general plan with at least seven elements, including land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise and safety. Specific topics such as open space and agriculture are found throughout the General Plan, specifically in the land use, conservation, and open space elements. Local governments also can add other material such as economic development, and air quality elements, and some counties have adopted separate agricultural elements. The 1988 Ventura County General Plan addresses agriculture in the chapter on Land Use and provides the Goals in Section 3.2.1-4 and Policies pertaining to agriculture in Section 3.2.1-4.

Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates land uses, establishes height, bulk, and space standards, and includes development standards for a variety of other uses such as signs, parking, and landscaping. The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance also seeks to provide the preservation of natural resources, prevent urban sprawl, and protect prime agricultural land. The Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance regulates agricultural land through two zoning designations: Open Space (OS), Agricultural Exclusive (AE).

Local Coastal Program

The Local Coastal Program, mandated by the California Coastal Act of 1976, is the Land Use Plan for the unincorporated portions of the coastal areas of Ventura County. It addresses the County's significant coastal issues with a combination of land use designations, resource protection, and development policies. The coastal zone was divided into three sub-areas: The North Coast, the Central Coast and the South Coast, each with its respective issues, objectives, and policies. These policies evaluate issues pertaining to environmentally sensitive habitats, archaeological and paleontological resources, agriculture, commercial fishing, recreation and access, hazards, beach erosion, energy and industrial facilities, public works, housing and the location and planning of new development. In specific, all three sub areas provide objectives and policies directly related to agriculture. One of the Plan objectives is to preserve agricultural lands through mitigation measures from new development, reduce land divisions which could affect productivity, minimize soil erosion, and designate minimum parcel size standards.

Coastal Zoning Ordinance

The purpose of the Coastal Zoning Ordinance is to protect and promote the public health, safety, and general welfare; and to provide the environmental, economic, and social advantages that result from an orderly, planned use of resources; and to protect public and private property, wildlife, marine fisheries, and other ocean resources, and the natural environment, by protecting the ecological balance of the coastal zone and preventing its destruction and deterioration. The Coastal Zoning Ordinance also seeks to provide the preservation of open space and agricultural lands as a limited and irreplaceable resource, through the regulation of four zoning designations (Section 8173, Coastal Open Space (COS), Coastal Agriculture (CA), Coastal Rural (CR), Coastal Rural Exclusive (CRE)).

Regulatory Setting

Federal

Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)

The Farmland Protection and Policy Act (FPPA), 7 U.S.C. 4201, was enacted in 1981 to minimize the loss of prime farmland and unique farmlands because of Federal actions by converting these lands to nonagricultural uses. It assures that federal programs are compatible with state and local governments, and private programs and policies to protect farmland. Federal agencies that authorize actions that result in the conversion of prime or unique farmland not already committed to urban development or water storage are responsible for compliance with the FPPA. Compliance is to be coordinated with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

State

Open Space Subvention Act (OSSA)

The OSSA provides for the partial replacement of local property tax revenue foregone as a result of participation in the Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other enforceable open space restriction programs (Government Code §16140 et seq.). Participating local governments receive annual payments on the basis of the number of eligible acres, quality (soil type and agricultural productivity), and, for Farmland Security Zone contracts, location (proximity to a city) of land enrolled under eligible enforceable open space restrictions.

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)

The FRPP provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and rangeland in agricultural uses. Working through existing programs, USDA partnered with State, tribal, or local governments and non-governmental organizations to acquire conservation easements or other interests in land from landowners. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement.

Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act)

The CKH Act established procedures for local agency changes of organization, including city incorporation, annexation to a city or special district, and consolidation of cities or special districts (Section 56000, et seq.) While LAFCO does not have any direct land use authority, the CKH Act assigns LAFCOs a significant role in planning issues by requiring them to consider a wide range of land use and growth factors when they consider proposed boundary changes. California Government Code Section 56001 specifically states that “the logical formation and determination of local agency boundaries is an important factor in promoting orderly development and in balancing that development with sometimes competing State interests of discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open space and prime agricultural lands, [and] efficiently extending government services.”

California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP)

The CFCP is a statewide grant funding program that supports local efforts to establish agricultural conservation easements and planning projects for the purpose of preserving important agricultural land resources. The CFCP provides grants to local governments and qualified non-profit organizations.

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) Section 65570(b) of the California Government Code

This statute requires the Department of Conservation to collect or acquire information on the amount of land converted to or from agricultural use for every mapped county and to report this information to the Legislature. This report is due biennially (every two years) on or before June 30 of every even-numbered year. This statute requires the Department of Conservation to update and send counties copies of current farmland maps by August 1 of each even-numbered year. Counties have the option to review the maps and notify the Department of any changes in agricultural land and request correction of any discrepancies or errors in the classification of agricultural lands on the maps. The statute also provides that the Department of Conservation may acquire supplemental information from new soil surveys and establish comparable baseline data for counties not included in the original 1984 mapping.

California Land Conservation Contract (Williamson Act)

For a discussion on California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act), reference Chapter 9: Agriculture, Section 9.3 Agricultural Policies and Programs, Existing Conditions.

Local

(See Existing Conditions discussion above)

Key Terms

Agricultural Preserve (AGP). In Ventura County, an Agricultural Preserve (AGP) is an area devoted to plant and animal production for commercial purposes, and for other compatible uses. The boundaries of the Preserve are designated by resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

Cancellation. The immediate termination of a Williamson Act Contract.

Farmland Security Zone Area (FSZA). The area that is created within an Agricultural Preserve by the Board upon request by a landowner or group of landowners. Once the designation has been made, the property owner may enter into a FSZA/LCA Contract.

Farmland Security Zone Contract (FSZA/LCA). A contract between a private landowner and the County that restricts land to agricultural or open space uses. The minimum initial term is 20 years.

Greenbelt Agreement. A joint resolution between interested cities and the County to protect open space and agricultural lands and reassure that land will not be converted to urban uses.

Land Conservation Act Contract (LCA Contract). Land Conservation Contract is the legal document that contractually obligates the property owner (and his or her successors of interest) to the enforceable

restrictions provided in the Act. Only land, which has been put into an Agricultural Preserve by resolution of the Board of Supervisors, is eligible for a contract.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). A commission within each county that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities.

Nonrenewal. Withdrawal of land subject to Williamson Act contract.

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APPENDIX 9.A: IMPORTANT FARMLAND MAPPING CONVERSION RATE TABLES

This appendix provides additional detail and analysis of the Important Farmland Mapping acreage conversions in Ventura County. The conversion rates account for all the important farmland categories classified by the biennial Department of Conservation's reports from 2004 to 2014. Also included is a summary table of conversion rates dating back to the first reports that tracked agricultural land in 1984. The summary table provides data up to 2012.

**TABLE 9.A-1
VENTURA COUNTY
2004-2006 Land Use Conversion**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

**PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2004-06 ACREAGE CHANGES			
			ACRES LOST	ACRES GAINED	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
	2004	2006	(-)	(+)		
Prime Farmland	47,192	45,430	1,836	74	1,910	-1,762
Farmland of Statewide Importance	34,978	34,231	759	12	771	-747
Unique Farmland	29,074	28,581	1,183	690	1,873	-493
Farmland of Local Importance	16,816	16,717	1,137	1,038	2,175	-99
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	128,060	124,959	4,915	1,814	6,729	-3,101
Grazing Land	198,087	199,004	460	1,377	1,837	917
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	326,147	323,963	5,375	3,191	8,566	-2,184
Urban and Built-up Land	101,841	102,873	29	1,061	1,090	1,032
Other Land	124,021	125,173	400	1,552	1,952	1,152
Water Area	3,939	3,939	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,948	555,948	5,804	5,804	11,608	0

**PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2006
Prime Farmland	301
Farmland of Statewide Importance	182
Unique Farmland	129
Farmland of Local Importance	940
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	1,552
Grazing Land	3,924
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	5,476
Urban and Built-up Land	0
Other Land	861
Water Area	0
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	6,337

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2004 to 2006

LAND USE CATEGORY	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland (1) to:	—	2	342	812	1,156	9	1,165	328	343	0	1,836
Farmland of Statewide Importance (1) to:	1	—	236	195	432	2	434	156	169	0	759
Unique Farmland to:	3	3	—	6	12	627	639	43	501	0	1,183
Farmland of Local Importance to:	68	7	17	—	92	715	807	61	269	0	1,137
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	72	12	595	1,013	1,692	1,353	3,045	588	1,282	0	4,915
Grazing Land to:	0	0	29	10	39	—	39	151	270	0	460
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	72	12	624	1,023	1,731	1,353	3,084	739	1,552	0	5,375
Urban and Built-up Land to:	0	0	29	0	29	0	29	—	0	0	29
Other Land to:	2	0	37	15	54	24	78	322	—	0	400
Water Area to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED to:	74	12	690	1,038	1,814	1,377	3,191	1,061	1,552	0	5,804

(1) Conversion to Unique Farmland due to the expansion of existing wholesale potted plant nurseries or the addition of new nurseries near Fillmore, Piru, Oxnard, Ventura, and Moorpark.

Source: Table A-45, Ventura County 2004-2006 Land Use Conversion Report, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Ventura.aspx>

VENTURA COUNTY

TABLE 9.A-2
VENTURA COUNTY
2006-2008 Land Use Conversion

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2006-08 ACREAGE CHANGES			
			ACRES LOST	ACRES GAINED	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
	2006	2008	(-)	(+)		
Prime Farmland	45,431	43,790	1,842	201	2,043	-1,641
Farmland of Statewide Importance	34,230	33,841	455	66	521	-389
Unique Farmland	28,583	28,643	890	950	1,840	60
Farmland of Local Importance	16,716	16,218	1,702	1,204	2,906	-498
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	124,960	122,492	4,889	2,421	7,310	-2,468
Grazing Land	199,002	195,674	5,070	1,742	6,812	-3,328
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	323,962	318,166	9,959	4,163	14,122	-5,796
Urban and Built-up Land	102,874	104,282	79	1,487	1,566	1,408
Other Land	125,174	129,562	834	5,222	6,056	4,388
Water Area	3,939	3,939	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,949	555,949	10,872	10,872	21,744	0

PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2008
Prime Farmland	291
Farmland of Statewide Importance	178
Unique Farmland	121
Farmland of Local Importance	782
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	1,372
Grazing Land	3,752
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	5,124
Urban and Built-up Land	0
Other Land	1,321
Water Area	0
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	6,445

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2006 to 2008

LAND USE CATEGORY	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland (1) to:	—	2	280	999	1,281	4	1,285	363	194	0	1,842
Farmland of Statewide Importance (1) to:	3	—	76	115	194	4	198	225	32	0	455
Unique Farmland to:	12	4	—	64	80	617	697	11	182	0	890
Farmland of Local Importance to:	131	36	36	—	203	983	1,186	131	385	0	1,702
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	146	42	392	1,178	1,758	1,608	3,366	730	793	0	4,889
Grazing Land (2) to:	7	5	311	15	338	—	338	346	4,386	0	5,070
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	153	47	703	1,193	2,096	1,608	3,704	1,076	5,179	0	9,959
Urban and Built-up Land to:	7	1	18	5	31	5	36	—	43	0	79
Other Land to:	41	18	229	6	294	129	423	411	—	0	834
Water Area to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED to:	201	66	950	1,204	2,421	1,742	4,163	1,487	5,222	0	10,872

(1) Conversion to Unique Farmland due to delineation of potted plant nurseries and nonirrigated orchards.

(2) Conversion to Other Land largely due to the delineation of oil fields on which grazing is not permitted, including the San Miguelito, Shiells Canyon, and Torrey Canyon fields.

Source: Table A-45, Ventura County 2006-2008 Land Use Conversion Report, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Ventura.aspx>

VENTURA COUNTY

**TABLE 9.A-3
VENTURA COUNTY
2008-2010 Land Use Conversion**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

**PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2008-10 ACREAGE CHANGES			
			ACRES LOST (-)	ACRES GAINED (+)	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
	2008	2010				
Prime Farmland	43,791	42,420	1,787	416	2,203	-1,371
Farmland of Statewide Importance	33,841	33,482	702	343	1,045	-359
Unique Farmland	28,643	28,793	1,535	1,685	3,220	150
Farmland of Local Importance	16,218	14,988	2,260	1,030	3,290	-1,230
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	122,493	119,683	6,284	3,474	9,758	-2,810
Grazing Land	195,674	197,278	743	2,347	3,090	1,604
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	318,167	316,961	7,027	5,821	12,848	-1,206
Urban and Built-up Land	104,280	105,233	108	1,061	1,169	953
Other Land	129,563	129,816	1,242	1,495	2,737	253
Water Area	3,939	3,939	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,949	555,949	8,377	8,377	16,754	0

**PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2010
Prime Farmland	284
Farmland of Statewide Importance	165
Unique Farmland	118
Farmland of Local Importance	732
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	1,299
Grazing Land	3,694
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	4,993
Urban and Built-up Land	0
Other Land	1,375
Water Area	0
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	6,368

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2008 to 2010

LAND USE CATEGORY	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland (1) to:	--	3	583	695	1,281	9	1,290	207	290	0	1,787
Farmland of Statewide Importance (1) to:	1	--	242	244	487	10	497	117	88	0	702
Unique Farmland (2) to:	36	7	--	20	63	1,027	1,090	30	415	0	1,535
Farmland of Local Importance (2) to:	172	163	183	--	518	1,272	1,790	108	362	0	2,260
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	209	173	1,008	959	2,349	2,318	4,667	462	1,155	0	6,284
Grazing Land to:	6	4	287	42	339	--	339	83	321	0	743
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	215	177	1,295	1,001	2,688	2,318	5,006	545	1,476	0	7,027
Urban and Built-up Land to:	20	23	44	2	89	0	89	--	19	0	108
Other Land to:	181	143	346	27	697	29	726	516	--	0	1,242
Water Area to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	0
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED	416	343	1,685	1,030	3,474	2,347	5,821	1,061	1,495	0	8,377

(1) Conversion to Unique Farmland is due to the identification of potted plant nurseries on land previously mapped as irrigated farmland.

(2) Conversion to Grazing Land is primarily due to irrigated crops or nonirrigated grain fields left fallow for three or more update cycles.

Source: Table A-45, Ventura County 2008-2010 Land Use Conversion Report, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Ventura.aspx>

VENTURA COUNTY

**TABLE 9.A-4
VENTURA COUNTY
2010-2012 Land Use Conversion**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

**PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2010-12 ACREAGE CHANGES			
			ACRES LOST	ACRES GAINED	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
	2010	2012	(-)	(+)		
Prime Farmland	42,422	41,570	1,056	204	1,260	-852
Farmland of Statewide Importance	33,484	33,337	197	50	247	-147
Unique Farmland	28,792	28,725	528	461	989	-67
Farmland of Local Importance	14,989	15,168	795	974	1,769	179
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	119,687	118,800	2,576	1,689	4,265	-887
Grazing Land	197,278	197,866	260	848	1,108	588
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	316,965	316,666	2,836	2,537	5,373	-299
Urban and Built-up Land	105,233	105,461	223	451	674	228
Other Land	129,816	129,887	630	701	1,331	71
Water Area	3,939	3,939	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,953	555,953	3,689	3,689	7,378	0

**PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2012
Prime Farmland	DATA NOT AVAILABLE
Farmland of Statewide Importance	
Unique Farmland	
Farmland of Local Importance	
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	0
Grazing Land	0
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	0
Urban and Built-up Land	0
Other Land	0
Water Area	0
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	0

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2010 to 2012

LAND USE CATEGORY		Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland	to:	—	2	23	846	871	4	875	40	141	0	1,056
Farmland of Statewide Importance	to:	0	—	30	85	115	5	120	10	67	0	197
Unique Farmland (1)	to:	63	20	—	9	92	233	325	14	189	0	528
Farmland of Local Importance	to:	106	16	51	—	173	558	731	9	55	0	795
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL		169	38	104	940	1,251	800	2,051	73	452	0	2,576
Grazing Land	to:	1	1	164	11	177	—	177	25	58	0	260
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL		170	39	268	951	1,428	800	2,228	98	510	0	2,836
Urban and Built-up Land (2)	to:	0	1	1	10	12	20	32	—	191	0	223
Other Land	to:	34	10	192	13	249	28	277	353	—	0	630
Water Area	to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	—	0
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED	to:	204	50	461	974	1,689	848	2,537	451	701	0	3,689

(1) Conversion to Prime Farmland is due to the delineation of irrigated agriculture that had previously been mapped as potted plant nurseries.

(2) Conversion from Urban and Built-Up Land was primarily due to the removal of tanks at the Ormond Beach Power Plant and the Willett Tank Farm in Ventura and small areas lacking structures in North Fillmore, Thousand Oaks, Camarillo, and Oxnard.

Source: Table A-45, Ventura County 2010-2012 Land Use Conversion Report, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Ventura.aspx>

VENTURA COUNTY

**TABLE 9.A-5
VENTURA COUNTY
2012-2014 Land Use Conversion**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

**PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2012-14 ACREAGE CHANGES			
			ACRES LOST (-)	ACRES GAINED (+)	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
	2012	2014				
Prime Farmland	41,570	41,143	598	171	769	-427
Farmland of Statewide Importance	33,339	33,045	415	121	536	-294
Unique Farmland	28,726	28,700	578	552	1,130	-26
Farmland of Local Importance	15,169	15,560	295	686	981	391
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	118,804	118,448	1,886	1,530	3,416	-356
Grazing Land	197,865	197,796	465	396	861	-69
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	316,669	316,244	2,351	1,926	4,277	-425
Urban and Built-up Land	105,462	105,671	186	395	581	209
Other Land	129,888	130,104	368	584	952	216
Water Area	3,939	3,939	0	0	0	0
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,958	555,958	2,905	2,905	5,810	0

**PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2014
Prime Farmland	DATA NOT AVAILABLE
Farmland of Statewide Importance	
Unique Farmland	
Farmland of Local Importance	
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	
Grazing Land	
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	
Urban and Built-up Land	
Other Land	
Water Area	
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2012 to 2014

LAND USE CATEGORY		Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland	to:	--	1	38	343	382	6	388	75	135	0	598
Farmland of Statewide Importance	to:	1	--	6	267	274	8	282	43	90	0	415
Unique Farmland	to:	30	27	--	36	93	318	411	1	166	0	578
Farmland of Local Importance	to:	104	54	38	--	196	28	224	52	19	0	295
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL		135	82	82	646	945	360	1,305	171	410	0	1,886
Grazing Land	to:	3	5	342	8	358	--	358	49	58	0	465
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL		138	87	424	654	1,303	360	1,663	220	468	0	2,351
Urban and Built-up Land (1)	to:	0	6	4	30	40	30	70	--	116	0	186
Other Land	to:	33	28	124	2	187	6	193	175	--	0	368
Water Area	to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	0
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED	to:	171	121	552	686	1,530	396	1,926	395	584	0	2,905

(1) Conversion from Urban and Built-up Land is primarily the result of a lack of sufficient infrastructure and the use of detailed digital imagery to delineate more distinct urban boundaries.

Source: Table A-45, Ventura County 2012-2014 Land Use Conversion Report, <http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp/Pages/Ventura.aspx>

VENTURA COUNTY

**TABLE 9.A-6
VENTURA COUNTY
2014-2016 Land Use Conversion**

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
Division of Land Resource Protection

Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program

**PART I
County Summary and Change by Land Use Category**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE INVENTORIED		2014-16 ACREAGE CHANGES			
	2014	2016	ACRES LOST (-)	ACRES GAINED (+)	TOTAL ACREAGE CHANGED	NET ACREAGE CHANGED
Prime Farmland	41,143	40,976	409	242	651	-167
Farmland of Statewide Importance	33,045	32,992	191	138	329	-53
Unique Farmland	28,699	28,950	584	835	1,419	251
Farmland of Local Importance	15,560	15,590	383	413	796	30
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	118,447	118,508	1,567	1,628	3,195	61
Grazing Land	197,794	197,859	832	897	1,729	65
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	316,241	316,367	2,399	2,525	4,924	126
Urban and Built-up Land	105,673	105,966	82	375	457	293
Other Land	130,105	129,688	792	375	1,167	-417
Water Area	3,940	3,938	2	0	2	-2
TOTAL AREA INVENTORIED	555,959	555,959	3,275	3,275	6,550	0

**PART II
Land Committed to Nonagricultural Use**

LAND USE CATEGORY	TOTAL ACREAGE 2016
Prime Farmland	DATA
Farmland of Statewide Importance	NOT
Unique Farmland	AVAILABLE
Farmland of Local Importance	
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	
Grazing Land	
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	
Urban and Built-up Land	
Other Land	
Water Area	
TOTAL ACREAGE REPORTED	

PART III Land Use Conversion from 2014 to 2016

LAND USE CATEGORY	Prime Farmland	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Unique Farmland	Farmland of Local Importance	Subtotal Important Farmland	Grazing Land	Total Agricultural Land	Urban and Built-up Land	Other Land	Water Area	Total Converted To Another Use
Prime Farmland (1) to:	—	8	106	181	295	4	299	36	74	0	409
Farmland of Statewide Importance (1) to:	11	—	79	37	127	0	127	24	40	0	191
Unique Farmland (2) to:	70	63	—	33	166	356	522	3	59	0	584
Farmland of Local Importance to:	128	33	37	—	198	45	243	82	58	0	383
IMPORTANT FARMLAND SUBTOTAL	209	104	222	251	786	405	1,191	145	231	0	1,567
Grazing Land to:	3	4	504	147	658	—	658	84	90	0	832
AGRICULTURAL LAND SUBTOTAL	212	108	726	398	1,444	405	1,849	229	321	0	2,399
Urban and Built-up Land (3) to:	8	1	4	7	20	9	29	—	53	0	82
Other Land to:	22	29	105	8	164	483	647	145	—	0	792
Water Area to:	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	—	2
TOTAL ACREAGE CONVERTED to:	242	138	835	413	1,628	897	2,525	375	375	0	3,275

(1) Conversion to Unique Farmland is primarily due to soil unit changes from the incorporation of the statewide gridded soil survey.

(2) Conversion to Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance is primarily due to soil unit changes from the incorporation of the statewide gridded soil survey.

(3) Conversion from Urban and Built-up Land is primarily due to a lack of sufficient infrastructure and the use of detailed digital imagery to delineate more distinct urban boundaries.

**TABLE 9.A-7
VENTURA COUNTY
1984-2016 Land Use Conversion**

Land Use Category	Acreage By Category (1)																	1984-2016 Net Acreage Changed	Avg Annual Change
	1984	1986	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996 (2)	1998	2000 (3)	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014 (4)	2016		
Prime Farmland	57,138	55,587	54,246	53,574	53,284	53,026	52,141	51,818	48,573	47,877	47,192	45,431	43,791	42,422	41,570	41,143	40,976	-16,162	-505
Farmland of Statewide Importance	39,917	39,327	38,779	38,278	38,082	37,811	37,611	37,700	35,792	35,204	34,978	34,230	33,841	33,484	33,337	33,045	32,992	-6,925	-216
Unique Farmland	22,978	22,626	22,326	22,507	22,454	22,516	22,437	22,643	28,103	27,982	29,074	28,583	28,643	28,792	28,725	28,700	28,950	5,972	187
Farmland of Local Importance	12,355	12,340	12,139	11,691	11,440	11,415	11,148	11,076	19,044	18,042	16,816	16,716	16,218	14,989	15,168	15,560	15,590	3,235	101
Important Farmland Subtotal	132,388	129,880	127,490	126,050	125,260	124,768	123,337	123,237	131,512	129,105	128,060	124,960	122,493	119,687	118,800	118,448	118,508	-13,880	-434
Grazing Land	212,779	212,160	211,573	210,106	209,668	209,086	208,752	207,852	197,973	198,372	198,087	199,002	195,674	197,278	197,866	197,796	197,859	-14,920	-466
Agricultural Land Subtotal	345,167	342,040	339,063	336,156	334,928	333,854	332,089	331,089	329,485	327,477	326,147	323,962	318,167	316,965	316,666	316,244	316,367	-28,800	-900
Urban and Built-Up Land	77,613	80,657	83,603	87,859	89,035	91,541	92,883	95,522	97,236	99,789	101,841	102,874	104,280	105,233	105,461	105,671	105,966	28,353	886
Other Land	130,036	130,118	130,272	128,922	128,974	127,524	127,041	125,403	125,291	124,746	124,021	125,174	129,563	129,816	129,887	130,104	129,688	-348	-11
Water Area	3,137	3,137	3,015	3,015	3,015	3,033	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,939	3,938	801	25
Total Area Inventoried	555,953	555,952	555,953	555,952	555,952	555,952	555,952	555,953	555,951	555,951	555,948	555,949	555,949	555,953	555,953	555,958	555,959	6	0

(1) Figures are generated from the most current version of the GIS data. Files dating from 1984 through 1992 were reprocessed with a standardized county line in the Albers Equal Area projection, and other boundary improvements.

(2) Acreage for Water changed in 1996 when refinements were made to lake and river boundaries from imagery and 1:24,000 scale quadrangles.

(3) Due to the incorporation of digital soil survey data (SSURGO) in 2000, acreages for farmland, grazing and other land categories may differ from those published in the 1998-2000 Farmland Conversion Report.

(4) Conversion of geospatial data to North American Datum 1983 (NAD 83) led to minor changes in total FMMP acreage beginning in 2014.

Percentage of County Inventoried: 47%